What does the National World War II Museum have to do with the Nebraska National Guard Museum? The Nebraska National Guard Historian was invited to speak about a soldier from our past that went on to make history. His legacy is honored in the museum in New Orleans. Read about the only Nebraska National Guardsman to have a national memorial in his hometown, a national museum where he did his work and an international memorial in France where he helped win World War II. See why Dwight Eisenhower said “he’s the man that won the war for us.” This incredible story can be found on page 3 of the newsletter.
From the Society President....

What a great fourth quarter at the Museum! We got an early Christmas present of a foundation grant for $100,000 to the “I Am the Guard” Room….WOW! We are excited about the dedication of the room in 2018. So great to see all the students from Crete Middle School visiting to learn about the museum and veterans! Thank you to Seward Public Schools for participating in our WWI and WWII studies and review we do in the Concordia University Learning Center. Speaking of Concordia….wow….check out the Military Appreciation Football game support and the Founders Day Birthday Party we hosted here at the Museum. What a great partnership with Concordia University….thank you for the great support. Take a look at the new Chaplains’ Display in the John W. Cattle, Sr. Exhibit Area created by our intern—Zane. You have got to check out the wonderful new introductory movie in the Jones National Bank and Trust Co. Theater! We finished the year with our annual NENG Birthday bash at the Museum. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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.
“He is the man that won the war for us.....”

The National World War II Museum hosted a “Higgins Day 2017” in New Orleans recently and the Nebraska National Guard Historian, Jerry Meyer, was included on a panel to discuss Nebraska’s connection to the city. The day featured discussion sessions on the life of Andrew Jackson Higgins (1886-1952) of Columbus, Nebraska and his impact on the nation in World War II. The reason the museum is located in New Orleans is because of this native Nebraskan.

The museum opened on June 6, 2000 under a different name, the National D-Day Museum. It was housed in a refurbished storage warehouse on Magazine Street and was the dream of author Stephan Ambrose. The original vision was to honor Mr. Higgins (World War II boat builder in New Orleans), his workers and the veterans who rode his craft ashore during the many amphibious operations during World War II (with special emphasis on D-Day, June 6, 1944). Dr. Ambrose died in 2002 but the spirit of the museum continued to grow. In 2004, by an act of Congress the facility became the National World War II Museum located on Andrew Higgins Drive. The facility quickly expanded to a five building campus dedicated to the story of Mr. Higgins and all things related to World War II. A future expansion in the next couple of years will see a building dedicated to the home-front and a new Andrew Higgins Hotel and Conference Center on the campus. Today, the museum is rated #4 most visited museum nationally by TripAdvisor (the first three are located all in Washington DC). Few people know the reason why this national museum is located in New Orleans.

“Higgins Day 2017” was a museum event to bring together Higgins family, Higgins Industries Employees and veterans and scholars of the story of Andrew Jackson Higgins. A large contingent of Higgins family made the trip to include his daughter Dawn Higgins Murphy of Lafayette, Louisiana. Many workers from Higgins Industries were also in attendance to share stories. A panel discussion was set up to include: Commander Jimmy Duckworth (US Coast Guard and Higgins Boat builder), Jerry Strahan (Author of Andrew Jackson Higgins and the Boats that Won World War II), Gayle Higgins Jones (Granddaughter/Family representative) and Gerald D. “Jerry” Meyer (Nebraska National Guard Historian and Designer of the Andrew Jackson Higgins Memorial in Columbus, Nebraska). Stephen Watson, president/CEO of the museum, introduced the panel and they spoke on a topic and answered questions at the end. Commander Duckworth was instrumental in building the 36’ Higgins LCVP that is on display in the Louisiana Pavilion at the museum. The LCVP was built for the museum in the late 1990’s by a dedicated group of volunteers to be used on Lake Pontchartrain and then be displayed in the facility. For the “Higgins Day 2017” events it was set up for people to board and experience standing in a World War II era landing craft. Duckworth talked about the unique experience of working with Higgins employees in the building of the boat. Jerry Strahan talked about the overall impact of Higgins on the war effort (12,964 vessels or 92% of the US Navy in 1943 were built by Higgins Industries) and the work force that built them. He highlighted the tremendous leadership skills of Mr. Higgins in taking on government bureaucracy and building a craft that was needed by the armed forces for amphibious operations. Gayle Higgins Jones talked about the family side of Mr. Higgins and how he was so dedicated to the country he loved. Gayle and her late husband were significant contributors to the original D-Day Museum. Jerry Meyer talked about Mr. Higgins as a soldier in the Nebraska National Guard in the early 1900’s (he was a member of the Millard Rifles and later the 2nd Regiment NENG). He then focused on the creation of the Andrew Jackson Higgins National Memorial in Columbus as a student centered service learning project and its impact on all that participated. The “spirit” of Mr. Higgins carried the project through to completion in 2003 (three years, $1.5 million dollar memorial) and later it was replicated on Utah Beach in Normandy as an international Higgins Memorial. Mr. Higgins is the only Nebraskan to have a national memorial in his home-town, a national museum built where he worked, and an international memorial on the spot where he made history. After questions from the crowd, the audience was treated to the Victory Belles singing the “Higgins Victory March”. Stephen Watson thanked the Nebraska contingent (Jerry Meyer of Seward and Dick Breuer of Columbus) for attending and sharing stories and artifacts with the museum.

