

## ARMY WARRANT OFFICER MUSEUM UPDATE



### Celebrating the first anniversary of the U.S. Warrant Officer Museum

By CW3 Pete Ray

US Army Warrant Officer Career College, Fort Novosel, AL

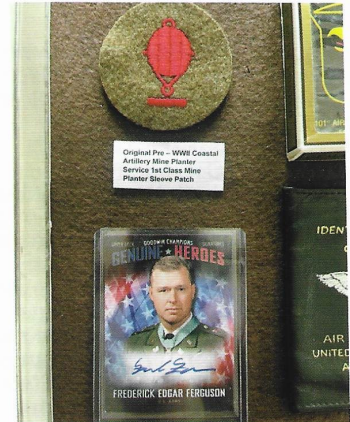
Greetings all!!

I would like to inform everyone that we have officially celebrated our first year of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Museum, located inside the Historic J.D. Holman House in Ozark, Alabama. The Warrant Officer Museum has a storied history. The original WOCS classes at Fort Wolters, Texas, established what was then known as the "Warrant Officer Hall of Fame" and would later move their artifacts to Fort Rucker, Alabama, and be renamed the Warrant Officer Museum. At that time, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the Warrant Officer Career Center [today known as the United States Army Warrant Officer Career College (USAWOCC)] maintained the upkeep until the early 2000s, when funding caused the museum to close.

For over a decade Warrant Officer historical artifacts and our story became scattered across the USAWOCC footprint. Some items were on display in various cases and hung on the walls of Swartworth Hall and Kliev Hall – two of the main buildings at the college, which were also named in honor of two epic Warrant

Officers. CW5 Sharon T. Swartworth was assigned to the Judge Advocate General's Office Headquarters, Department of the Army Pentagon, and was killed in action when a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter was shot down over Tikrit, Iraq, on 7 November 2003. She was 43 years old. Manfred L. Kliev was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action while engaged in military operations serving as an Instructor Pilot when his UH-1B helicopter was shot down while performing support missions in the Republic of Vietnam on 9 October 1964. Most other historical items were locked away in storage and tucked away in bins. A collective effort from Colonel Kevin McHugh (the current Commandant of the USAWOCC), cadre members, and volunteers from the Warrant Officer Association – "Above the Best Chapter," collectively began efforts to reinvigorate the concept of a Warrant Officer Museum.

In the summer of 2023, the city of Ozark, Alabama [Ozark Area Chamber of Commerce] reached out to Colonel Kevin McHugh through the Ozark Area Military Affairs Committee to request if there were any service members interested in volunteer



projects to help the City of Ozark. Colonel McHugh met with Mayor Mark Blankenship, and several Warrant Officer Candidates came together to rebuild an essential retaining wall at the Historic J.D. Holman House, one of the many neoclassical homes in the Wiregrass Region. The Holman House was built between 1912 and 1913 for Jesse DeCosta Holman, a prominent local merchant, and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1982. Mayer Blankenship and Colonel McHugh discussed further options for setting up a United States Army Warrant Officer Museum

to tell the history and heritage of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer. Today, the upper west wing is dedicated to the history of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer and maintained by the USAWOCC - Fort Novosel, Alabama. The official opening to the public was on 26 February 2024. The museum currently displays items that tell our story from the original U.S. Army Coastal Artillery Mine Planters Corps to present-day operations. Other displays showcase the Warrant Officer Medal of Honor Re-



8

NEWSLINER

April 2025

J. Novosel, Frederick E. Ferguson, and Louis R. Rocco) and the history of the female Warrant Officers dating back to the first female, Olive Hoskins. The museum also features Don Stivers "Let Go" and "The Quiet Professional" paintings and the Warrant Officer Song by Al Curving. We also have many other items on display, and even an entire side is dedicated to the history of the 1st Warrant Officer Company. If you are ever in the Fort Novosel area and have time to check out the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Museum, it is located at 285 East Broad Street, Ozark, Alabama 36360. If you have any items you would like to be displayed, please feel free to contact me at Pete Ray (716) 713-0849 or by email: [pete.ray131@gmail.com](mailto:pete.ray131@gmail.com). Lastly, if you are in the area and would like me to meet you, I will gladly free up some time to take you on a tour of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Museum. 🇺🇸

