

Visitor Guide to Challenge Coins



The Museum of Augusta Military Academy



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Introduction—The Challenge Coin Concept

Coins have been given as souvenirs and rewards since Roman times. Tradition suggests that the modern challenge coin concept dates to the First World War. According to a legend, an American lieutenant in the Army Air Corps printed medallions to encourage *esprit de corps* among his men. One aviator was stripped of his tags and other identifiers when he crash-landed behind German lines. After giving the enemy the slip, he reemerged at the border. His French allies failed to recognize him, and only the medallion, hidden under his shirt, saved him from being shot as a spy.

Fifty years later in Vietnam, an Army Green Beret sergeant-major strove to unite his isolated and unheralded team of warriors. He had minted the oldest existing challenge coin, the Vietnam Green Beret. Men distinguished each other by this unconventional passport when they met deep in the jungles. Since then, hundreds of coins have been stamped with the mottos and insignia of military units. The concept has also spread to civilian organizations.

The coin check is a cherished custom in which military members share and compare coins in bars, compelling the “loser” to buy drinks for the rest of the group. Typically, older coins carry the weight of seniority, while officer coins carry the weight of rank. The loser is he who forgets to bring or hesitates to show his coin.

CHALLENGE COINS

#1 USS Indianapolis Commemorative

The sinking of the USS *Indianapolis* was one the worst disasters in America's naval history. The Fifth Fleet's flagship was returning from her secret mission delivering the uranium core of the atom bomb to Tinian Island, in preparation for the bombing of Japan. She was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine on July 30, 1945, cutting off her bow and sinking her in a brief 12 minutes. The explosion killed 300 of the crew of 1,196 outright. Over half the remaining men died in the four days they were adrift, from drowning, injuries, dehydration, salt-water saturation, and shark attacks. Due to communication failures, the *Indianapolis* was not officially declared missing. A U. S. Navy airman, Wilbur Gwinn, happened to sight the oil slick surrounding the drowning sailors while flying a patrol, and alerted his squadron commander. Multiple planes and aircraft participated in rescuing the 316 survivors. To avoid damaging morale, the U. S. government did not report the fate of the *Indianapolis* and her crew until after Japan's surrender. Eight survivors were still living in 2020.

Donated by Jim Belcher.



#2 Staunton Military Academy Museum

Staunton Military Academy was the largest of the many military preparatory schools operating in 20th century Virginia. William G. Kable, a veteran of the Confederate Army, founded the school in 1884, and ran it until his death in 1920. In 1904, a fire destroyed several buildings, but they were quickly rebuilt and expanded. Over time, over 19,000 cadets attended SMA, with attendance peaking at 665 in the 1966-67 school year. Famous alumni of the school include the 1964 Republican Presidential candidate Barry Goldwater, Jr. Famous teachers include Army Major Thomas Howie, who was killed while trying to liberate the town of St. Lo after the WWII Normandy invasion. Post-Vietnam anti-military sentiment and financial trouble led to the closure of the school in 1976. Its alumni maintain a museum at Staunton's Mary Baldwin College in conjunction with the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership, the only all-female cadet corps in America.

Unknown donor.



#3 USAA

The United Services Automobile Association provides home, auto, and life insurance to U.S. military personnel and their families. 25 Army officers founded the company in Texas in 1922. At the time, coverage for soldiers was almost impossible to obtain. Insurers rejected them based on their transient lives and high-risk jobs. By relying on each other's support, the officers overcame this problem. To this day, USAA has received no government money. It is a member-funded organization. The company offers a unique life insurance plan that covers death in combat. "Acts of war" are excluded from civilian policies, but for USAA's clients, they are an ever-present possibility. Today, USAA has expanded their market to include all branches of the service, their families, and qualifying veterans.

Unknown donor.



#4 Pacific Air Forces—Supply

The several Army Air Commands assigned to the Far East before WWII overlapped geographically, duplicated duties, and acted too slowly when the war began. Afterward, the jet age opened, and flight accelerated. Surprise attacks were more likely, but quick responses were easier. Unsleping global vigilance was required to prevent a disastrous clash with the communist powers. In 1957, the Pentagon replaced the complicated WWII organization with an integrated command responsible for the entire Pacific hemisphere. The Pacific Air Forces would be able to meet threats as they arose. As their first commander, General Lawrence Kuter, exhorted, “We have no time to get ready. We must be ready.” Today the U.S. Pacific Air Command is one of several Major Commands of the U.S. Air Force. Regional supply squadrons have equipped and provisioned its many bases since a reorganization the late 1990’s.

Donated by Goodloe Saunders.



#5 Congressional Medal of Honor Society—Gary Littrell

One of 248 men presented the Medal of Honor in the Vietnam War, Gary Littrell was a naturally-gifted fighter. During his rough-and-tumble childhood on a Kentucky farm, he watched a paratrooper demonstration at Fort Campbell and was inspired to join the Army. As a seventeen-year-old the ordeal of boot camp was insufficiently challenging—he had to put a few rocks in his boots in order to feel comfortable. After completing Ranger school, serving on Okinawa (and briefly in the Dominican Republic) Gary Littrell deployed to Vietnam. His knowledge of the language made him invaluable as an officer commanding a South Vietnamese Ranger battalion—especially on the night of April 4, 1970. A North Vietnamese force ten times the size of the battalion surrounded their hill, killing the commander and wounding the other two American officers. Only Littrell and the battalion surgeon were left to lead. For four days and nights, they directed artillery fire, rescued the wounded, rallied the disheartened South Vietnamese troops, and radioed American pilots overhead as they struck at the besiegers. Finally, the airstrikes cleared a path for 41 of the original 473 men to retreat from the hill. Littrell expected a modest decoration, but after three years of no recognition was convinced the Department of Defense had forgotten his exploits. He was deeply humbled to receive the Medal of Honor in 1973, which he wears in honor of his fallen comrades rather than himself.

Donated by Don Studer.



#6, #8 & #14 Second Marine Expeditionary Brigade

The Second Marine Expeditionary Brigade is a part of the Second Marine Division, which was formed in preparation for WWII, and fought on Guadalcanal, Tarawa, and Okinawa. Their divisional motto is "Follow me!" and their insignia a torch surrounded by the Southern Cross. In 1984, the Expeditionary Brigade was activated as a distinct unit within the division, based at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Deployed to Iraq during the 2003 invasion, they were designated "Task Force Tarawa," a reference to their Pacific Theater heritage. Brigadier General Lawrence Nicholson, an Augusta Military Academy alumnus, commanded the force during Operation Leatherneck, their 2010 deployment to Afghanistan.

Unknown donor.



#9 & #98 Adjutant General's Corps

Holding the second oldest title in the U. S. military, the Adjutant General brings administrative regularity to the armed services. George Washington created the position when he appointed Horatio Gates to advise him in the field. Although Gates' primary duty was in organizing the ragged and difficult American militia into an effective army, he also proved his worthiness by winning the decisive victory of Saratoga. Another noteworthy Adjutant General was the great Western explorer, Zebulon Pike. During the Civil War, the responsibilities of the Adjutant General's Corps shifted to handling the vast burden of military paperwork. They kept records on each enlisted man in the Union Army. By the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, they had developed modern staffing methods, but were not made a separate branch of service until 1950. During WWII, the Corps used electronics to record manpower and casualty statistics, and afterward seamlessly discharged six million soldiers. As part of the U.S. Army Human Resources Command (see #97), their current duties encompass mobilizing, deploying, and discharging troops, reporting casualties, delivering mail, and supporting morale.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#10 & #92 101st Airborne Division

“We few, we precious few, we band of brothers.”—Shakespeare, Henry V

Known as the “Band of Brothers,” the 101st Division is the only air assault division in the United States Army. Their first commander, Brigadier General William C. Lee, spoke to the unit as they were activated of their “rendezvous with destiny.” Lee echoed the words of President Franklin Roosevelt’s speech six years before, which encouraged Americans to prevail against the Great Depression. The division’s insignia, the eagle, symbolizes their ability to strike like a “thunderbolt from the skies.” As paratroopers, the Screaming Eagles would be the first division to set foot on French soil on D-Day. By destroying and capturing key objectives, they allowed the Allies to gain a foothold in enemy territory. One of the 101st Division’s finest moments came in Bastogne, Belgium, amidst the Battle of the Bulge. Christmastide found them surrounded, with a German commander demanding their surrender. The American commander, Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe, simply replied, “NUTS!” The division was eventually relieved. The 101st served a notable peacetime mission in 1957, securing the admission of black students to Little Rock, Arkansas schools. During seven years in Vietnam, they transitioned their means of attack from airplanes to helicopters.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#11 AMA Alumni Foundation

Charles S. Roller, Sr., a Confederate veteran, began teaching boys in 1865. Over the next fifteen years, his class transformed into the Augusta Military Academy, Virginia's oldest non-collegiate military school. The percentage of graduates who entered the military always equaled that of the general population, but soldierly discipline was believed to be a valuable preparation for civilian life also. Roller moved onto the campus in 1879, and traversed the ridges of Virginia and West Virginia, recruiting boarding students. Uniforms became obligatory in 1905. When Roller died in 1907, his sons Thomas and Charles, Jr. inherited the academy. AMA became part of the U.S. Army's Junior ROTC program in 1919. In the same year, a Cadet Waiter program was created in which poorer boys worked their way through school by doing needed chores. Attendance fell during the Depression years, but more than recovered during the postwar boom. In the optimistic atmosphere of the 1950's and early 60's, enrollment soared. However, state-funding cutbacks and Vietnam anti-military odium brought an end to AMA's glory days. An Alumni Foundation had existed since the 1920's, but was revived to help bolster the school's fortunes. The Foundation received non-profit status in 1977—too late to save the academy, which closed six years later. The Foundation still exists to preserve AMA's memory, award scholarships to descendants, contact living alumni, publish the *Bayonet* newsletter, and operate a museum in Charles S. Roller, Sr.'s house.