In 1964, Stephan Ambrose was doing interviews with Dwight Eisenhower in Gettysburg for his papers and he said: “Andrew Higgins is the man that won the war of us….if he had not designed and built those LCVPs we could have never gone over an open beach….the whole strategy of war would have been different.” Andrew Jackson Higgins of Columbus Nebraska played a major role in helping the Allies win and his legacy is in his hometown, in New Orleans, and on Utah Beach in Normandy, France. As the 75th Anniversary of D-Day comes up in 2019, the country will be re-introduced to a familiar name from the war and what the home-front did to supply the service-members with the tools to win the war. The Nebraska National Guard currently has a small display on Mr. Higgins and shares his story with visitors.

L to R: Andrew Jackson Higgins on one of his PT boats in World War II. The LCVP “Higgins Boat” on display at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans. The famous pic of D-Day of soldiers disembarking from a Higgins Boat. Expert panel on Higgins at WWII Museum. Statue of Higgins at Utah Beach in France.
A foundation grant of $100,000 will assist the Nebraska National Guard Museum in completing the “I Am the Guard” Room in 2018. The donation was received at the Museum prior to Christmas and the donor will be recognized at the annual July 4th dedication. The “one of a kind” room is the gateway to the Museum main floor and will incorporate the latest in interactive technology.

The Nebraska National Guard will be the only one of thirty-one Guard state museums to have this room. The room was designed to assist the patrons who are not familiar with the military and the National Guard. Less than 1 percent of Americans serve in the military today and it was imperative to teach people what it takes to serve. The “I Am the Guard” Room and the future “Cornrow to Hedgerow” 4D Experience Room are the cornerstones of the Museums’ interactive rooms. The “Cornrow to Hedgerow” 4D Experience will tell the story of Nebraska’s famed 134th Infantry Regiment in the liberation of St. Lo, France in World War II which saw 44 guardsmen killed in action. This $900,000 display will be the major part of the Museums’ Capital Campaign in 2018-2019.

The “I Am the Guard” Room is the first room visitors see when exiting the Jones National Bank and Trust Company Theater or the Concordia University Learning Center. The patron will be greeted by a larger than life drill sergeant on an AV monitor and will be “instructed” on the proper ways of the military (basic training scenes). Around the walls will be displays from the military: Enlisted, Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO), Officers, Warrant Officers, and Family. These will displays artifacts and storylines of what each mean to the service-member. A “National Archives” like display will feature the Oath of Office and will allow visitors an opportunity to see and hear the oath recited from actual members of the Nebraska National Guard. The center interactive displays will feature the details on the Army and Air National Guard (ranks, MOS’s, training, etc…). Above the monitors will be the State and Federal Missions of the Nebraska National Guard and samples of each one. Also in the middle will be the “20 Year Project” which is the latest series of tracking new recruits as they serve in the Nebraska National Guard. A patron can follow each year of the recruits’ service in the military. The walls and displays are created by Revolution Wraps of Lincoln and Hartman Historical Services of Omaha.

