



wistariahurst

HOLYOKE'S MUSEUM & GARDENS

Dec 12, 2022

MA SHRAB FINAL REPORT

This Veterans' Heritage Preservation project had several goals of 1) creating an exhibit of military uniforms; 2) prepare for long-term storage of the same military uniforms, along with flags and 3) collection of Oral Histories of Holyoke Veterans

With the assistance of UMass History Student Nicholas Anderson we were able to research the uniforms, create exhibit labels, and display 15 uniforms from the Civil War to 2019. What we thought would be a one time summer exhibit actually increased for the exhibit to be shown at the War Memorial Building for Veterans Day services and some are now on permanent display at the War Memorial Building. The exhibit has appropriate mannequins for each uniform, researched and bi-lingual labels, and includes reproduction period posters. Attendance to the Exhibit from it's opening in May until the end of August at Wistariahurst was 220 people. Now, with the exhibit in place at the War Memorial Building for Veterans Day Observances, an additional 400 people have seen the exhibit.

All of the uniforms located at the Holyoke Veterans Services at the War Memorial Building have been inventoried, labeled and cataloged into an excel spreadsheet with images. Any uniforms, or associated accessories, not on display are archivally housed in boxes wrapped in unbuffered tissue. Each box is labeled with images for easy identification without having to rummage through the box. Additionally, one museum display case was purchased to display on rotation, two uniforms in the Veterans Services entry way. This locked display case has not only added security to some significant items, but projects an image of respect and honor for all the soldiers who have worn uniforms and served. Thus it has boosted the morale of those veterans in need of assistance, coming into the Veterans Services Department.

All flags in the Holyoke Veterans Services "Flag Room" have been cataloged, labeled, and have archival cotton sleeves sewn onto them for proper support during display. A new, appropriate, display system has been installed for the Flag Room so the flags are no longer handled, or draped inappropriately for long periods of time. Any flags of significance in the collection not on display have been housed in archival boxes.

We were able to collect and transcribe seven hour long oral histories from Holyoke Veterans, including one Veteran of World War II, and one veteran from the Korean Conflict. Other interviews include a nun who served as a reservist at Barnes Air Reserve Base, a helicopter pilot, Viet Nam vet and many others. Although we did not meet our goal of eight to ten interview, we feel the quality of these interviews are high and will attract the interest of the public and researchers. By training local community members to conduct these interviews, it was another way to engage our community in learning and sharing Veterans' history. All of the interviewees expressed how moved they were by hearing the stories of these soldiers.

With the help of a local veteran of color, we had a public panel discussion about race and discrimination in the military which attracted 46 people to attend and engage in a lively discussion.

Thank you MA SHRAB for the opportunity to work on such a meaningful project for Holyoke.

Penin Marshall



Curators Statement

Through the process of unpacking and displaying these uniforms I was forced to confront and redefine my understanding of military service. As a military historian, I am often presented with works that describe wars as multi-dimensional affairs that reflect larger geo-political issues but due to their scale, sometimes ignore the experiences of American service members. Working with the material history embedded in these uniforms allowed me to reevaluate how military history can be told so that veteran's experiences can be better understood. Their histories can be revisited through the biographies of former service members, and it can be retold through the uniforms and memorabilia that they once wore to better understand the gravity of their service. While this approach is not inherently new, the process of reanimating uniforms and taking incorporeal experiences and histories and making them tangible through interactions with physical examples of history was new to me. Through my interactions with these histories I believe my understanding of the U.S. military has become more developed, and I hope to share that understanding with Holyoke and the nation.

Through the use of historical military uniforms, this project seeks to answer questions of American identity and the importance of the military in the larger American culture. In addition, this exhibit hopes to redefine what service means to the nation and the Holyoke community. It declares that service is not a one-way road, it is a reciprocal relationship that relies on the support of all Americans to create a better society, one that seeks to truly understand and accept one another. A nation that can develop and evolve, however that must be done together.

