

VETERANS NEWS



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Lest we forget ...



Veterans of two wars are now prominently and permanently recalled at the museum of the Potter County Historical Society. The local Daughters of the American Revolution chapter has presented the society with a display that documents the Revolutionary War veterans whose final resting place was Potter County. Meanwhile, the Potter County Commissioners have donated a display that memorializes the eight Potter County men who died in the Korean War.

Documenting the background and gravesites of the county's Revolutionary War veterans has been one of the most ambitious projects in the history of the DAR Allegewi Chapter. Work dates back to the 1920s, when DAR members started seeking gravesites so bronze markers could be placed. Nearly a century later, the current membership set out to finish the task. Each man's service had to be authenticated by the National Society of the

DAR, using enlistment records, pension documents and other reliable sources. Gravesites also needed to be verified and located. Descendants were tracked down and the project all came together in 2015. None of the soldiers was native to the area; all moved here years after the war. They include:



Betty Wei, a member of the DAR Allegewi Chapter, is shown with the mahogany piece she donated to the Potter County Historical Society for the Revolutionary War display. It will house the commemorative soldiers donated to the museum by the local DAR unit.

--**Roger Edgecomb.** Born in 1757 at Norwich, Conn., he enlisted in the Continental Army three times before being discharged in 1779. He's buried at Lymansville. His monument, if any, has been lost.

--**Richard Ellis.** Born in 1760 at Ashfield, Mass., he was drafted in 1778 and was wounded in battle. He ended up in Ellisburg, where he built a saw mill, grist mill and tavern. He was married to two sisters from the Chilson family, who bore him a total of 19 children. Ellis is buried in Ellisburg.

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--**David Kibbe.** Born in 1745 at Enfield, Conn., he served from 1776 to 1783. Kibbe married twice and had eight children. He died at Whites Corners in 1835.

--**Major Isaac Lyman.** Born in 1759 at Lebanon, Conn., he had a storied military career. Married three times, he fathered 17 children. Major Lyman was an important figure in the founding of Potter County. He died at Lymansville (now Ladona) in 1827.

--**Isaac Phillips.** Born at Frederickstown, N.Y., in 1762, he enlisted at age 15 as a "drummer boy." Phillips is buried in the Clara Cemetery.

--**Amos Raymond.** This prominent Potter County resident was born in 1757 at Holden, Mass. He assisted in the capture of British General John Burgoyne at White Plains, N.Y. after the Second Battle of Saratoga. He ended up in Allegany Township, where he died in 1852. He is buried in Raymond Cemetery.

--**Israel Rickey.** He was born in Cortland Manor, N.Y., and enlisted to fight against British and Delaware Indian forces in 1775. In 1777, he was drafted. Late in life, Rickey moved to Potter County. He died in 1851 and is buried in Roulette.

--**Daniel Rooks Sr.** Born at Uxbridge, Mass., in 1764, he moved to Bingham Township, where he died in 1840. He is buried in the North Bingham Cemetery.

--**Joseph Throcmorton.** Born in Sussex County, N.J., in 1765, at age 15, he enlisted. Throcmorton took part in the Pennsylvania Insurrection and later served in the War of 1812. He became a ship carpenter and a farmer. In 1824, he moved to Hector Township. He's buried at Douglass Cemetery.

--**Salmon Hawley** served in the Connecticut militia as a private. He died in Daniels, Potter County, in 1842.

--**Joseph A. Carpenter** enlisted under the alias E.W. Carpenter in Massachusetts. Carpenter served throughout Maryland and Virginia and was at Yorktown, Va., when British Lieutenant General Lord Cornwallis surrendered to General George Washington, ending the war. He arrived in Potter County around 1850 and died in 1854 near Clara.

Korean War: no longer 'forgotten'

A display of mementos from Potter County's highly successful Korean War Veterans Recognition Dinner and Memorial Service has been available for public viewing at the F. W. Gunzburger County Office Building in Coudersport. Now, the display is being moved to the military wing of the Historical Society museum. Among its features is a series of photographs depicting the eight Potter County men who were killed in action: Paul M. Brown, Edward W. Duston, Lewis A. Guilds, John Goery, Donald T. Johnson, Robert I. Roberts, Gerald Lattin and Fred J. VanWhy. County officials worked with the U.S. Defense Department and other partners to hold the event in recognition of the Korean peace treaty's 60th anniversary. Potter County's ceremony was used as a model for other counties across the nation holding similar Korean War veterans' recognition events.