The final wall will be the “They Served in the Nebraska National Guard” wall. This will feature a series of interactive displays which patrons can touch and learn more about some of the people that have served in the Nebraska National Guard. Some of the faces and stories on the wall are: Warren Buffett, Buffalo Bill Cody, Jenny Bos, Andrew Jackson Higgins, Wendy Johnson, Butler Miltonberger, etc... So when a visitor wants to know about Warren Buffett and his service in the Guard they touch his picture on the screen. The monitor will display some facts about his service from 1951-1956 and shows some of the interviews the Museum did with him in 2017. Mr. Buffett was a finance NCO and served in the Headquarters Company in Omaha. Visitors can learn about Jenny Bos, our only female recipient of the Bronze Star with Valor for her actions in Iraq while serving as a truck driver that was involved in an ambush. The display is a product of Nano-Nation in Lincoln.

The “I Am the Guard” Room is expected to open on July 4, 2018 following a dedication ceremony. The room is expected to bring visitors from all around the country to see the state of the art displays. The Museum is currently working on a Capital Campaign to finish out the “Cornrow to Hedgerow” 4D Experience in 2019 (75th Anniversary of the Liberation of St. Lo) and the main floor exhibits in 2020. If you are interested in sponsoring a room or display, please call the Museum at 402-309-8763.
The M151 and M38A1 from the museum collection joined up with aviation and ground equipment from the Nebraska National Guard to support the Military Appreciation Football game at Concordia University in Seward. A UH-60 and UH-72 landed to the east of the stadium and ground vehicles (Ambulance and HUMMV) joined them after they landed. Dr. Van Vahle (Museum volunteer) helped move the vehicles in place for the event. Darin Krueger was on hand to meet and greet with people and promote the museum. CSM Baker and COL Teegerstrom joined the group to promote the NENG.

Thank you to museum volunteers Dr. Van Vahle and Darin Krueger for helping with the Military Appreciation Day event at Concordia. Great to see CSM Marty Baker out among the troops. Thanks to COL Eric Teegerstrom for setting this all up. Great success. Look forward to next year!
The members of the 134th Infantry Regiment that served in the Aleutians during World War II are finally getting some recognition at the Museum. The “Lost Battalion” got its name when they were deployed from California in the early part of the war to stem the advances of the Japanese in the Alaska territory. They were supposed to rejoin the regiment and fight in France but that never happened. They were called the “Lost Battalion” because of that. The Museum would like to thank the Edward Jones office and staff here in Seward for this wonderful display!

Seward High School Students Visit for WWI and WWII Classes in Concordia Learning Center

Tom Tvrdy is loves to visit the Museum with his classes. The Museum would like to thank him and the great students in his history class at Seward High School for coming in for the World War I and II classes. The NENG Historian teaches the lessons and does some hands on touring related to the topics from the Concordia University Learning Center. The students got to stand inside the WWI Mock Up trench and smell the simulated Mustard Gas. The students got to see the vision of the “Cornrow to Hedgerow” 4D Experience that is being programmed for 2019.
Founders’ Day Celebration at Museum

The Museum helped celebrate Founders’ Day for Concordia University. The birthday bash was an extravagant affair with catered foods and drinks from the Bottle Rocket Brewery. It gave the Museum a chance to highlight new additions and prospective exhibits for 2018/2019 to the visitors. Jenn worked her magic and over 150 people attended the event. The cake created by Kitty at Tasteful Indulgence didn’t last long with the large crowd. So great to see faculty and students and locals make the journey over to the Museum for this annual event. Thank you Concordia for allowing the Museum to be part of this special event.
American Legion Oratorical Contest Held at Museum

The Nebraska American Legion hosted its annual Oratorical Contest at the Museum. The event was judged in the Jones National Bank and Trust Company Theater. Contestants did presentations in front of a panel of judges. The winner, Thomas Bosmeniel from Ulysses is pictured with Ken Meyer after the event.

