



More than Scuttlebutt....

3d Quarter FY 2011

National Museum of the Marine Corps, 18900 Jefferson Davis Highway,
Triangle, Virginia 22172 www.usmcmuseum.org

April–June '11 Highlights:

- * 159,845 people visited the Museum during this quarter, making it the best 3d quarter numbers on record for the Museum.
- * SemperFind, the Museum's first scavenger hunt contest, was a big hit. Four observant hunters were rewarded with prizes. Next year's contest will begin in March.
- * Combat Artist Kristopher Battles was promoted to staff sergeant.
- * Winter holidays in June? Not really but the dates for those festive decorations and jolly old visitors have already been set. Check usmcmuseum.org for details.
- * The NMMC Facebook has more than 22,000 fans.

Visit www.usmcmuseum.org or join as a fan on Facebook to learn about exciting events at your community's museum.

Museum Staff Restore History in Home of Commandant

The National Museum of the Marine Corps acquires, preserves, and exhibits artifacts representing Marine Corps history from 1775 to the present. As part of its mission, the Museum is tasked with collections stewardship responsibilities at the Home of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, providing professional expertise and stewardship for the artifacts and works of art displayed there.

NMMC staff members are responsible for the care of 142 paintings, decorative arts objects, and furniture in the Home of the CMC. This work includes identifying specific needs of the individual objects, developing statements of work and appraisals, and conserving furniture and fine arts objects. Most recently the mission also included the deinstallation, movement, storage, and reinstallation of NMMC property at the home.

Staff worked with the outgoing Commandant Gen James T. and Mrs. Conway as well



Jennifer Castro works with contractors to unpack the shade for a Tiffany Lamp that once was owned by "President's Own" conductor and composer John Philip Sousa.



The Music Room at the Home of the Commandant after renovation is complete and artifacts have been reinstalled.

as the current Commandant, Gen James F. Amos and his wife. The project was led by Jennifer Castro, general collections curator. The team also included Gretchen Winterer, assistant general collections curator, Joan Thomas, art curator, and Vickie Stuart-Hill, assistant art curator.

Work began on the deinstallation on 14 October 2010. Reinstallation concluded June 2011, but that doesn't tell the whole story. The complex project involved two years of planning, contracting, and conservation. Staff members also had to advise Marine Barracks staff on care and handling issues and provide continuous briefings for the Commandant and his wife and staff.

Before the renovation work began, condition reports documented the current condition of all NMMC property in the Home of the Commandant.

(See *Artifacts Restored*, page 3)

Director's Log



NMMC Docent Tom Walsh explains an 1833 USMC period uniform to a young visitor at Joint Service Open House.

The Museum's strategic plan includes a vision statement: "To expand the Museum's sphere of influence and relevance beyond our walls." We are the Marine Corps' *national* museum; so, how do we make a difference nationally? We're pleased with our annual attendance levels topping a half-million, but that's a small audience when we consider the entire nation. The most immediate pages of the Museum's "to-do list" still involve improving and growing our programs and planning for Phase 2, but the staff is developing plans for reaching out to others on a broader scale.

NMMC staff enthusiastically participated in Marine Week again this year, and we staffed booths at the Joint Service Open House at Andrews Air Force Base and at the Society for Military History this summer. Our volunteer docents travel to military history and community venues throughout the mid-Atlantic, spreading the word about all we have to offer. Our educators visit Washington metropolitan area classrooms with teaching trunks and puppets. But those efforts still reach a limited audience. What more should we do in the decades ahead?

A distance learning feasibility study has given us some clues about how to reach teachers and students in more distant classrooms, and we are planning our first experiments in this regime of learning this fall. Traveling exhibits hosted by NMMC are a possibility. Maybe we should look at the old-fashioned idea of a tour mobile. NMMC staff recently visited a mobile exhibit hosted by the Library of Congress that takes that old but effective idea to a 21st century platform. More Museum publications about our collections will help bring those objects alive to people who can't travel to Virginia. Sharing our programs with other museums is a distinct possibility. And keeping up with Internet and social media platforms is essential. What ideas do you have? How can we make a difference nation-wide? This would be a good time to hear your ideas! We have noticed that our audience at the Museum isn't shy, so we're expecting some excellent feedback from you. Meanwhile, we'll keep our road show active and let you know when we might be in your neighborhood. Thank you for caring!



Sgt Janelle Lopez applies camouflage paint to a young visitor at Joint Service Open House.

NMMC Attends Society for Military History 2011 Conference

Representatives from the National Museum of the Marine Corps attended the 2011 Conference of the Society for Military History (SMH) hosted by the First Division Museum at Cantigny in Wheaton, IL, 9-11 June. The conference is an opportunity for an estimated 400 historians from government, academia, and other sources to network with members of the greater military history community.

The branch managers of Visitor Services and Curatorial Services exhibited Museum photos and publications while interacting with conference attendees and distributing literature from the Marine Corps History Division, Marine Corps Archives, and NMMC. Also in the room were exhibits from the American Battlefield Monuments Commission, Army Historical Foundation, Great War Society, National World War I Museum, Canadian War Museum, National World War II Museum, National Korean War Museum, National Vietnam War Museum, and various Wisconsin and Illinois State museums and living history groups. The exhibition area was popular and many ideas and experiences were shared. One common remark by visitors about the NMMC exhibit was that they had visited and enjoyed our Museum or they planned to visit NMMC on their next trip to the East Coast.