~ Nicholas Anderson, Exhibit Curator

***“Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country’s cause.
Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves,
as he best can, the same cause.”***

Abraham Lincoln



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

**Jesus Pereira,
Holyoke Veterans' Services**

Rick Allen

**Quentin Donohue,
Holyoke High School**

Doug Griffin

Holyoke War Memorial Commission

**Matt Keagle,
Fort Ticonderoga**

Heather Leitl

Charly Olivera

Mrs. Lenora Tiggle

Dennis Picard

Joanne Picard

**Robert Vigneault,
Holyoke Community College**

Brianne Willette

Betsy Wood



PHOTOS OF THE EXHIBIT IN PROCESS OF INSTALLATION



Navy Veteran with her uniforms

EXHIBIT OPENING PHOTOGRAPHS



Panelists and Moderator for the "I was a Black G.I" discussion panel

EXHIBIT ON DISPLAY AT HOLYOKE VETERANS SERVICES AT THE WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING



INITIAL CONDITION OF THE UNIFORMS.



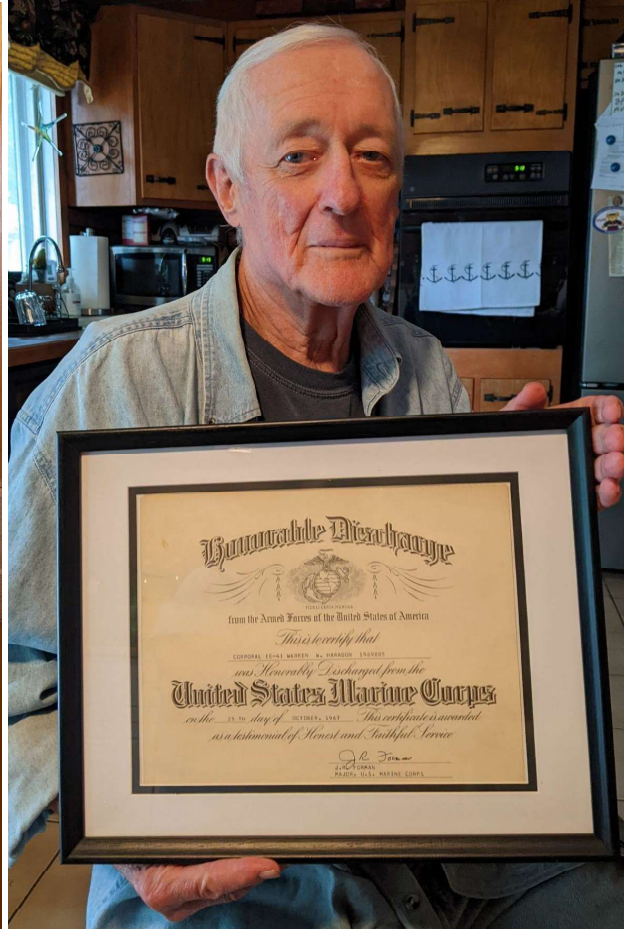
UNIFORMS LABELED AND IN ARCHIVAL BOXES (Shelving is on its way)



A COUPLE OF OUR ORAL HISTORY NARRATORS



Sister Judy Rosenthal



Warren Haradon

Veterans needed to 'record history'

HOLYOKE – Recently, the Massachusetts State Historic Records Advisory Board (MASHRAB) awarded their Veterans' Heritage Preservation grant of \$15,000 to Wistariahurst in collaboration with Holyoke Veterans' Services. This grant, along with a Holyoke Local Cultural Council grant will support the upcoming Veterans Uniform Exhibit and the collecting of 8 - 10 oral histories of Holyoke Veterans along with some preservation projects.

Wistariahurst is now looking for Veterans willing to share their military story through an oral history interview. These interviews will be conducted by volunteer interviewers who have been trained in oral history best practices. Veterans have the choice of being video or audio recorded. We are looking for Holyoke Veterans of all ages who have served in a variety of branches of the military and who served at different periods of time. Interviews would be conducted between April and the end of June. Wistariahurst will provide recording technology and transcription. Recordings will be held at Wistariahurst and made available for public viewing and research as a transcript and/or as a

digital recording.

"We were extremely thankful to these funders to receive their support and are excited to get started with this oral history project," says Penni Martorell project coordinator and curator at Wistariahurst. "Oral history interviews are rich sources of information because of their personal nature." "This is a great opportunity for Veterans, young and old" states Jesus Pereira, Director of Holyoke Veterans's Services. "It is a chance for Holyoke Vets to share their stories, and educate future generations about their experiences."