2nd Annual Crete Middle School Day at Museum

The Museum would like to thank Aaron Wagner and the teachers and 8th grade students at Crete Middle School for coming to Lincoln to see our flight facility and to Seward to visit and tour our facility. The school does an outstanding Veterans week and we have become part of the celebration. Students got to learn about what it is to be a veteran from volunteers at the Museum. They got a chance to see the new intro movie in the theater. Great tours from the Historian and curator. Thanks to Aaron and group from Crete! Great students!

Flags Donated to Museum

The Museum would like to thank Dale and Joann Wallman for their donation of flags recently. We now have a collection of flags for special events like the Run to St. Lo (French Flags) and the 25th Anniversary of our partnership with the Czech Republic (Czech Flags). Thank you for the donation!
Second Annual “Christmas in the Military” 2017

The Nebraska National Guard Museum hosted its second annual “Christmas in the Military” recently. The Museum was able to unveil its latest introduction movie, do meet and greets with veterans, support musical talent from the community and enjoy food and drinks on the special day.

The day started off with the unveiling of the new introductory movie in the Jones National Bank and Trust Company Theater. The bank supported the 10/11 CBS production that was created by Jason Steiner and Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Hynes. Steiner and crew from 10/11 put together the 15 minute movie that will be showed to patrons upon entering the Museum. On hand for the unveiling were several voices used in the movie: Mike “The Voice of Concordia Sports” Meyer, Command Sergeant Major Marty Baker, and Colonel Craig Strong. After the preview was shown the people got a chance to ask questions of the producer and actors in the film.

Military Veterans from the Seward Kiwanis Club served as greeters for the event. They met patrons coming to the Museum and guided them to activities that were scheduled throughout the day. Veterans who greeted: Crystal and Erik Kirby, Lloyd Lipska, Ted Payne, Jim Everts, Pee Wee Schulz, and Dick Stillahn.

Special music was scheduled during the event. The Firehouse Five got the party started in the Concordia University Learning Center. The group was made up of Joanie Breaka (Trumpet), Dave Weseley (Trumpet), Dave Kasl (Euphorium), Wendy Schulz (Trombone), and Dan Hicks (Tuba). They played a delightful blend of old and new Christmas favorites. The next group was the Seward Kiwanis Ki-Tones under the direction of Paul Beck. These dapper gentlemen were a delight to hear. Following the K-Tones were the Bluejays made up of Meghan Meyer (Trumpet), Blair Souchek (Trombone) and Camryn Jensen (Guitar and Piano). The Bluejays did several variations of instrumental and voice. Mary Meyer followed them on piano with many Christmas favorites to the gathered crowd. The finale was Abby Van Velson on violin playing many classic and modern pieces. The Museum has been fortunate over the past couple of years to showcase local talent at the event.

The Nebraska National Guard Museum Society was host to the event and provided food and drink. Roxie Heins of York was hostess. The Museum had special Kolaches prepared for the event. Apple cider and Pumpkin Spice Coffee were also on hand. Patrons enjoyed the delightful food/drink while they toured. This is the second annual “Christmas in the Military” event and it was well attended (132 people signed in at the docent station).
October 9, 1949—Nebraska Air National Guard pilot Max Blank is killed while flying the P-80C on a training mission.

October 10, 1961—Berlin Crisis. Nebraska units are called up to respond to this Cold War event.

November 11, 1990—Veterans Day call up of the 24th MED for service in Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

November 20, 1977—Air National Guard pilots Nolan Voight and Raymond Hesse are killed in a training flight with the RF-4C near Lincoln.

December 7, 1945—the 4th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, the 134th Infantry Regiment is demobilized from service in World War II.

December 23, 1854—the proclamation from Acting Governor Cuming is signed forming the Nebraska National Guard.

December 23, 1940—the 134th Infantry Regiment is called up for one year of service. They would report to armories in Nebraska and ship out to Camp Robinson, Arkansas early in 1941. After Pearl Harbor, their orders would be extended for the “duration” of the war.