The conference activities included a military book fair and tours of the Cantigny Museum and other museums in Chicago, as well as 63 sessions on military topics ranging from the Greek era through modern times, including a paper by History Division staff member Beth Crumley. One highlight exhibit at the Cantigny Museum was the recent recovery and restoration of a Higgins Boat that ferried U.S. troops and equipment to the beach at Normandy in June 1944. Until the museum recently purchased it, this landing craft was the property of a fisherman in France. The conference banquet was held at the Cantigny Museum, one of the museums visited by the original exhibit designers of NMMC. Recently, members of the Cantigny Museum visited NMMC to study our exhibits as they plan to expand their facilities in the near future, bringing the relationship full circle.

The next SMH Conference will be hosted by the U.S. Army Historical Foundation during mid-May 2012 in Arlington, VA.

Museum Tour Motivates Officer Candidates

Every few months, hundreds of officer candidate uniforms mix with the usual backpacks, flip flops, and cameras of daily Museum patrons as candidates from the Officer Candidates School (OCS) on Quantico Marine Corps Base flood the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

Visiting the Museum gives the candidates an opportunity to witness the centuries of pride and traditions of the Corps. In addition to displaying its inspiring history, NMMC builds incentive for the intense OCS training ahead. The day at the Museum is used “as a motivational tool. This is their third week right before liberty. Once week four comes, they can drop on request. So in case they are thinking of giving up, this reminds them of their history, something they could become a part of,” says GySgt Jose Acero, a drill master at OCS.

The officer candidates take a tour, eat in the Mess Hall, and spend time browsing the exhibits. For some, this is their first time at the Museum. Others are seasoned visitors. “The first time I came to this Museum, I was seventeen. It opened my eyes and cemented my desire to join the Corps because I saw its tradition and how it had been built up for over two hundred years,” says officer candidate Evan Koehler.

After weeks of training, candidates can appreciate the Museum in a new light. The rigorous preparation in OCS makes the visit to the Museum more than a history lesson. “The facts were there, but now the ‘why’ is there,” says Koehler. The candidates witness the pride and history of the Corps they will represent for the rest of their lives when commissioned as officers at the end of the summer.

In just the few hours spent here, the candidates realize its enormous scope. “It’s a fantastic Museum,” said Koehler. When asked if he had any suggestions, Koehler responded that he wished they had more time to go through the galleries.

Acero says that the National Museum of the Marine Corps reveals to the candidates “what they have an opportunity to become a part of—the Marine Corps’ already great history. Now they are a part of the Marine Corps future.” The Museum conveys the rich history of the Corps to young officer candidates about to become a part of it. The story of the Marine Corps is told at the Museum, but these officers’ chapters have yet to be written.

Artifacts Restored (continued from page 1)

A professional appraiser valued Museum property in the CMC house to exceed 1.9 million dollars. NMMC provided specialized conservation for objects displayed in the house, such as paintings, frames, furniture, and upholstery. The contract conservators worked on more than 75 objects, including the Congressional medal awarded to Archibald Henderson in 1816, a Hepplewhite period mahogany English wine cooler, a rosewood music box, and a Tiffany floor lamp with Dragonfly pattern shade that belonged to John Phillip Sousa.



Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen James Amos gives his remarks during the Home of the Commandants ribbon cutting ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington 20 May . (Photo by Sgt Bobby J. Yarbrough)

One of the most interesting projects involved the conservation of four 19th century porcelain portrait miniatures of the Zeilin family, individually enclosed in thin brass oval frames originally housed within a larger wooden frame with acidic materials. The portraits are beautifully executed hand-colored photographic transfers on thin oval porcelain plaques. They feature images of BGen Jacob Zeilin (7th Commandant of the Marine Corps) and his wife, Virginia, their son, 2d Lt William Freeman Zeilin, and their daughter, Margaret Freeman Zeilin. The conservation was completed by local fine arts conservator Katja Gibson of Fine Art Restoration, under the direction of the NMMC staff.

The CMC’s house itself, designated a National Historical Landmark, is a Georgian Federalist design, whose architect was most likely George Hadfield, credited with designing the original Treasury Building and the Executive Offices in Washington, D.C. It was completed in 1806. In the fall of 2010, major renovation work began on the house to address failing flooring systems, major structural challenges, mechanical deficiencies, and security shortfalls not unexpected in a structure over 200 years old.

NMMC Takes the Museum beneath the Arch and Beyond at Marine Week St. Louis



Marine Week St. Louis, held 20-26 June 2011, gave the Museum team, including educators, Marines, and other staff, a chance to talk to the people of that wonderful city about the Museum and all we have to offer.

The entire team helped to staff the tent where the Museum's traveling exhibit and teaching trunk items were on display. Everyone, young and old, enjoyed trying on uniform items and talking art with Combat Artist SSgt Kristopher Battles. Many of visitors left ensuring us they would make it to the Museum some day in the near future.

Children at a Boys and Girls Club, the Demetrious Johnson Charitable Foundation, and the St. Louis Science Center were treated to "Marines in Space," the education team's puppet show about Marines aspiring to "dream big." Marines in period uniforms also interacted with the young people, sharing their experiences.

"Afghanistan, It's People, It's Army - and U.S. Marine Advisors," a collection of photographs by LtCol David Benhoff depicting the Marine Corps' mission to train the Afghan National Army and curated by the Museum, was also on display at a local St. Louis restaurant. The photos were such a hit that patrons were upset when the show was taken down.

Chesty, the Museum mascot, even put in some special appearances, much to the delight of children of all ages. The Museum had the opportunity to share NMMC with thousands of people.