If you are interested in participating as a Veteran to be interviewed, please contact Penni Martorell at martorell@holyoke.org, 413-322-5660 or Jesus Pereira at pereiraj@holyoke.org, 413-322-5630.

The Veterans' Heritage Preservation grant program is offered through support from the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth and the Massachusetts General Court. Activities of the MA SHRAB are also supported by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).

SHRAB VETERANS HERITAGE GRANT BUDGET

Local Cultural Council Award \$15,000

All Events to take place before September 2022

Send Receipts to Holyoke LCC for reimbursement

Grant Budget

Stipend for discussion Panelists			\$400.00	POs 20231359, 1335, 1334, 1333,		\$14,600.00
Stipend for Doug Griffin Panel Coordinator			\$500.00	PO20231360		\$14,100.00
Oral Historians (\$100 each interview) Interviews each 8 interviews		\$900.00	\$400.00	Multiple POs		\$13,700.00
Stipend for 8 Vet Interviewees (\$100 from SHRAB) See LCC grant for the other \$50		\$800.00	\$700.00	Multiple POs		\$13,000.00
Transcription Services (\$1.2/min)		\$648.00	\$505.20	Multiple POs		\$12,494.80
Stipend for Exhibit Researcher		\$400.00	\$400.00	PO 20222403		\$12,094.80
12 Mannequins for Uniform Exhibit		\$3,600.00	\$732.18	PO 20222406		\$11,362.62
Toner and Supplies for Exhibit, and cataloging			\$599.48	PO 20231045		\$10,763.14
Mannequins for Display at Vet Services		\$3,000.00	\$3,996.49	PO 20231048		\$6,766.65
1 Museum Display case for uniforms		\$3,600.00	\$4,290.00	PO 20222964		\$2,476.65
Museum Display Supplies			\$182.50	PO In Process		\$2,294.15
20 Archival Textile Storage Boxes and Archival Tissue for Uniform Storage		\$1,703.00	\$723.69	PO 20230883		\$1,570.46
Archival Storage Boxes for Flags		\$125.00	\$644.23	PO 20231152		\$926.23
Additional Tissue		\$200.00	\$129.24	PO20231264		\$796.99
Flag Display Materials for 20 flags		\$1,684.00	\$753.19	PO 20230689		\$43.80
Exhibit Opening - Kids Interactive			\$29.98	PO 20222775		\$13.82
						\$13.82
		Total Spent	\$14,986.18			
Matching In-kind Hours	391 hrs	x 34.97/hr	\$13,673.27	See attached breakdown of hours		
Matching Funds from Holyoke Local Cultural Council Grant			\$2,500.00	Stipend to Archive Interns, additional stipends to Vets, Translation, Printing and Supplies for Exhibit Panels and interactive elements		
Matching Funds from The Wistariahurst Foundation			\$5,000.00	Shelving, Challenge Coins for Vets, Luncheon for Veterans on Panel		

**SHRAB VETERANS HERITAGE GRANT
TAFF AND VOLUNTEER HOURS TRACKING**

Week Number	Week Ending (Saturday)	Penni Staff (150 hrs)	Pen notes re:Hours	Jesus Staff (10 hrs)	Jesus Notes re: Hours	Nicholas Exhibit & Research (80 hrs)	Textile & Other Vol. (20 hrs)	Archivist Intern Hours	Other Notes
Weeks 18 - 32 there was no volunteer activity on this project.									
Week 33	9/17/2022								
Week 34	9/24/2022			2.50	Orient Adra to War Memorial Bldg and Staff				
Week 35	10/1/2022	2.00	Move Mannequins and Exhibit to War Memorial Bldg				4.00		
Week 36	10/8/2022	8.00	Set up Exhibit for Doors Open Event				10.00	11.00	
Week 37	10/15/2022	15.00	Doors Open Event					14.00	
Week 38	10/22/2022	5.00	Bring New Mannequins to War Memorial					3.00	
Week 39	10/29/2022	6.00	Flag Sewing					6.00	
Week 40	11/5/2022	8.00	Start Dressing Mannequins					6.00	
Week 41	11/12/2022	15.00	Prep Exhibit for Veterans Day	8.50	Veterans Day Services			4.50	
Week 42	11/19/2022	4.00	Make Exhibit permanent					11.00	
Week 43	11/26/2022	15.00	Flag Sleeve Sewing					0.00	
Week 44	12/3/2022	15.00	Flag Sleeve Sewing and Hanging					0.50	
Week 45	12/10/2022	10.00	Grant budget balance and reporting					4.00	
Total Hours		200.00		21.00		85.00	35.00	60.00	401.00