Unknown donor.



#12 USMC American Legion

The most influential veterans' organization in the U. S., the American Legion was first envisioned by Theodore Roosevelt's son, Lieutenant Colonel Ted Roosevelt Jr., while serving in WWI. A group of officers established the Legion in Paris after the war. Later, members received a Congressional charter and headquartered the organization in Indianapolis. To be a member, a veteran must have served at least one day's active duty in wartime, but not necessarily overseas. Distinguished accomplishments of the American Legion include lobbying for the creation of the U. S. Veterans' Bureau (later Administration) in 1921; drafting a code outlining flag etiquette, which Congress adopted in 1942; sponsoring the G. I. Bill after WWII; and contributing much of the funding for the Vietnam War Memorial (see #75). They have also instituted national youth programs in civics, public speaking, baseball, marksmanship, scouting, and emergency preparedness. In 2019, the American Legion celebrated their centenary.

Unknown donor.



#13 Support Our Troops

Ribbons carrying the rallying slogan “Support Our Troops” were popular during the Gulf, Iraq, and Afghan Wars. The slogan was printed on red, white, and blue for the U. S. military, red for the Canadian forces, or on yellow. Yellow ribbons are associated with constancy and patience in awaiting a loved one’s return, as in the 1917 song “She Wore A Yellow Ribbon” or the 1973 song, “Tie A Yellow Ribbon on the Old Oak Tree.” Some labeled “Support Our Troops” a blanket justification of U. S. war policy, but the slogan encourages support of all soldiers overseas, not a particular war.

Unknown donor.



#15 U. S. Army Reserve Ambassador

Congress authorized the U. S. Army Reserve as part of a reorganization act in 1920. The Reserve is composed of “warrior-citizens” who commit to serving their country part-time. They participate in military exercises and maneuvers, known as a “battle assembly,” one weekend per month, in addition to two weeks per year of annual training. In times of war or other crises, they may be called on for full-time service. Before WWII, America’s Regular Army was small, and the Reserve formidably increased her military capability. During the Cold War, an expanded Army assumed the duties of worldwide peacekeeping, while the Reserve strategically backed their endeavors. Later administrations reduced defense spending, giving the Reserve prominence once more as they deployed with the regulars to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Reserve Ambassador was created in 1998 to inform the public about the U. S. Army Reserve, its opportunities, and its mission.

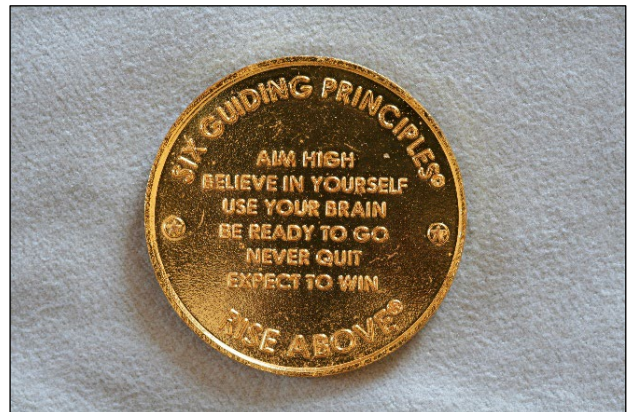
Unknown donor.



#16 & #17 Red Tail Angels—Tuskegee Airmen

Prior to WWII, African-Americans were mostly relegated to menial jobs in a segregated U.S. military. White officers believed blacks to be inferior in intelligence, and barred them from leadership roles, including flying. With the onset of war, however, the new Army Air Corps needed recruits, and civil rights groups pressured the U.S. government to include black men. In 1941, the 99th Pursuit Squadron was formed, with the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama as its training site. Booker T. Washington had founded this prestigious school in 1881 for the advancement of the black community. It boasted skilled aeronautics instructors and ideal flying conditions—a year-round warm climate and flat sandy ground. Training complete, the 99th deployed to North Africa. Although they were issued clumsy, second-hand fighter planes, the squadron nevertheless significantly threatened German forces on the ground and in the air. As the thrust of the war shifted to Italy, recent Tuskegee graduates joined them to form the 322nd Fighter Group. Often, Tuskegee Airmen guided American bombers deep into enemy territory. The Airmen earned the nickname of “Red Tail Angels” because bombers followed the distinctive red tails of their P-51 Mustangs (pictured on this coin) back to the lines. In all, the group flew 15,000 missions, shot down or destroyed 273 enemy planes, and earned 150 Distinguished Service Crosses. 66 Tuskegee Airmen were killed in action. Their heroism won support for the eventual desegregation of the U.S. military. Less than 200 Airmen still lived in 2020.

Unknown donor.



#18 Patriot Guard Riders

The Patriot Guard Riders is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization which ensures dignity and respect at memorial services honoring fallen military personnel, first responders, and honorably discharged veterans. Consisting mostly of motorcycle riders, they attend funeral services as invited guests of the family to show their respect for the deceased, their families, and their communities as well as to shield the mourning family and their friends from interruptions created by protesters.

Unknown donor.



#19 Riverside Military Academy Alumni Association

Riverside Military Academy was founded in Gainesville, Georgia, in 1907 as an all-male, military, college preparatory school for grades 7-12. Two Gainesville businessmen and professors, Haywood Jefferson Pearce and Azor Warner Van Hoose, Jr., gathered more than 30 local investors, and construction began in 1907. Classes began in the fall of 1908. By 1913 the 25-acre campus included two brick buildings and a small wooden cottage. That same year, Pearce hired Sandy Beaver, a young educator in Stone Mountain. Beaver's move to Gainesville was the beginning of a 56-year career at Riverside that was life-changing for many of the young men he influenced.

The purpose of RMA is “to develop virtuous and competent young men who are prepared for success in college and positions of responsibility thereafter. The academic and military programs combine to produce young men of character, sound judgment, and commitment. Riverside graduates will embody the characteristics of an educated and engaged citizen – one who is critical to the governance of a free republic.”

The Riverside Military Academy Alumni Coin was presented to the AMA collection by Bud Oakey, AMA '70. Bud, who attended AMA from 1968 through 1970 transferred to Riverside Military Academy (RMA) in Gainesville Georgia after his mom moved to Atlanta to be closer to her parents. As Bud has stayed close to those he attended AMA with, he to has stayed close to his brothers at RMA. As an active Military Academy, Bud has stayed engaged with the school and actively participated in the academy's growth both serving as the Chairman of the Alumni Council and serving on the school's Board of Trustees. When elected as Chairman of the Alumni Association Bud created the RMA Alumni Coin exhibited herein to represent the values he gained from both AMA and RMA. As each new alumni chairman creates their own coin, the alumni continue to use the coin Bud created presenting this coin to all graduating seniors during a formal presentation by alumni welcoming their new brothers into the brotherhood.

Donated by Daniel G. “Bud” Oakey



#20 Ad Astra Per Aspera Society

Augusta Military Academy's most illustrious organization began as a note jotted down on a troop ship in the Atlantic. In 1919, Charles Roller, Jr., was returning from service in WWI to run the boys' school he had inherited from his father. En route, he put to paper his idea for a society composed of "the ten best cadets" from each school year. On the same page he wrote the society's founding values: "We do not court popularity, but we do place service above self and loyalty next to Godliness."

It's not known why Roller waited six years to pick the charter members, but the first students were selected in 1925. Early on, Roller alone chose the cadets and handwrote their names into a ledger. By the time of his death in 1963, existing Ad Astras were choosing the new inductees. While not all years produced the full complement of 10 Roller envisioned (some years, as few as 3 were chosen), the society ultimately totaled 550 members by the time AMA closed in 1984.

Unknown donor.



#21 French D-Day 50th Anniversary Commemorative

On June 6, 1994, the Allies commemorated the 50th anniversary of the D-Day invasion of Normandy. Over 45,000 veterans of the landing revisited the beaches where fifty years before, they had spearheaded the liberation of Europe from the Nazis. Notable guests ranged from singer Vera Lynn to President Bill Clinton. Walter Cronkite, a D-Day veteran and famous newscaster, was master of ceremonies. The *Comite du Debarquement* (literally Committee of the Landing) holds smaller commemorations each year around sites such as the American Cemetery and Memorial on Omaha beach. Their motto, printed on this coin, is: *Un avenir meilleur... dans un monde en paix*, or “A better future... in a world at peace.”

