



Welcome Back to the New York State Military Museum

It has been nearly three years since the last edition of the Friends of the New York State Military Museum Newsletter. Certain matters caused this unfortunate pause, most pressing the COVID-19 pandemic. But through it all, the Museum has continued to operate in various ways, and while the Museum doors were closed to the public starting in March 2020, the Museum re-opened in July 2021 and has been up and running ever since.

In the meantime, since the last Newsletter, the Museum has added a temporary exhibit regarding the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; the exhibit is on loan from the New York State Museum. At right is a photo from the exhibit, which is a part of the aluminum facade of the World Trade Center Towers. Plans are also underway to create a permanent exhibit on the Global War on Terror, which will include, among other things, material regarding the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In addition, the postponed ceremony honoring 2020 Veteran of the Year Robert Van Pelt was combined with the ceremony for 2021 Veteran of the Year Garth Lloyd into a program held this past November. You can read about the ceremony on the inside of the Newsletter.



Veterans of the Year Ceremony Held in November 2021

A ceremony was held on Saturday, November 6, 2021, to honor two distinguished New York State military veterans: Robert W. Van Pelt, the 2020 Veteran of the Year, and Garth D. Lloyd, the 2021 Veteran of the Year. The ceremony honoring Robert Van Pelt was originally planned for 2020 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ceremony was held at the Elks Club in Saratoga Springs, NY. It was sponsored by the Friends of the New York State Military Museum and by the Association of US Army — Capital District of New York Chapter.

The recipients were introduced by BG (Ret) Barry Hartman, a Trustee of the Friends of the New York State Military Museum. The recipients were given various awards, presented by Roy McDonald, President of the Friends of the New York State Military Museum; SSG William Valenza, President of the Association of US Army— Capital District of New York Chapter; NYS Senator Jim Tedesco; Congresswoman Elise Stefanik (21st Congressional District, New York); and, Congressman Paul Tonko (20th Congressional District, New York).



Pictured from left to right are: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Van Pelt; Roy McDonald, President of Board of Trustees of the Friends; NYS Senator Jim Tedesco; Mr. and Mrs. Garth Lloyd and their son Adam; and, Barry Hartman, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Friends. (Photograph courtesy of Paul Fanning)

Robert W. Van Pelt, U.S. Army, Vietnam War, GWOT, served for 42 years in the Army of the United States. He began his Army career as a draftee in March 1969. While attending Basic Training, he reenlisted and was trained as a Fixed Station Automatic Digital Network Controller. After training, he was assigned to the First Signal Brigade in Phu Lam, Republic of Vietnam and assigned to the United States Army Strategic Communications Command at Camp Darby, Coltano, Italy, until December 1971.

Bob left active duty and joined the New York Army National Guard as a Multi-channel Radio Chief with the 187th Signal Group. He also served as communications chief for Company A, 3/109 Armor with the Tennessee Army National Guard. Later, he rejoined the New York Army National Guard, rising through the ranks to Sergeant Major in March 1987, and serving as operations Sergeant Major for the 187th Signal Brigade. He was appointed to Command Sergeant Major in October 1991 and served as the Command Sergeant Major for the 242nd Signal Battalion, 1-101st Cavalry, 187th Signal Brigade, 53rd Troop Command, and managed the Empire State Military Academy Signal School in Farmingdale (Long Island), NY. He was selected as the Division Command Sergeant Major for the 42nd Infantry (Rainbow) Division in 1998. In June 2001, Van Pelt was appointed Command Sergeant Major for the New York National Guard, holding that position until his retirement in June 2011.

Bob and his wife Debbie live in Malta, NY. They have two children and four grandchildren.

Garth D. Lloyd, SP4, U.S. Army, Vietnam, was drafted into the United States Army in 1969. He completed Basic Training at Fort Dix. After that, he was assigned to the 25th Infantry Division in Vietnam as an 11 Bravo, Infantryman. Garth was wounded in action by a booby trap on February 12, 1970. He was medically evacuated to the United States and medically discharged several months later as a Spec 4. For his actions in Vietnam, Garth was awarded the Purple Heart, Air Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and Good Conduct Medal.

