



The Patriot News

The Newsletter of the Maine Military Historical Society



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Maine Military Historical Society

33 State House Station – Camp Keyes
Augusta, Maine 04333-0033

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A Word From The President

Dear MMHS Members:

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. As we begin 2011, and we formulate our plans for the upcoming year I am pleased to announce that we will honor the 103rd Infantry Regiment by proclaiming this year, "The Year of the 103rd".

The 103rd was organized within the Maine Army National Guard prior to WW I and fought as part of the 26th "Yankee Division" in Aisne-Marne Offensive; St. Mihiel; Meuse-Argonne and the Defensive Sector in France.

In WW II it was assigned to the 43rd Division. The Division saw extensive combat in Guadalcanal; New Guinea; the Northern Solomon's and Luzon in the Philippines.

We will honor the 103rd veterans during the year in a variety of ways, such as a luncheon, award presentations and capturing their unique oral histories. More to follow.

The museum has been busy. We celebrated the Marine Corps Birthday in Nov, The National Guard Birthday in Dec, gave a tour to a delegation from Montenegro, and had an open house in support of Governor LePage's Inauguration.

As I step into my new role as President, I look forward to working with the Board of Directors and the membership on continuing the efforts to get our name out there, to improve the museum, and to increase our membership and donations.

Remember, if you have a few hours that you could give, we would be glad to hear from you.

Dave



Museum Celebrates Service Birthdays

By David Googins

On November 10th the Maine Military Historical Society and Museum celebrated the 234th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps by holding an open house.

Former Marines and many National Guard Soldiers were in attendance, as MG John Libby presented some Vietnam era Marines with long overdue decorations and certificates. This was followed by the Marine Corps Hymn and cutting of the cake.

On 13 Dec an open house was once again held to celebrate the 374th Birthday of the National Guard, originally called the Militia.

COL Michael McLaughlin presented challenge coins to the youngest active guardsman and the oldest active guardsman present as well as the oldest retiree present. Many Guard members and the Gorham Flag ladies were in attendance at this event.



COL Michael McLaughlin presents a Challenge Coin to SPC Sassman, the youngest Guardsman present.. (Photo by SSG Esther Kazian)

History of the 103rd Infantry Regiment

By SSG Esther Kazian

Originating in Bangor as the 2nd Maine Infantry, the oldest of the original companies dating back to 1851, the 103rd has a long and interesting history.

During the Civil War the regiment participated in the battle at Yorktown, the Peninsula Campaign, Gaines Mill, Malvern Hill, the second battle of Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville as part of the V Corps. Upon the expiration of its term of service all who would re-enlist and recruits were transferred to the 20th Maine regiments and thereafter during the Civil War the record of the 20th Maine is the record of the 2nd.

During the famous battle of Gettysburg while defending Little Round Top, the 20th Maine held the extreme left of the Union line and repulsed every attempt made to penetrate the line on the afternoon of July 2, 1863 as part of Hood's Division, Longstreet's 1st Confederate Corps, practically annihilating the 15th and 48th Alabama regiments.

During the Civil War the regiment was the first to be sent to battle and participated in the following engagements:

Bull Run, Peninsula, Valley, Manassas, Antietam,

Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, wilderness

Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Shenandoah

Appomattox, Virginia 1862, Virginia 1863, Louisiana 1864

On June 16, 1880 the regiment was reorganized as the 2nd Infantry.

The regiment was again called into Federal service on June 18, 1916 and served along the Texas border from June 29 through October 25, 1916. Activated for service in World War I on April 13, 1917, they assembled at Westfield, Massachusetts as part of the 52nd Brigade, 26th Division and were consolidated with the 1st New Hampshire Infantry later to be redesignated the 103rd on August 22nd, 1917. The regiment entered the front lines on February 8, 1918 and until the Armistice on November 11, 1918 they were constantly at the front. During World War I the regiment served overseas and participated in the following battles:

**Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne
Ile de France 1918, Lorraine 1918**

They returned on April 28, 1919 and were reorganized as the 3rd Infantry and redesignated as the 103rd Infantry on January 1, 1922.

When called into service for World War II, the 103rd became part of the 43rd Infantry Division. During this conflict the 103rd took part in four major engagements: Guadalcanal, North Solomons, New Guinea and Luzon. They were the first outfit to reach the Ipo Dam which controlled one third of the water supply for the city of Manila in addition to being one of the few regiments of the United States Army which actually made "Target Tokyo".