Unknown donor.



#22 WWII Veteran Commemorative

Sixteen million men and women—11 percent of the U. S. population—served in World War Two, the largest percentage of Americans ever in uniform at one time. 39 percent volunteered, while 61 percent were drafted. 75 percent served overseas. One-third worked behind the lines at home or abroad, never seeing combat. More men were killed in WWII than in any other U.S. conflict. Less than half a percent of the total American population perished, however, compared to over 2 percent in the Civil War. 400,000 women served, mainly in support and administrative roles. Eight successive Presidents of the United States, from Dwight Eisenhower to George H. W. Bush, were WWII veterans. As of 2020, 300,000 veterans of the great struggle survived, all in their nineties or older. They have been called the “Greatest Generation” and the “men who saved the world.”

Unknown donor.



#23 American Legion Riders—U. S. Coast Guard

The American Legion Riders are a group of motorcycling Legion members who ride to raise money for various causes. Founded in 1993 by two veterans, they identify firmly as a Legion program rather than a separate club. They participate in nationwide events such as Rolling Thunder, Operation Wounded Warrior, and the American Legion's fundraising Legacy Run. The Riders escort departing military units to the airport and welcome returning units home from duty. They have donated thousands to schools, veterans' homes, VA and children's hospitals, and for scholarships. Offshoots of the Legion Riders include the Patriot Guard Riders (see #18), who accompany military funerals. This coin carries a Coast Guard insignia on the back, representing a Rider's branch of service.

Unknown donor.



#24 Special Operations Command—9-11 Commemorative

On September 11, 2001, Islamic terrorists hijacked and intentionally crashed three airliners into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. 2,977 American citizens and 372 international travelers were killed. Many responded heroically amid the destruction: the passengers who wrested a fourth plane from the terrorists, the New York policemen and firefighters who rescued victims beneath the rubble of the Twin Towers, and the Special Operations Command personnel who deployed on a manhunt for the perpetrators. Two days after the attacks, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld issued orders from the collapsed Pentagon mobilizing the Special Forces at a small Air Force base in Tampa, Florida. The Ground Zero response was a joint effort with the local emergency services departments. The subsequent Iraq War focused on the Special Forces, whose superior abilities surpassed the sheer strength of the regular army. Their deployment rate, mission scope, and public renown increased greatly. In May 2011, Navy SEALs, silently landing in the mountains of Pakistan, killed Osama Bin Laden, mastermind behind the 9-11 attacks.

Unknown donor.



#25 Master Paratrooper U. S. Army

In the Airborne divisions of the U.S. Army, a soldier achieves the rank of Master Paratrooper after making 65 jumps. 25 of these jumps must be executed with full combat gear, including rifle, cartridges, and canteen. Five known as “mass tactical jumps” confront the soldier with a problem to solve in a mock battle situation, testing skill and presence of mind. Four jumps must be made after dark, and at least one as jumpmaster. Jumpmasters are expert paratroopers who train recruits in airborne warfare. To qualify as a Master Paratrooper, a soldier must complete jumpmaster school. He must also demonstrate good character. Beginning with the 29th Infantry Division in August 1940, paratrooper units were critical to victory in WWII. Their importance has diminished in more recent wars due to the greater agility of the helicopter in air assault operations.

Unknown donor.



#26 Special Agent—U. S. Department of Commerce

Special agents of OEE are sworn Federal law enforcement officers with the authority to make arrests, execute search warrants, serve subpoenas, and detain and seize goods about to be illegally exported. OEE investigations are conducted to gather testimony and evidence of alleged or suspected violations of dual-use export control laws. OEE works closely with attorneys with the Department of Justice and the Office of Chief Counsel for Industry and Security to prosecute criminal and administrative cases.

Unknown donor.



#27 Army National Guard—War On Terror

The Army National Guard's training requirements are similar to the Army Reserves, but their responsibilities are different. While the Reserves share the linear command structure of the Active Army, the National Guard report to both federal and state governments. Within their respective states, they serve in times of civil unrest, natural disaster, or whenever first responders are overwhelmed by a crisis. They report to armories located in strategic places throughout the state. The governor, acting through the state's Adjutant General, is responsible for deployment. The President can also federalize the National Guard for domestic or overseas actions. The Guard began as loosely-organized local militias which protected the early American settlers from Indian attacks. The Massachusetts Bay Colony militia held its first formal muster in 1636. In 1916, Congress reorganized state militias into the National Guard. They are the oldest military units in America. During the War on Terror, a defense-funding shortage led the Department of Defense to convert the Guard to an operational force. Guardsmen and Reserves constituted 45 percent of military serving overseas.

Unknown donor.



#28 & 29 Marines—Toys for Tots Foundation

At Christmastime in 1947, Diane Hendricks wanted to donate several of her handcrafted dolls to needy children but was unable to find a group that would distribute them. Her husband, Marine Reserve Major Bill Hendricks, suggested “Start one!” He garnered support from fellow Marine Reserves stationed in Los Angeles, California, and together they delivered 5,000 toys. Hearing of their success, the Marine Commandant inaugurated a nationwide effort the following Christmas. Walt Disney painted the familiar train logo to promote their campaign, which has continued every year since, becoming a nonprofit foundation in 1991. Supporters have included the singer Nat King Cole and First Ladies Nancy Reagan, Barbara Bush, Michelle Obama, and Melania Trump. The Foundation had donated a total of 512 million toys by 2016.

Unknown donor.



#30 Pearl Harbor Survivors—35th Anniversary

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the naval base where the U.S. Pacific Fleet was stationed. Leaders had suspected the enemy might strike somewhere in the Pacific, but, due to its remote location, Pearl Harbor seemed an unlikely site. In fact, the United States had underestimated the size, strength, intelligence, and technical capability of Japanese forces. Japanese aircraft carriers and support vessels transported their deadly cargo to Hawaiian waters in complete radio silence to avoid interception. “The day that will live in infamy” found the Pearl Harbor base completely vulnerable. Aircraft attacked the fleet in two successive waves at 8:00 hours. Unprepared and initially stunned, men responded with great valor once alerted, manning battle stations, quenching fires, rescuing wounded, evacuating flaming and sinking ships, and keeping up a stream of anti-aircraft fire as long as anyone was left aboard. Inadequate artillery inflicted little damage on Japanese planes. However, by concentrating on the harbor, the attackers unwittingly spared our aircraft carriers, repair stations, fuel supplies, and other facilities. The total casualties amounted to 2,335 servicemen (mostly Navy) and 68 civilians. Many sailors gave their lives to allow others to escape; among fifteen Medals of Honor awarded, ten were posthumous. The Pearl Harbor Survivors Association was founded in 1958 for fellowship, commemoration, and education, and disbanded in 2011 due to the passing of many members. Two survivors still lived in 2019.

Unknown donor.



#31 USS Virginia

The USS *Virginia* has been dubbed “The Most Technologically Advanced Submarine in the World.” Officially launched in 2003, she was the first of the new Virginia class of lightweight, fast-attack, nuclear-propelled submarines that replaced the more cumbersome and expensive Seawolf craft of the late 1980’s. Nuclear submarines have guarded the seas since 1958, when the USS *Nautilus*, constructed 1951, accomplished her first mission at the North Pole, but the Virginia class truly takes underwater defense to a new level. *Virginia* was drafted using only computerized software, enabling designers to work speedily, and is wired throughout with fiber-optic cable. Instead of the traditional periscope, her crew uses infrared and camera systems to watch for enemies. Attached to the 377-foot hull are a diver’s pressure chamber and minisub for support of Navy SEAL missions. On this coin, USS *Virginia*’s seal appears in Navy colors of blue and gold, and shows the submarine sailing into the new millennium with George Washington as a figurehead, crowned by nine stars representing previous namesake vessels.

Unknown donor.



#32 USS John F. Kennedy

The USS *John F. Kennedy* was the last conventionally-powered aircraft carrier built by the U.S. Navy. Construction of her hull began in 1964. Caroline Kennedy, the assassinated President's nine-year-old daughter, christened the vessel, and in 1968, *John F. Kennedy* sailed on her maiden voyage. Initially designated an attack carrier, she was soon reclassified as a "multi-purpose" carrier, capable of anti-submarine warfare. She sailed peacetime missions to the Mediterranean and North Atlantic, as well as Gulf and Iraq War patrols in the Persian Gulf. The *Kennedy* was decommissioned in 2007. Her deck failed to meet standards and upgrades proved to be too costly. She was the last remaining aircraft carrier with potential to become a museum, as the nuclear powerplants of today's carriers damage the ship when disassembled. Preservation efforts failed due to lack of interest, and the Navy has consigned the *Kennedy* to the scrapyards. Her seal resembles the Kennedy family coat of arms, with the addition of wings, representing air power, and dolphins, representing freedom of the seas, vigilance, and friendship.