After leaving the Army, Garth was a manager at R&B Tire Company from 1979 to 1988. From 1988 until his retirement in 2012, Garth worked at the water treatment plant of the City of Saratoga Springs.. Since 2013, Garth has been a volunteer with the Saratoga County Veterans Administration Mentor Program. In that role, he has been paired with disabled veterans, who he has mentored and helped for several years. He has been a docent at the New York State Military Museum since 2013. He has served on both the Docent Advisory Committee of the Museum and as an instructor for middle and high school students who visit the Museum through the Museum's Education Opportunity Program.

Garth is married to Diane. They live in Ballston Spa and have one son, Adam, and three grandchildren.

What visitors to the New York State Military Museum have been saying

Here are some comments, since the Museum re-opened, from the Museum guestbook:

“Liked the preservation of weapons and old relics.”

“Loved how it focuses on the people of the wars.”

“Great exhibits.”

“We loved all the artifacts.”

“Scavenger hunt was very fun!” [Refers to the activity which is offered to children]

“I loved interaction with veterans.” [Refers to the conversations which the docents often have with the visitors]

“I loved the medical exhibits.”

“Moved here from Boulder, Colorado in 2020; always wanted to come to the Museum!”

“Interesting [regarding] Civil War. Enjoyed reading everything.”

“Very informative. Great relics.”

“Made me proud to be a New Yorker.”

“Awesome!”

“It’s like a living textbook of American history.”

“Thank you for keeping our history alive.”

MUSEUM HOURS
Tuesday - Saturday
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
(Closed Sunday & Monday)

Research Center Hours:
Appointments are required.

The Museum is closed on all New York State & Federal Holidays.

Address:
61 Lake Avenue
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Phone: (518) 581-5100

Museum Store
phone: (518) 226-0490
(Tuesday thru Saturday, 11:00am to 4:00pm)

www.friendsofthenysmilitarymuseum.com

Education Opportunity Program Starting Up Again

Like many activities at the Museum, the Museum's Education Opportunity Program was suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Program is being resumed in May, and we are planning to continue with regular visits from local students thereafter.

The Program is coordinated by Bill Watkins, with the assistance of several of the Museum docents, who guide students through the Museum exhibits.

Typically, the students visit the Museum for approximately two hours. They tour the Museum under the guidance of the docents, who lead the students through the permanent exhibit areas of the Museum — Revolutionary War Era, 19th Century Call to Service, Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

The following groups of students are scheduled to visit the Museum in May:

May 5 — Latham Christian Academy (3rd through 6th graders)

May 19 — Stillwater School District (4th graders)

May 20 — Stillwater School District (5th graders)

May 25 — Schuylerville School District (4th graders)

May 26 — Schuylerville School District (5th graders).

The Friends extends its sincerest gratitude to the Stewart's Holiday Match program for two grants of \$1850.00 — one in 2021, and another in 2022 — for use by the Friends in connection with speakers and children's programming at the New York State Military Museum. Thank you so much to Stewart's Shops!

We thank the following people for their efforts in creating and/or distributing this edition of the Newsletter: Robert Kazalski, Fred Katz, Roy McDonald, Tim Sinnott, Bruce Farley, Garth Lloyd, Jim Gandy, Paul Fanning and Francis Crandall (Flight Creative Group).

New Docents at the Museum

Several new docents have joined the Museum since our last Newsletter. We would like to introduce you to one of the new docents here; we will introduce others in subsequent editions of the Newsletter:

Bill Cooney was born in Troy and grew up in Lansingburgh. He attended Siena College, where he majored in History and served in the ROTC. After graduating from Siena, Bill joined the United States Army in 1978 as an Armored Cavalry Officer and served with the 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 3rd Infantry Division on the East German border. He later attended the Military Intelligence Advanced Course at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and he is Airborne qualified.

After leaving the Army, in 1983, Bill received both a J.D. and an MBA from Georgetown University. He spent most of his career with GE Power Systems, first practicing commercial law and later working in gas and steam turbine business management. In his career, he had stints in many places around the world, including the United Kingdom, Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Bill is married, and he and his wife Karen have two children — Angelica and Alexander. (Photograph courtesy of Tim Sinnott)



Our next edition of the Newsletter will highlight the recent Vietnam Veterans Commemoration ceremony.