103rd Infantry Regiment Crest

The 103rd lineage continued on when it became the 20th Armor in the 1950's and early 60's and later transitioned into today's 133rd Engineer Battalion.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

THE MMHS WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME:

GARY & BRENDA BUCK
CHRISTOPHER ARMSTRONG
MARVIN MILBURY
ROBERT LETELLIER
SAUL GOLDBERG

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2011 BOARD MEETINGS

PLACE: MMHS MUSEUM

TIME: 4:00 PM , 2ND TUESDAY OF MAR, MAY, JUN, SEP, OCT, NOV

WOMEN VETERANS PLAQUE DEDICATION

PLACE: HALL OF FLAGS, STATE CAPITAL

TIME: 18 FEBRUARY 2011, 2:00 PM

Know of a special event? Please let us know so that we can inform our membership.

Dates in Military History

JANUARY

1777- General George Washington captured Princeton, N.J. from the British Army.

1942 – General Douglas MacArthur was compelled to evacuate his troops as Japanese forces captured Manila, in the Philippines.

1945 – Battle of the Bulge which began 16 Dec 1944, ends in German defeat

1951 – Chinese Communist forces captured Seoul, Korea from United Nations Troops.

1954 – USS Nautilus, the first atomic submarine in the U.S. Navy was launched at Groton, C.T.

1967 – Operation Cedar Falls began against the communist held Iron-Triangle area north of Saigon.

FEBRUARY

1704 – Abenaki Indians attacked the frontier settlement at Deerfield, MA , massacring more than 50 people.

1782 – British House of Commons voted to end further fighting against the former British colonies in America.

1898 – The Battleship Maine was sunk following an explosion in Havana, Cuba.

1943 – Women's Marine Corps Auxiliary established.

1943 – General Rommels Afrika Corps defeated and threw back American forces during the battle of Kasserine Pass, in Tunisia, North Africa.

1945 – The U.S. Marines Invade Iwo Jima.

MARCH

1776 – British evacuate Boston after American troops occupied and fortified Dorchester Heights, overlooking the city.

1812 –Congress authorized the first war bonds to help finance the war of 1812

1865 - Confederate soldiers under the command of General Lee, tried but failed, to break through the union lines at the siege of Petersburg, V.A.

1960 – First Women Paratrooper

1965 – First U.S. ground combat force, the 3500 man 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade arrived at Danang, South Vietnam.

1966 – 2,000 North Vietnamese troops attacked a Green Beret camp in the Ashau valley of South Vietnam, killing 200 soldiers

Maine Women Veterans Recognition Plaque

By Peter Ogden

In honor of Maine Women Veterans, the 124th Legislature passed a Resolution to arrange for a plaque to be designed and permanently placed in the State House. The plaque will be placed in the Hall of Flags in a prominent position among existing plaques honoring veterans of World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

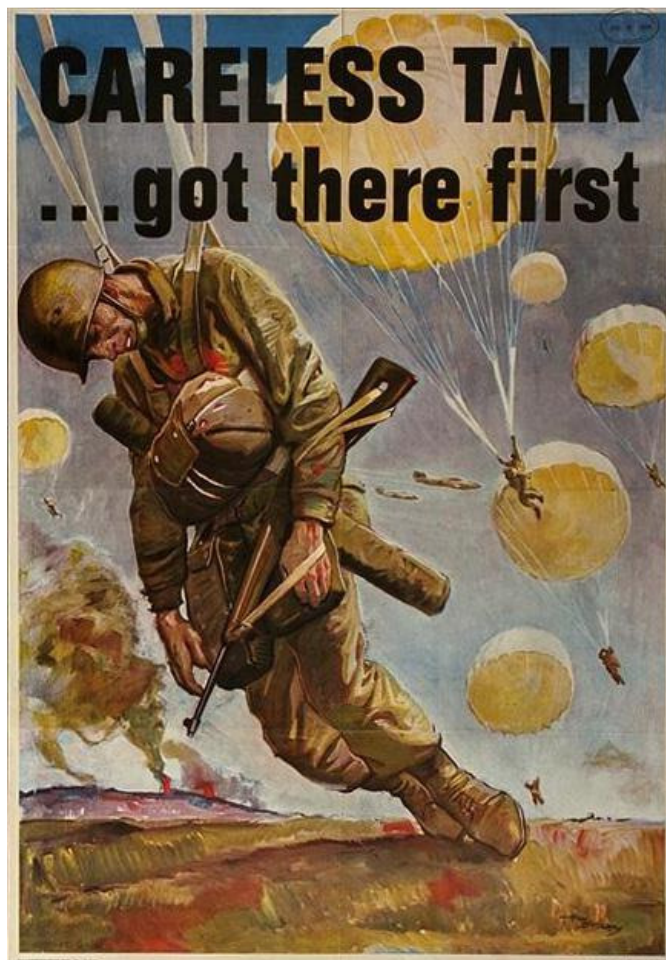


After months of planning, a design depicting Maine women who served in different U.S. Military capacities over four centuries was chosen. This included the 18th century – Hannah Watts Weston, a Revolutionary War patriot; 19th Century – Emily W. Dana, Civil War Union Army Nurse; 20th Century – Patricia A. (Chadwick) Erickson, WW II Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP); and 21st Century – Annette M. Bachman, War on Terrorism, Maine Army National Guard.