Unknown donor.



#33 U. S. Army Intelligence Support Activity—Ft. Belvoir

The U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command is based at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. Under its control falls the U.S. Army Intelligence Support Activity, sometimes known as the Secret Army of Northern Virginia, the Gray Fox, or simply the Activity. Much of the Activity's work is classified and little of their actual nature is known. The unit's first mission was an attempt to free the hostages in the Iran embassy in 1979. Although they often work with other government agencies such as the CIA, they prefer to operate exclusively under presidential command. A candidate for the Activity must be a special operations soldier such as a Navy SEAL or Army Green Beret. Activity soldiers are trained in scouting, radio tracking, piloting, and repairing any craft or vehicle, sniping, and hand-to-hand combat. They guard important figures, rescue hostages, and prepare battlefields for the Special Forces. Their seal portrays an American eagle clutching a Scottish claymore inscribed with the words "Send me" (Isaiah 6:8) and a Latin motto, *Veritas omnia vincula vincit*, or "Truth overcomes all bonds."

Loaned by Ben Zinkhan.



#34, #54, & #55 USMC Fifth Marines

Activated 1917, the Fifth Marine Regiment fought its first and deadliest battle at Belleau Wood in June 1918, when the German offensive approached Paris and the Marne River (see #7). The regiment defended this small but strategic forest at a staggering price—243 killed and wounded out of 260 men. When a French leader recommended retreat, Captain Lloyd Williams retorted: “Retreat, hell! We just got here!” The grateful French awarded the Fifth the Croix de Guerre for their sacrifice. In WWII, the regiment endured grim months on Guadalcanal, where the American troops barely held Henderson Airfield after their sea support failed. They were now answerable to the First Division (see #52). On Peleliu, they relieved the First’s other exhausted units late in the battle. Oliver P. Smith, the Fifth’s former commander, became Division Commander in WWII and Korea. As the Korean People’s Army pursued the U.S. Marines out of Chosin, Smith echoed the divisional motto, “Retreat, hell!” adding, “We’re not retreating, we’re just advancing in a different direction.” The Fifth Marines were the first unit to enter Iraq in 2003.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#35 Wisconsin—Lucky Traveler

The Sioux, Winnebago, and Menominee tribes inhabited Wisconsin until they were pushed westward by European encroachment. The French explorer Jean Nicolet arrived in 1634, and trading posts sprang up at Pepin and Prairie du Chien. Little permanent settlement occurred until the British gained control of Wisconsin after the French and Indian War. Green Bay, the state's oldest city, was founded in 1781. Two years later, the United States acquired Wisconsin as part of the Treaty of Paris, which recognized our independence from Great Britain. After land disputes with the Indians were resolved in series of bloody clashes, pioneers—primarily New Englanders, Germans, English, and Norwegians—flocked to the territory. Wisconsin achieved statehood in 1848. Important industries have included lead mining and logging, and more recently, dairy and brewing. The nickname “badger” describes the miners, while “cheese-head” evokes the dairy industry. The worst wildfire in American history erupted at the Peshtigo logging camp in 1871. Early Wisconsin politics reflected classical liberalism. Concerned abolitionists established the Republican party in a Ripon schoolhouse in response to the pro-slavery Kansas-Nebraska Act. U.S. Senator and Union general Carl Schurz immigrated to Wisconsin to realize the freedoms he had unsuccessfully fought for in his native Germany. His wife, Margarethe Schurz, started America's first kindergarten in her home. This “gold piece,” actually a brass alloy, is a traveler's memento from the state.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#36 U. S. Marine Corps—223rd Anniversary—Second Division

The most versatile of the Armed Forces, the U.S. Marine Corps conduct the land and air operations incident to naval warfare. On November 10, 1775, well before declaring independence, the Continental Congress authorized “two battalions for landing forces.” Legend has it that the Marines’ first commandant, Samuel Nicholas, began battalion recruiting in a Philadelphia tavern. In March 1776, Marines landed rowboats on the beaches of New Providence Island, Bahamas, capturing British cannon for the undersupplied Continental Army. Concerned about defending American shipping from the Barbary pirates, Congress reestablished the Marine Corps as a branch of the Navy in 1798. Determined to be “First to Fight,” the Marines have made 300 amphibious landings in their history. The National Security Act of 1947 elevated the Marine Commandant to membership in the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Corps continue to celebrate their birthday each year on November 10, 1775, with exhibits, parades, drills, and a cake-cutting ceremony.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#37 Doolittle Tokyo Raid Commemorative

After the devastating Pearl Harbor attacks (see #30), America was determined to respond. In the spring of 1942, the aircraft carrier *Hornet* escorted sixteen B-25 Mitchell bombers and 80 airmen to the Japanese coast. Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle led the raid in person. On April 18, 1942, the *Hornet*'s crew destroyed a Japanese patrol boat, but not before it could radio home a warning. Fearing premature detection, Doolittle ordered the raid to take off ten hours early. This decision meant flying a greater distance and quickly consuming limited gasoline supplies. The raiders accomplished their mission over Japan, bombing many strategic targets. They had intended to land in Allied China, but barely reached the mainland before their fuel evaporated. The crews bailed out before impact. Three were killed in bailout, seven were injured, and eight were captured by the Japanese. Of the eight captives, three were executed, one died in prison, and four were released at the end of the war. The surviving raiders escaped home with help from the beleaguered Chinese populace. Although the damage to their infrastructure was minimal, the Japanese were infuriated by the sudden reprisal. The Doolittle Raid was the only time in history that bombers have launched from an aircraft carrier. All the raiders received the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry, while Colonel Doolittle received the Medal of Honor.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#39 & #40 USMC Mom & Dad Coins

In recent decades, fifteen percent of the U.S. military is consistently deployed. Their families and parents long for their return. The loneliness and stress arising from absence and uncertainty must be recognized in order to be endured. Deployment may also entail altered relationships and new responsibilities. These two coins honor military parents for both temporary and eternal sacrifices. The reverse side of the “Father” coin reads: “They looked up to you as their hero. Now you can look up to them as yours.” The “Mother” coin declares: “It is because you protected them that they are so willing and able to protect you.”

Loaned by Don Studer.



#4I USMC Rifle Slogan

The Marine Rifleman's Creed was authored by Major-General William H. Rupertus shortly after Pearl Harbor. Rupertus is described as a gruff "old-school Marine," a leader in the battle of Peleliu, and later Commandant of Quantico, who died of a heart attack shortly before the end of WWII. The beginning of the creed is inscribed on this coin. It concludes: "My rifle and I are the defenders of my country. We are the masters of our enemy. We are the saviors of my life. So be it, until victory is America's, and there is no enemy, but peace!" The rifle and rifleman, and their relationship, are central to the Corps. Rupertus had considered writing an editorial expressing this idea but feared sounding didactic. He believed a creed would inspire the average soldier more deeply. All recruits still memorize the creed at boot camp. In addition, some Marines personalize their rifles by naming them.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#42 Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard lies on the border of Maine and New Hampshire. The timber-rich region once built ships for the king of England. During the Revolutionary War, Portsmouth's patriot shipbuilders constructed such legendary craft as John Paul Jones' sloop *Ranger*. In 1800, Congress made the Naval Shipyard a federal installation. Their projects have included building the *Kearsarge*, a half-steam, half-sail battleship that sunk the ferocious Confederate *Alabama*, launching L-8, the first and only WWI U.S. submarine, and pioneering, with the *Swordfish*, the teardrop-shaped, nuclear-powered modern submarine. In WWII they employed 23,000 people and broke their efficiency record by launching four submarines in one day. Today they are one of four remaining U.S. shipyards: Portsmouth, Norfolk, Puget Sound, and Pearl Harbor. A 2001 Supreme Court case resolved that Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is located in the state of Maine.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#43 Massanutten Military Academy

Founded in Woodstock by the Reform Church in 1899, Massanutten Military Academy is a coeducational military school for grades 5-12 plus one postgraduate year. In 1917, school president Howard Benchoff described the goal of a military program as “to train the boys with a discipline that is valuable and give them that easy and graceful carriage which is an accomplishment in any gentleman's claim to culture”. In 1930, the U.S. War Department made Massanutten a JROTC unit. The school motto is *Non Nobis Solum* (“Not for Ourselves Alone”).

Loaned by Don Studer.