The Seward 4th of July Committee and Museum

Clark “Mr. 4th of July” Kolterman has a full agenda for the 2018 event here in Seward. Committee meetings are flushing out time and space conflicts to maximize and build up momentum for July 4th. The Museum will host the “Vaudeville 1918: Welcome Home” event at the Seward High School on Monday evening. This WWI themed event will honor the 100th anniversary of the war and feature acts and talent from around the state. This year is also the 25th Anniversary of our State Partnership with the Czech Republic and the NENG. The committee is trying to bring maximum Czech participation on the July 4th events and parade. The Museum will partner will many organizations to host events tied to the Czech visits. The Museum will also be unveiling many new additions for patrons to check out following an early morning dedication ceremony. We plan on bringing in some famous re-enactors again: General Pershing (Dave Shuey) and his friends Teddy Roosevelt and George Patton. The 1776 soldiers will be camped out on the yard again (thanks Mike Wilson!) and marching in the parade. Check out all the equipment on display in front of museum during the day. This has the makings of the best July 4th we’ve had since opening in 2016!
NENG Birthday at the Museum

The Museum saw another great crowd on December 9th to celebrate the birthday of the Nebraska National Guard (December 23, 1853). The adjutant general was on hand to help cut the cake and say a few words. The Society hosted the food and Bottle Rocket Brewery provided the cash bar. Music was provided by Mary Meyer on the piano. The evening was well attended by supporters of the Museum.

National Guard Birthday at Capitol

The Nebraska National Guard hosted the annual event at the Rotunda on December 16th to celebrate the 1636 founding of the National Guard. The event was attended by Governor Pete Ricketts and the Adjutant General, Major General Daryl Bohac. This yearly event featured storyboards from the Museum at the cake cutting ceremony following the event in the Rotunda. Soldiers and Airmen attended the event.
New Movie Unveiled at Museum

A new introductory movie was unveiled at the Nebraska National Guard Museum on Saturday, November 25, 2017 during the annual “Christmas in the Military” event. The movie was produced by Jason Steiner of 10/11 CBS in Lincoln and sponsored by Jones National Bank and Trust Company in Seward. The unveiling is set for 9:00am in the Jones National Bank and Trust Company Theater in the Museum. Max Wake, Jones National Bank and Trust Company President, makes the introduction in the film and welcomes patrons to the state of the art facility. Many will recognize Governor Pete Ricketts who lent his voice to Acting Governor Thomas Cuming who wrote the proclamation of December 23, 1854 which founded the Nebraska National Guard. Many other voices are also featured in the film: Mike Meyer (Voice of Concordia Sports) is the narrator, Command Sergeant Major Marty Baker, Brigadier General Richard Dahlman, Colonel Craig Strong, Seward Mayor Josh Eickmeier, Lieutenant Colonel Steve Collins, Sergeant First Class Jenny Bos, and Ismaila Moussa. The movie features video excerpts of the 33rd Nebraska Adjutant General, Major General Daryl Bohac who highlights the history of the organization and welcomes everyone to the Museum. The movie was written by Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Hynes, NENG Public Affairs Officer, with research from Gerald D. “Jerry” Meyer, NENG Historian, Captain Cody Cade, Museum Curator, and Senior Airman Trey McNeese-Polivka. The Museum would like to thank Max Wake and Jones National Bank and Trust Company for their generous support of the film and to Channel 10/11 CBS in Lincoln for the production of the film.
Pictures from the Museum....

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE: WWW.NENGM.ORG
Thank You to Our Sponsors

Museum Usage Sets Record in 2017

**TOTAL FOR 2017: 17,763 (last year 2016: 13,610) (+4,153)**

**Totals for Year:**

- Tours: 23 for 911 (avg. 40 per tour)
- Individual Visits: 12 months for 1,539 (avg. 118 per month)
  - Best month - July (221) Worst month - October (56)
- Education Classes: 19 for 1,668 (avg. 87 per educational visit)
- Fundraising Events: 2 for 359 (Night at Museum and Run to St. Lo Memorial 5K)
- NENG Museum Events: 28 events (minus July 4th) for 3,779 (avg. 134 per event)
  - July 4 Record 8,717 (single day record)
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

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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”.

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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.

In Memory......

The Museum lost some dear friends in 2017…..Stan Matzke was instrumental in making introductions to prospective donors to assist the Museum with major improvements…..Suzanne Kolterman brought in legislative spouses and helped promote the Museum at the state level. Our condolences to the families of Stan and Suzanne.