It's often called the "Forgotten War," but that doesn't apply in Potter County. All Korean War veterans were honored during a sold-out recognition dinner at American Legion Post 192 in Coudersport. Mementoes collected as part of that ceremony have been donated for permanent display at the Potter County Historical Society museum.

National veterans' committee sets sights high

Members of the National Veterans and Military Services Committee redoubled their efforts to effectively advocate for those who have served their country in uniform during their annual legislative conference earlier this year in Washington, D.C. Pennsylvania is represented on the committee by Potter County Commissioner Paul Heimel and Erie County Councilman Jay Breneman.

Potter County was singled out for special honors as a result of its 100-percent compliance with a Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund national initiative geared toward memorializing casualties of that war. Each of the eight men from Potter County who lost his life in the war is now recognized in the national archives with a photograph and a biographical sketch. Each casualty is also memorialized with a bridge named in his honor.



Committee members also met with two representatives of the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA) to learn how they can support the new Veterans Economic Community Initiative (VECI), creating partnerships to care for veterans, and the new "MyVA" program, which makes benefits and services more accessible.

Also during the conference, the group committed to a partnership with Army OneSource, designed to help county veterans service officers better assist vets through the use of data. The committee then heard presentations on two other programs for veterans -- Dreams for Veterans and Heroes with Hearing Loss – and shared best practices in place for addressing veterans' housing needs.

On the legislative front, committee members approved a resolution calling on Congress to fund free burial of spouses and dependants of veterans at veterans' cemeteries. A second resolution, calling for reinstatement of compulsory military service, failed by majority vote.



Lastly, committee members attended a Rural America Summit at the White House. Issues such as veterans' employment opportunities, economic development and substance abuse were discussed with representatives from the U.S. Dept. of Labor (DOL), U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, White House Economic Council, and White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Proposals that emerged from the summit will be compiled into a work plan that participants will begin to address in July. County representatives were charged with marshaling local resources to take advantage of the new federal initiatives. The National Veterans and Military Services Committee is an affiliate of the National Association of Counties.



News & Notes

VA expanding health care enrollment



Health care enrollment application period has been expanded by the VA for one year to approximately 545,000 veterans who have encountered difficulties in signing up for benefits. VA will contact veterans to confirm their continued interest in enrolling in VA health care and seek any information needed to complete their application. During the process, vets will be informed of new VA health care services, programs and resources. Potter County Veterans Affairs Director Will Worthington is available to assist. He can be reached at 814-274-8290, extension 210, or by email at wworthington@pottercountypa.net. On a related note, VA is now able to fund care for all veterans with hepatitis C, regardless of the stage of the patient's liver disease. The move follows increased funding from Congress along with reduced drug prices. Veterans can now turn to their local VA facility for treatment or can continue to receive treatment through the Choice Program.

Communication a key for reaching veterans

Service agencies can do a better job of connecting military veterans with benefits and services to which they're entitled. That's the premise behind a six-county survey being conducted by the Pa. Link to Aging and Disability Resources. Coordinator Mike Morelli, who is spearheading the project, points out that a high proportion of veterans are not well-informed about the help that's available to them. He's reaching out to Link's many partnering agencies to determine how to better serve veterans by referring them to the VA or other providers. The survey is being conducted in Potter, Cameron, McKean, Elk, Clearfield and Jefferson counties. Morelli can be reached at 814-389-7481.



Fund available for veterans' housing needs



Veterans facing difficult financial challenges may be able to qualify for help through the Emergency Solutions Initiative. A \$200,000 federal grant was recently received to help veterans from Potter, Cameron and Elk counties who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Help is available for veterans, regardless of discharge status, for overdue rent, security deposits, temporary rental assistance and case management. More information is available from Lisa Harris at 814-389-5065.

Potter County Veterans News is a publication of the Potter County Veterans Affairs Department. Copies are available for download from the county's website, pottercountypa.net. For more information, contact Paul Heimel at 814.274.8290, Ext. 203.