#44 Roller Rifles

The Roller Rifles, Augusta Military Academy's crack drill team, were founded in 1946 by Charles S. Roller, Jr., then principal of the school. The name honors his son, Charles S. Roller III, who had been killed in a motorcycle crash in 1938. Roller, Jr., was their first Commander, while his grandchild Linda was their Honorary Vice Commander or figurehead. The team won drill competitions frequently, repeatedly outperforming at events like the Alexandria George Washington's Birthday Parade and the Winchester Apple Blossom Festival. Motion was synchronized; discipline was impeccable. Until AMA closed in 1984, the Roller Rifles were the face of the academy. Those of AMA's alumni who had participated in their school days revived the platoon in 2004. At their height, the New Roller Rifles had 40 members. They even submitted a bid to march in President Barack Obama's inaugural parade but were turned down in favor of more prestigious drill teams. As their members advanced in age, the Roller Rifles decided to decommission the unit in 2011. These coins were distributed to riflemen at the decommissioning ceremony.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#45 U. S. Army Recruiting Command—Command Sergeant Major

In 1822, Major-General Jacob Jennings Brown, commander of the U.S. Army, established the General Recruiting Service. In early America, volunteerism was considered the best way of raising an army. Leaders held that, in wartime, the natural impulse to defend the homeland prevails over selfish motives. During the Civil War, however, a shortage of volunteers led to the passage of draft laws. Modern warfare demanded a reliable supply of troops, and conscription would be reinstated in both World Wars. Greenville Clark, a patrician Harvard attorney, and paradoxically a dedicated advocate of world peace, convinced Congress to pass the Selective Service Act in June 1940. Harry Truman renewed the Act in 1948, and for fifteen years America had a peacetime draft. When a disproportionate number of draftees were killed in the unpopular Vietnam War, Richard Nixon moved to return America to an all-volunteer army. The Recruiting Command, which had been activated in 1964, took over procurement of troops in 1973. It handles advertising, recruiting, induction, examination, and administration. The Command Sergeant-Major coordinates these tasks.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#46 Bicentennial Commemorative Coin

Planning for the U.S. Bicentennial began a decade prior to the celebration. President Lyndon Johnson created the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission in 1966, but it dissolved after six years, unable to decide on the most suitable site for the festivities. Nixon changed the Commission to an Administration, which shifted the focus to multiple smaller, local celebrations. Philadelphia had initially floated ideas for a World's Fair similar to their wildly successful 1876 Centennial Exposition, including a grandiose model city showcasing the marvels of engineering. In the wake of the tumultuous 1960's, Nixon preferred to emphasize the nation's traditional values over its modern achievements, and critics accused the Bicentennial of backward-looking sentimentality. The ARBA also struggled to fairly portray the various groups involved in America's founding. Every city held its own unique events. The horse-drawn Wagon Train traversed the country from Washington State to Valley Forge, while the Freedom Train visited myriad towns along U.S. railroads. The Liberty Bell was moved from Independence Hall to a pavilion for easier viewing, where it remains today.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#47 Operation Iraqi Freedom

In 2003, the United States, already at war with Afghanistan, partnered with her allies in sending an ultimatum to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. This brutal dictator sympathized with 9-11 terrorist groups, and his regime was infamous for murdering and torturing political and religious dissenters. Many believed Iraq was secretly amassing chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. The goal of the March 2003 invasion was to overthrow Saddam, capture any lurking terrorists, and find and destroy the weapons of mass destruction. The campaign proceeded swiftly, with a sense almost of false ease, as Iraqi forces fled before the superior firepower of the American military. Baghdad was captured and Saddam toppled on April 9. Afterward the United States' primary objective became stabilizing the nation, a task easier said than done. Guerillas loyal to the old regime struck unexpectedly at American occupation, while the Sunni and Shiite sects of Islam, freed from Hussein's indiscriminate oppression, turned on each other. Committed to supporting Iraq's new democratic government, the U.S. did not withdraw its forces completely until December 2011. 4,287 American troops were killed in Iraq.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#48 Korea—The Forgotten War

Korea merits its name as “The Forgotten War.” The earlier Allied triumph in WWII and the later American discomfiture in Vietnam overshadowed it. The United States and the Soviet Union had divided Korea, which had been Japanese territory before the war. The Soviets aided North Korea in setting up a communist government. Meanwhile, with United Nations approval, the Americans promoted a South Korean republic. When the Chinese and Soviet-backed North Koreans invaded the republic, the U.S. was pledged to defend it. President Truman signed a U.N. order to interfere, rather than an outright declaration of war, but the results were the same. In the first eight weeks, the Korean People’s Army nearly pushed U.S. forces into the sea. General Douglas MacArthur of WWII fame liberated South Korea in a stunning campaign beginning with his amphibious landing at Inchon and supported by the new U.S. Air Force. By September 1950, the U.S. was preparing to attack North Korea. To avoid provoking the Soviets and Chinese, Truman blocked MacArthur from entering communist territory and eventually recalled him. In the Second Chinese Offensive, the U.S. was driven back to the 38th parallel. The war degenerated into a stalemate between equally-matched powers after December 1950. North Korea’s refusal to release prisoners of war and their distortion of prisoner death tolls prolonged the agony. Finally, in November 1952, President Eisenhower visited Korea to encourage peace talks. As in WWI, the fighting ended in an armistice—more of a truce than a treaty. Over 33,000 Americans were killed in the Korean War.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#49 Virginia 200th Anniversary Commemorative

Many states produced their own bicentennial challenge coins. This one depicts Virginia's epitomal "Sic semper tyrannis" seal, designed by the founding fathers George Mason and George Wythe. On the back, profiles of the eight presidents born in Virginia cluster around a picture of the original Williamsburg House of Burgesses, the oldest representative body in America. The 1976 bicentennial (see #46) paid homage to Virginia's integral role in founding the United States. George Washington received the honorary posthumous title "Commander of the Armies." On July 10, 1976, Queen Elizabeth II of England toured Monticello and the University of Virginia, where she dined in the Rotunda Dome Room with then-Governor Mills E. Godwin.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#50 Mystic Krewe of Louisianians

Krewes are exclusive social clubs that conduct Mardi Gras revelry in New Orleans. French and Spanish colonists brought Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, traditions to Louisiana. The festival, loosely based on the Catholic holiday, indulges guests before the stringent season of Lent begins. Paraders dressed in outlandish garb carry torches and fling coins, coconuts, and beads. Like high school students at a prom, the krewes nominate kings and queens of the pageants. Louisiana politicians in Washington, D.C. began planning their own Mardi Gras balls at city hotels as early as 1944, later forming the Mystic Krewe for the purpose. Jimmy Hayes, a U.S. Congressman, chaired the 1994 ball, “A Portrait of Louisiana.”

Loaned by Don Studer.



#51 Sons of Confederate Veterans

The Sons of Confederate Veterans originated in Richmond, VA in 1896. Membership is restricted to male descendants of Confederate soldiers. Their first president was the son of J.E.B. Stuart. A 1958 Act of Congress made Confederate veterans officially U.S. veterans, and the U.S. government distinguishes the SCV as a Veterans' Advocacy Group. Although affirming their admiration of their Southern ancestors and their virtues of courage, loyalty, and honor, the SCV identifies as non-racist and non-violent and tries to distance itself from "hate groups." They hold conferences for fellowship, publish materials for the dissemination of Southern history, and have vocally opposed the removal of Confederate flags, monuments, and statues.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#52 (slot reserved for future exhibit)

Vietnam servicemen account for one tenth of their generation. All in all, 8.7 million wore American uniform during the twenty-year period of hostilities, of which only 2.7 million were deployed to the country. Contrary to common beliefs, the Vietnam soldier tended to be a volunteer, not a draftee. Young people were inspired to join the military through the example of the previous generation and their shining victory in WWII. Only 25 percent of the troops were drafted, and 30 percent of those draftees were killed—a significant, but not shocking disparity. In all, 52,879 Americans were killed in action in Vietnam (see #71). Although less than one percent of the wounded died, they were three times likelier to be disabled than in WWII, due to advanced battlefield medicine and swift helicopter transport which enabled them to survive crippling injuries. In contrast with previous soldiers, Vietnam veterans fought in a misunderstood conflict and returned to face an insulting reception from their ungrateful countrymen. They also endured major problems with post-traumatic stress disorder and sickness caused by the chemical Agent Orange. Today, the ordeal the Vietnam veterans underwent to stanch the spread of communism is better appreciated. Roughly 610,000 are living in 2021.

Donated by Don Studer.



#53 USMC Corporal

The title “corporal,” dating to medieval wars, means “head of a body.” A corporal is a junior non-commissioned officer, the lowest-ranking in the military. Unlike commissioned officers (lieutenants and higher) who are graduates of ROTC, military, or civilian college, non-coms (corporals and sergeants) are privates of proven leadership ability. Superior officers depend on their skill in relating to the enlisted men and their expertise in fields such as artillery or communications. In the Marines, where small units independently perform specialized missions, a Corporal’s responsibilities are broader and his authority weightier than in other service branches. For a Corpsman, promotion to Corporal is a proud accomplishment.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#56 10th Transportation Battalion—Waterborne

Joint Base Langley-Eustis, a consolidated Air Force-Army installment in Hampton, Virginia, is home to the 10th Transportation Battalion, one of three similar units in the U.S. Army. The base's location at the mouth of the York River is well-suited for amphibious training. The 10th Battalion maintains Logistics Support Vehicles, the descendants of the Landing Ship Transports of D-Day fame, as well as numerous smaller landing craft. Used to move equipment, supplies, and troops ashore or between ports, LPVs are theoretically capable of crossing an ocean, although they sail too slowly to evade an enemy. During overseas wars, waterborne transport links inland forces to supply-chain ships. The 10th Battalion consists largely of "waterborne engineers" or boat mechanics, whose duty is to maintain craft ashore and at sea. They played a part in the WWII Italian campaign, Vietnam, and the 1991 Kuwait invasion. The eight-pointed wheel and star on the 10th Battalion's crest symbolize their ability to reach all points of the compass.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#57 U. S. Army Retired

The colorful Department of the Army emblem on this coin has graced official documents since 1947 but has only been used as a public seal since 1974. The emblem displays some various weapons of the U.S. Army throughout its history, including a cannon, cannonballs, and a pikestaff on the left, and a mortar, bombshells, and a musket on the right. In the center, a Roman cuirass lifts aloft a red Liberty cap, a symbol of the American Revolution, while a rattlesnake warns all comers: "This we'll defend." The drum, nearly hidden by the Stars and Stripes, alerts the public of the Army's intent to defend the United States.