The plaque is being totally funded through private donations.

The Plaque will be dedicated on February 18, 2011 in the Hall of Flags at the State Capitol. The ceremony will take place at 2:00 PM. We are still fundraising in order to have enough money to provide each living women veteran (over 10,000) a coin that is struck in the likeness of the plaque.

For those who would like to help us honor Maine's Women Veterans please contact Maine Veterans' Services for more details or call Peter Ogden or Nancy Plourde at 626-4464.



Admin Note

If you wish to receive information on the Maine Military Historical Societies on-going events or any updates on current happenings, please drop an email to Soraya Umphrey at soraya.thomas@us.army.mil.

Please be sure to send in any changes to your address or email address. It's important that we keep our records as current as possible.

Soraya Umphrey

“Axis Sally” a Maine Native

By David Googins

“Axis Sally” was born as Mildred Elizabeth Sisk to Mary Hewitson Sisk and Vincent Sisk on November 29, 1900 in Portland, Maine. They resided at 45 Park St.

In 1907, her father abandoned the young family and she then moved with her mother to Greenwich Village in New York City. When she was eleven her name was changed to Mildred Gillars, after her mother officially divorced Vincent Sisk and married Dr. Robert Bruce Gillars, a dentist. The family eventually moved to Ohio.

She graduated from High School in Conneaut, Ohio and enrolled at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware Ohio. She pursued a degree in dramatic arts, but failed to graduate.

She returned to New York and enrolled at Hunter College becoming romantically involved with Max Otto Koischwitz a German born professor.

Her stage career at a dead end, she traveled to Germany where she met up with Koischwitz who had renounced his U.S. citizenship and became an official in the Nazi radio service in charge of Propaganda.

He convinced her to make broadcasts for Hitler while living together in Berlin. Her propaganda program was known as “Home Sweet Home” aired daily and was heard all over Europe, the Mediterranean, North Africa and the U.S.

She referred to herself as “Midge at the mike”, however GI’s dubbed her “Axis Sally”. She would tease and taunt the American Military about their wives and sweethearts back in the States. She also played American songs interspersed with defeatist propaganda and anti-Semitic remarks and attacks on Franklin Roosevelt.

What turned out to be Gillars most infamous broadcast was entitled “Vision of an Invasion.” This radio drama, which depicted a failed Allied invasion, aired on May 11, 1944, several weeks before the D-Day landings in Normandy. For the broadcast Gillars portrayed an Ohio mother who experiences a vivid dream of her sons excruciating death on a ship destroyed by Germans as it attempts to cross the English Channel. It was specifically aimed at American troops stationed in England who would take part in the large scale military operation. The message was that the Allied soldiers who invaded Europe would face wholesale slaughter.

The broadcast was full of realistic and unnerving sound effects, including the cries of wounded soldiers and the sound of gunfire and explosions, creating the impression of a massacre. This would later prove to be her undoing in the American court.

After the defeat of Germany, Gillars was arrested and kept in detention for a year in Frankfurt until it was decided she would face trial. Returned to the U.S., she was incarcerated in the Washington D.C. District Jail and held without bond and charged with 10 counts of treason.

The trial lasted for six hectic weeks. Finally the jury found her guilty of one count of treason and Mildred received a 10 to 30 year prison sentence, a \$10,000 fine and would be eligible for parole after 10 years. She was transported to the Federal Women’s Reformatory in Alderson, West Virginia.



Mildred Gillars – “Axis Sally”

Becoming eligible for parole in 1959, she waived the right, preferring prison to life on the outside facing ridicule as a traitor. Two years later she applied for parole and it was granted. Having served 12 years she departed Alderson prison at the age of 60. Her post prison life was bleak and uneventful. She taught for awhile in a Roman Catholic school for girls in Columbus, Ohio, and then she returned to her old alma mater, Ohio Wesleyan and received a bachelor’s degree in speech. She returned to Columbus and taught languages at St. Joseph Academy.

Mildred Gillars died in Columbus, Ohio on June 25, 1988 at the age of 87.

PLEASE VISIT OUR PREFERRED VENDORS

As we get corporate sponsors, we will list these as preferred places to shop.

Letter From the Editor

We need Your Input!

We would like to ask all members for their personal stories, histories, pictures or events that they would like to have published within these pages. Maybe you have a funny story about Annual Training or a story about deployment or you would like to tell someone else's story.

Articles should be no more than 300 words. Any photos submitted should be JPG or BMP.

Please submit any articles or comments to:

David.Googins@us.army.mil



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