Military uniforms exhibit opening at Holyoke Wistariahurst Museum

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Military uniforms exhibit opening at Holyoke Wistariahurst Museum

By [Dennis Hohenberger](#) | [Special to The Republican](#)

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum announced the launch of “Attention! Translating Uniforms, Understanding Service,” an exhibit featuring garb worn by the U.S. military over centuries.

The Tuesday, May 24, grand opening at 10:30 a.m. will feature a color guard and remarks by dignitaries.

A series of lectures and other events are planned over the summer, including a talk by Nicholas Anderson, the exhibit’s curator. In addition, Matthew Keagle, a curator at the Fort Ticonderoga Museum, will lead a June 15 discussion on “Dressing Independence: The Creation of American Military Dress.”

Programs also include a panel on “I am a Black Veteran: A Retrospective of Military Service 1960-2022” on July 9, a summertime concert and lawn picnic on the museum’s grounds, and a closing ceremony.

Local veterans and the Holyoke Veterans Services Department loaned out uniforms for the exhibit.

Anderson is a first-year graduate student in 19th and 20th-century American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He worked closely on the show with Penni Martorell, the museum’s curator and city historian.

Anderson credited former service members and Veterans Services Director Jesus Pereira for donating the 13 uniforms. “We’ve been working to preserve them and get them in the best condition possible,” he said.

All branches are represented except the newly created Space Force. Several uniforms date back to the Civil War, joining displays from the Great War, World War II, Korea, Vietnam and modern iterations.

A local veteran loaned her USS Carl Vinson uniform, a bright-red ensemble worn by culinary specialists during cooking competitions. The veteran also served on a submarine, according to Anderson.



A local veteran loaned their culinary specialist uniform worn while serving on the USS Carl Vinson.

“A lot of uniforms have detailed stories. You look at their ribbons and medals, and they take you where that veteran went,” Anderson said. A World War II Army Air Corp jacket notes service in Normandy, Northern Europe, Holland and the Rhineland.

“It was interesting to chart his time in the military, and his uniform also shows he was there for at least a year-and-a-half. He had a very complex military service,” he said. The exhibition also chronicles the evolution of women in the military.

Anderson, a Long Beach, California native, was resigned to classroom and research work before the invitation to curate the exhibit came along. “The work in the museum and having this experience has been fun for me. I enjoyed it and found it quite fulfilling,” he said.

Every medal, ribbon, and patch required research and verification on Anderson’s part. For example, two uniforms contained the “Ruptured Duck” patch, signifying military personnel honorably discharged.

“I didn’t find that out till later in my research and from looking through old ribbons no longer park of army standards,” Anderson noted. He admittedly “nerded out” at times as he unpacked the items. He added the uniforms represent American values and what it means to serve.

A display at the War Memorial Building on Appleton Street and a plaque at Veterans Park honor Holyoke’s three Medal of Honor [recipients](#): Raymond Beaudoin, John S. Mackenzie, and Joseph Mueller.

Anderson, 21, hoped the exhibit would promote a discussion about the complex nature of service. He wants the public to educate themselves on the medals and ribbons meanings. “So when you see somebody on the street, you can appreciate and understand what they’ve done for the country,” he said.



The exhibit's curator Nicholas Anderson and Holyoke City Historian Penni Martorell.

Martorell received a \$15,000 state Veterans Preservation Grant for the exhibit and associated programs. Activities include collecting oral histories from Holyoke service members.

She learned about the medals and ribbons and their significance and stories. The museum will properly preserve and store the uniforms when the exhibition ends. Part of the funding will pay for new display cases at the War Memorial Building.