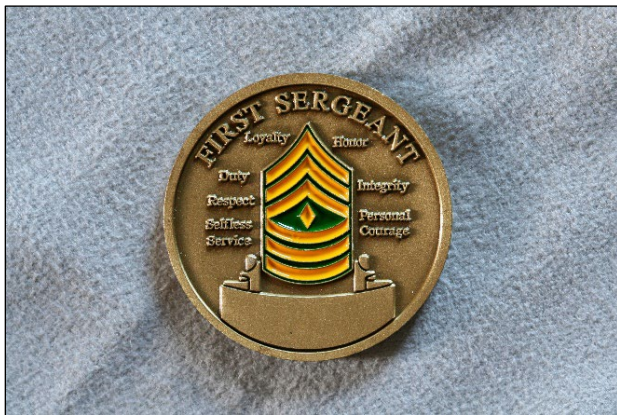
Loaned by Don Studer.



#58 U. S. Army First Sergeant

The diamonds below the yellow chevron on this coin indicate a First Sergeant. The first sergeant originated as the senior enlisted soldier in a company, the basic organizational unit in the Continental Army. In 1833, position pay was raised above that of a master sergeant, making it a separate rank. The first sergeant works with the Company Commander, usually a captain or lieutenant. While the company commander plans future operations, the first sergeant ensures daily orders are carried out. He forges his company into a formidable fighting force, drilling troops for combat, attending to personal problems, punishing disorderly conduct, overseeing enlisted promotions, mentoring junior N.C.O.s, and driving reenlistment campaigns. A first sergeant earns respect by holding himself to the same strenuous standard he expects from his men.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#59 POW-MIA Flag

Mary Hoff, wife of Navy pilot and Commander Michael G. Hoff, conceived of the iconic Prisoner of War-Missing in Action flag after her husband's plane was lost over Laos in 1970. It has become a national Congressional ensign, and has been the only flag other than the Stars and Stripes to fly over the White House. Mary Hoff contacted the Annin Flag Company in New Jersey with her idea, and an anonymous employee, later identified as Norman Heisley, drew the original design. Heisley modelled the gaunt prisoner of war on his Marine son, who was recovering from a bout of hepatitis. The harsh black-and-white color scheme of the flag evokes the black garb worn by American POWs in North Vietnamese camps (see #77), and more broadly reminds us of the privations borne by all prisoners of war. The fence and watchtower are reminiscent of the German POW camps of WWII. Mary Hoff was an early member of the League of POW/MIA families. Her husband's body was at last found in 1979. She died in 2015, aged eighty-five.

Donated by Don Studer.



#60 USMC First Marine Division—Association

The largest division in the U.S. Marine Corps was officially activated on February 1, 1941. For actions worldwide, they have earned a record nine Presidential Unit Citations, the highest unit award granted. They fought on Guadalcanal, Peleliu, and Okinawa in the Pacific theater, and occupied North China postwar where they first clashed with communist fighters. In Korea they participated in the Inchon landing and miraculously evacuated from mountainous “Frozen Chosin.” The First Division was the scourge of the Viet Cong in the 1968 Tet Offensive. Nor was their record dimmed in the Iraq War, when they launched a high-speed attack through Kuwait to Baghdad, captured Saddam Hussein’s birthplace of Tikrit, and defeated the insurgents at the urban Battle of Fallujah. The First’s insignia is a blue diamond overlaid with the Southern Cross (compare to the Second Marine Division insignia, #6), a red numeral one, and “Guadalcanal,” recalling their baptism by fire in WWII. During a 1943 furlough in Australia, “Waltzing Matilda” became the divisional march. WWII veterans founded the First Marine Division Association in 1947. Association camaraderie sweetens the often-bitter memories of combat survivors.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#61 U. S. Army Drill Sergeant

A drill sergeant's task is to mold a recruit into a professional fighter. To be selected to attend and to successfully complete Drill Sergeant Academy are among the highest achievements for a non-commissioned officer. Drill sergeants master the particulars of Basic Training, enforcing order down to buttons, buckles, and bedsheets. Ferocious taskmasters, they condition soldiers to the unquestioning obedience needed in an effective force. Their tough program also instills respect for others and pride in self, country, and mission. The Drill Sergeant's Creed exhorts them to "lead by example, never requiring any soldier to attempt any task I would not do myself." They appear "squared away," or uncompromisingly fit and trim, wearing the unique drill sergeant hat. First made in the Wild West, this hat was standard Army headgear from the 1870's until WWI and was readopted for drill sergeants in 1964. It is akin to that of a park ranger. The drill sergeant insignia shows a breastplate signifying readiness and a torch signifying liberty.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#62 U. S. Merchant Marine

The U.S. Merchant Marine refers collectively to the nation's civilian mariners and her privately and federally-owned cargo ships. Although the merchant fleet supports the armed forces, it is not itself a branch of service. During WWII, however, a merchant sailor's job was as critical to the war effort and as hazardous to himself as a serviceman's job. Innumerable U-boats prowled the Eastern Seaboard, and half the war's sinkings occurred off American shores. With the Navy engaged abroad, the undersized merchant service was defenseless at the war's outset. They nevertheless requested, and got, hundreds of civilian volunteers to transport vital war supplies. Torpedoes were a constant threat. U-boats sunk more merchant than navy ships, and some have estimated that Merchant Marine casualties were higher than those of the Marine Corps—about 8,300. In spite of their courage, WWII merchant sailors did not receive the same pay, credit, or adulation the armed and uniformed combatants enjoyed. Only in 1988 did Congress grant them veteran status. Today, Merchant Marine captains train at federal colleges such as the Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York, which was founded in the midst of the war, September 1943.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#63 U. S. Coast Guard

The U.S. Coast Guard is America's oldest "floating force." In 1790, Alexander Hamilton, concerned about the payment of the federal debt, proposed to Congress that ten cutters be built to enforce tariff laws. The ten ships were named the Revenue Cutter Service because of their rig. After 1808, Revenue Cutter Service patrols helped end the slave trade. In 1915, the RCS merged with the Life-Saving Service, which operated scattered coastal stations, to create the Coast Guard. In 1939, the Coast Guard assumed responsibility for lighthouses. They adopted the slogan of Life-Saving Service shore crews rowing into stormy seas to aid shipwrecked sailors: "You have to go out, but you don't have to come back!" The Coast Guard doubles as America's smallest armed force and her maritime law enforcement agency, falling under the command of the Navy in wartime and the control of the Department of Homeland Security in peacetime. They police American waters, apprehend drug smugglers and illegal immigrants, and monitor weather and tides. Since the Titanic disaster in 1912, the Coast Guard has prevented countless similar shipwrecks through their vigilant iceberg watch program. Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr. sums up the Coast Guard's mission: "We protect those on the sea. We protect America from threats delivered by sea, and we protect the sea itself."

Loaned by Don Studer.



#64 Bong WWII Heritage Center

America's deadliest flying ace, Richard Ira Bong, was raised on a farm near Superior, Wisconsin. He realized his longtime dream of flying through Civilian Pilot Training and joined the Army Air Corps at the outbreak of WWII. General Charles Kenney personally selected Bong to fight in the Fifth Air Force Squadron, attacking Japanese forces that had surrounded Australia. Bong flew over battles in New Guinea, the Molucca Islands, and the Philippines. Issued a P-38 Lightning, then the fastest plane in the world, he surprised enemies by plunging, striking, and rushing upwards out of reach. After destroying 40 Japanese planes, he received the Medal of Honor at the hands of General MacArthur. He was recalled home and married his sweetheart in February 1945. He had dubbed his P-38 "Marge" in her honor. Tragically, Richard Bong was killed on August 6, 1945, the day of the Hiroshima bombing, in the crash of an experimental Lockheed P-80 jet he was test-piloting. He was honored as a hero nationwide. The Bong WWII Heritage Center preserves "Marge" along with other artifacts in the town of Poplar, Wisconsin, where he is buried.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#65 Alaska Travel Coin

The United States purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867 for three cents an acre. At first, this vast territory seemed to many like a useless appendage to the continental U.S. Detractors nicknamed it “Seward’s Icebox” after Lincoln’s Secretary of State who had favored the acquisition. The 1896 Yukon Gold Rush revealed the value of Alaska’s natural resources. The state also yielded fish, fur, timber, oil, and natural gas. During WWII, Japan occupied two Alaskan islands, Attu and Kiska, and military presence swelled the peninsula’s population. The inhabitants voted for statehood in a 1946 referendum, and lobbied Congress vigorously to recognize it. Finally, President Eisenhower signed the Alaska Statehood Act, and on January 3, 1959, the territory entered the Union. This keepsake coin was redeemable for \$1 during the first year of statehood.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#66 USAF Lackland Air Force Base

As the need for flying crews became desperate in 1941, Brigadier-General Frank D. Lackland set aside space at Kelly Field, a Texas Army Air Corps base, to house and train them. The training base became a separate installation on July 4, 1942 and was named for Lackland in 1947. During the war, Lackland's recruits came from the Southwest and Gulf Coast regions; after the war, they arrived from every state. All enlisted airmen attended basic training in a central location, among the maze of hastily-erected barracks in San Antonio, the "Gateway to the Air Force." Until 1993, a majority of Air Force officers began their careers at Lackland's Officer Training School. Lackland's other functions have included teaching English to allied soldiers, training bomb-sniffing, search, and guard dogs, staffing a large base hospital, and advancing cryptography and cyber security. It is one of the few WWII air bases still open, and although the infrastructure has been modernized, many recruits lived in tents until the late 1960's. In 2001, Lackland absorbed the neighboring Kelly Air Force Base. On the back of this coin is the motto "Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom," attributed to Irish politician John Philpot Curran, and the slogan "Peace is our profession," adopted by the Cold War Strategic Air Command.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#67 USAF Davis Monthan Air Force Base

Named for two Tucson, Arizona aviators killed in plane crashes, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base dates from 1927. Tucson had already opened the world's first municipal airport and allotted the field for use as a military refueling station. In 1940, it became an Army Air Corps base, with Frank D. Lackland (see #66) as its first base commander, and it has since been headquarters and training site for a succession of bomber groups. In its first decades, Davis-Monthan experienced change at a supersonic pace. As WWII progressed, the B-17 Flying Fortress was succeeded by the B-24 Liberator, and then by the B-29 Superfortress, a triumph of engineering and the largest plane of the war. In 1949, the *Lucky Lady II*, a Davis-Monthan Superfortress, was the first aircraft to circumnavigate the globe non-stop. Davis-Monthan entered the jet age in 1953, acquiring Shooting Star trainers and Stratojet bombers. In 1960, the first Intercontinental Ballistic Missile wing was established there. Drones arrived as early as 1971. Davis-Monthan's fascinating history is documented in its eerie boneyard, a combined scrapyards and storage facility, which has received the nation's retired military aircraft for over 75 years.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#68 & #69 Bicentennial Tributes to the Army & Marine Corps

“1776-1976. In tribute to the Armed Services of the United States of America, Guardians of Liberty,” reads the inscription on the backs of these two coins. The laurel wreath surrounding the inscription symbolizes victory. A California business, the Lombardo Mint, stamped these coins as souvenirs for the 1976 Bicentennial (see #46).

Loaned by Don Studer.



#70 Fort McHenry National Monument

Revolutionary-era Fort Whetstone was refortified in 1803, and renamed for James McHenry, George Washington's Secretary of War. Star-shaped and designedly impregnable, the fort protected the harbor of Baltimore, then a shipping center and the third-largest city in America. In 1812, the United States declared war against Britain, who had been unjustly seizing and impressing American shipping and sailors. In August 1814, the British sailed into the Chesapeake Bay, landed an army, burned Washington, D.C., and moved on to capture Baltimore. The land forces were halted at the city's temporary earthworks. The British Navy then attacked Fort McHenry to gain control of the harbor. A tiny garrison of 1,000 valiantly rebuffed the attack and kept the "Star-Spangled Banner"—an enormous fifteen-star, fifteen stripe flag sewn by a local woman, Mary Pickersgill—flying until dawn. The sight of the flag inspired lawyer Francis Scott Key to write the National Anthem while interceding for a prisoner friend aboard a British ship. Discouraged by the stalwart American resistance, the British made permanent peace the following winter. In later years, a young Robert E. Lee oversaw expansion of Fort McHenry. During the Civil War, it housed Confederate prisoners of war, as well as Maryland's civilian Confederate sympathizers. The fort was the site of America's largest military hospital during WWI and the subsequent influenza pandemic. In 1933, the National Park service acquired Fort McHenry.

Loaned by Don Studer.



#71 - #74 Vietnam Armed Forces Coins

After the Vietnamese expelled their French colonizers in 1954, the communist faction gained control of the country north of the 17th parallel. The North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong guerilla fighters continually threatened the quasi-democratic southern regime, or Viet Minh. President Kennedy's administration wanted to counter communist aggression to prevent its spread throughout Asia, and in 1960, America began sending military advisers to Vietnam. The provoked North Vietnamese torpedoed the U.S. Navy destroyer *Maddox* on the stormy night of August 2, 1964. Although the *Maddox's* crew survived, the incident convinced an alarmed Congress to pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, committing the U.S. to military escalation in Vietnam. Because a United Nations treaty prohibited invading North Vietnam by land, the Air Force was employed to bomb North Vietnamese targets in Operation Rolling Thunder and to devastate their crops with the chemical Agent Orange. The ground war largely became a stalemate—until in the 1969 Tet Offensive, the Viet Cong surprised and nearly overwhelmed South Vietnam. Although the Americans and the Viet Minh decimated and repelled the invaders, graphic media coverage of the battle's brutality and high death tolls discredited the already unpopular war. The new Nixon administration denied General William Westmoreland additional troops, equipped the Viet Minh to fight independently, began withdrawing from the country, and forced the NVA to agree to peace in 1973. In 1975, North Vietnam broke these accords and invaded again, meeting a feeble resistance that swiftly evaporated. Frantic South Vietnamese citizens were evacuated from Saigon rooftops by the last departing Americans, and the entire country was in communist hands. For the first time, the United States had lost a war, at a cost of 58,279 lives. These coins honor the different roles of the armed forces in Vietnam.

Loaned by Gary Sheffer.





#75 & #76 Vietnam War Memorial & Three Servicemen Statue

To many during the apathetic decade of the 1970's, the Vietnam War's anomalies, blunders, and cruelties defined its veterans. Returning soldiers endured demeaning treatment in exchange for sacrifices which few cared to understand. It was 1979 before a Memorial Commission was established. The commission awarded the project to young architect Maya Lin. She designed a simple wall of gently reflective granite, with the aim of harmonizing discord and easing the pain of memory while suspending judgment of war policy. Instead of carved symbols of heroic glory, the Vietnam Wall is etched with the names of every serviceman killed there, in the order that they fell. As of September 2020, 58,279 are included, 340 of whom are MIAs retrieved since the Wall's creation. 160 Medal of Honor winners appear, as do the eight women who died in Vietnam. The sight of the Wall induces tears in many veterans, but some felt that it lacked patriotic inspiration for the average viewer. Frederick Hart sculpted the livelier statue of three servicemen at one side of the Memorial, highlighting their diversity as well as their bravery. At the other side a similar statue, added in 1993, honors the courage and compassion of the female nurses.

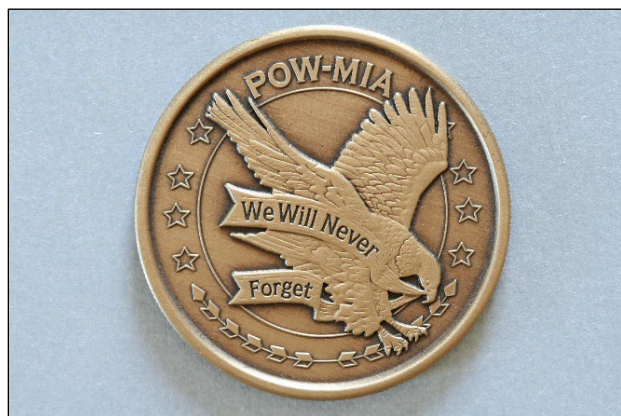
Loaned by Gary Sheffer.



#77 Vietnam POW-MIA Commemorative

Vietnam's prevalent landscape, a dense and trackless rainforest, made rescues of soldiers taken prisoner or missing in action difficult. Even their status was hard to determine, as the NVA and Viet Cong reported skewed statistics on prisoners and casualties. We know today that 766 Americans were held as prisoners of war, of which 114 died in captivity. The horrors of North Vietnamese prison camps approached those of Nazi Germany. The worst was ironically nicknamed the "Hanoi Hilton"—but no hospitality was offered there. American soldiers and airmen suffered from sickness, starvation, and extreme torture. The torture was intended either to force from them military secrets and mock confessions of anti-Americanism, or else to kill them. Forbidden to speak to each other, using a tap code to communicate kept POWs sane in spite of constant fear. Top officials in Washington remained relatively ignorant of the prisoners' plight. After Ho Chi Minh died, the situation began to improve, and in 1973, 591 POWs were returned home. However, since North Vietnam was victorious, further searches for POWs and MIAs were impossible for many years. Many remains have been recovered, and the total missing in action, originally 2,646, now stands at 1,585. This coin declares that "we will never forget" them.

Loaned by Gary Sheffer.



#78 AMA Roller Riders

The Roller Riders are an informal group of Augusta Military Academy's alumni who organize motorcycle trips through neighboring states. Several alumni originated the concept in 1998. New members provided their own motorcycle. Echoing the school tradition, the newest rider in the group served as a gopher for the more experienced members. (He also wore a pink helmet on the first day of the journey.) At one point, as many as 15 Riders scheduled a trip after every Augusta reunion. They toured Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Maryland, and even ventured to Niagara Falls. The group continues to provide AMA brothers with adventure and camaraderie. The Roller Rider challenge coin was among the first that AMA acquired, and is a member-only privilege.

Unknown donor.



#79 U. S. Air Force

The U.S. Army Signal Corps, which had launched observation balloons during the Civil War, began testing the newly-invented airplane in 1907. Two years later they acquired “Airplane No. 1”—an improved Wright Flyer. The First Reconnaissance Squadron, activated 1913, is the oldest unit in the Air Force and still aloft. It saw its first action in the 1916 U.S.-Mexico border disturbance. When America entered WWI, it was the only combat-ready air squadron, but others were quickly formed. In 1920, Congress permanently established the Army Air Corps. The defense budget was limited, but 1930’s civilian aviators spread developments such as closed cockpits, transoceanic flight, aerial refueling, and infectious enthusiasm to their military counterparts. In light of its comparative youth, the Air Force’s hallmark has been its speed in innovation. When WWII began, the Army Air Corps had only 2,200 planes; by the war’s end, it had 63,175, which had been instrumental in winning the victory. The National Security Act of 1947 made the Air Force its own department. In the face of the Cold War, the USAF pioneered supersonic flight, the jet age, the Strategic Air Command, medevac helicopters, ballistic missiles, communications satellites, the early-warning system, and the space program. In 2019, a new branch of service, Space Force, fell under their jurisdiction. An Air Force slogan, “Cross into the Blue,” adorns the back of this coin.

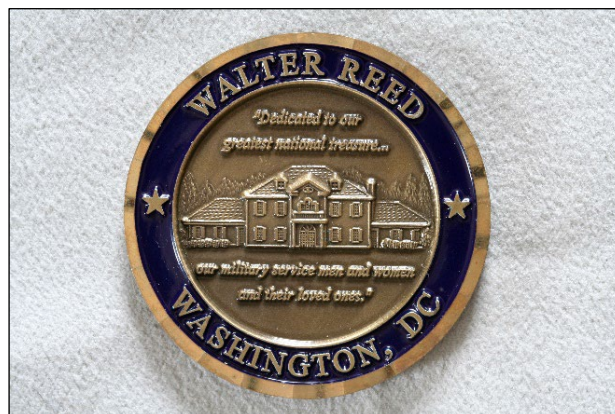
Donated by Goodloe Saunders.



#81 Fisher House

The first Fisher House was built at National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, in 1991. The vision of Jewish philanthropists Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher, Fisher Houses provide temporary homes for families of service members who are sick, injured, wounded, or otherwise undergoing medical treatment. The model closely resembles the previously-established Ronald McDonald House for families of critically-ill children. Fisher Houses are at walking distance from veterans' and military hospitals, allowing daily visits and close support. Lodging, dining, and transportation are free. Some patients reside at a Fisher House with their families during their rehabilitation. The Bethesda facility was built as a public-private partnership, but installation commanders now oversee construction. Since its founding, the Fisher House Foundation has served more than 400,000 families, for stays as short as two days or as long as three years.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#82 Patrick T. Henry, Asst. Secretary of The Army

Assistant Secretary describes several civilian positions under the Secretary of the Army. Each position entails different responsibilities. Manpower and Reserve Affairs supervises recruiting, training, structure, policies, and compensation. The position was established in 1950, abolished due to budget cuts in 1961, and reinstated in 1968. Clinton-appointee Patrick T. Henry was Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs from 1998-2002. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and served twenty years in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he directed tank training. As a leader, he instructed his followers to under-promise, but overdeliver.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#83 U. S. Army Memorial Affairs

For most of history, efforts to recover military dead were limited. Soldiers were usually buried on the battlefield, and corpses were often lost in the chaos. Leadership sometimes returned bodies of officers to families, who were obliged to foot the bill for the shipment (in an expensive lead-lined coffin to slow decay). By WWI, better methods of embalming had been developed, and the government offered families a choice between national cemetery burials at home or overseas. Although many requested their fallen hero returned, 130,000 American troops still lay in graves abroad. After the Korean War, overseas burial was discontinued. Military mortuaries are now tasked with sending remains home (see #96). The Landstuhl Mortuary was founded in the early 1950's to trace and locate missing men from WWII. Ever since, they have ensured that soldiers who die in combat, accidents, or from other causes, are identified and respected.

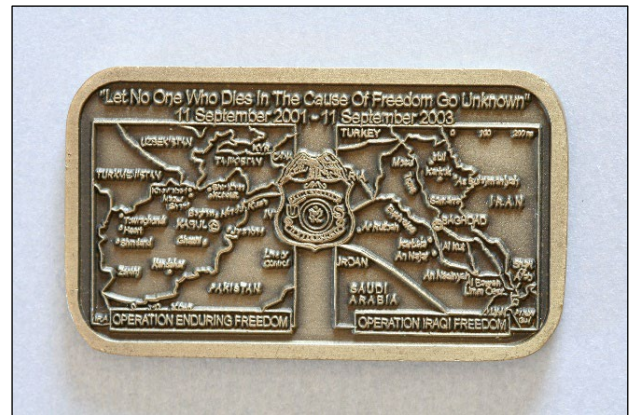
Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#84 U. S. Military DNA Registry

The two following coins imitate the shape of the military “dog tag.” Soldiers have worn their name and number into battle since 1906. When an unknown casualty is found, fingerprints and other records collected on enlistment can be corroborated with information on the tag. Mitochondrial DNA is used to trace unknowns when the body is not intact. Only a small amount needs to be gathered for positive recognition. Because it resides in durable cell walls, degrades at a slow rate, and descends through the maternal line, it has been used to locate missing in action from previous wars. Families submit samples of their own DNA to compare with their supposed ancestor’s remains. The Vietnam Unknown Soldier, Lieutenant Michael Blassie, was identified through mitochondrial testing in 1998. In 1991, the Department of Defense created a DNA registry for all armed service members.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#85 Recovery & Identification, Hawaii

After WWII, the Department of Defense started a program to search for 79,000 missing soldiers. The Central Identification Laboratory was built at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, in 1947, and returned many remains in the ensuing years. However, the total number of missing in action grew with the Korea and Vietnam Wars. Scientists working at the CIL use data about age, height, teeth, racial background, and previous injuries to identify the recovered body. Recently, mitochondrial DNA tests have made for foolproof recognition. A database of those missing in action was developed in 2003. Search teams continue to discover WWII dead in the submerged wreckage of ships and airplanes or unearth Vietnam War remains beneath the jungle. In 2014, the laboratory merged with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#86 U. S. Forces Korea—Seoul Mortuary

The unusual triangular shape of this coin evokes the folded American flag. In the center is the seal of the Army Quartermaster Corps—an eagle perched on a wheel representing transport, with a sword for combat and a key for stewardship. The Quartermaster Corps were established in 1912 to support forces in the field, and military mortuaries fall within their sphere of responsibility. Above are three grave markers: a cross, the traditional burial symbol, a Star of David, used to honor Jewish personnel, and a triangle, indicating an unknown soldier. The American and South Korean flags fly together for the countries' mutual alliance formed after WWII. After the disarmament of imperial Japan, American forces occupied Youngsan Garrison, the site of the Seoul Mortuary. In 2017, the Eighth Army moved its headquarters to nearby Camp Humphreys, and Youngsan became a city park.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#87 U. S. Army Search & Recovery Team

From 1973 until 1976, a Thailand-based branch of the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) scoured Vietnam for MIAs. After the Vietnam conflict ended, their work was transferred to the CIL in Hawaii (discussed in #85). Both formed part of the U.S. Army Total Personnel Command (see #97). Associated search and recovery teams operate around the globe, as America's unknowns often rest in remote and unlikely places. The Department of Defense estimated in 2018 that 34,000—less than half—of the unaccounted for could still potentially be found.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#88 Deputy Chief of Staff For Personnel

The Joint Chiefs of Staff serve as strategy advisers to the President in his capacity of commander in chief. Beneath them, Deputy Chiefs of Staff oversee different aspects of the military's vast organization. The U.S. Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel is dubbed the G-1. Responsible for manpower throughout the Army, he guarantees the force is strong enough to tackle any mission. The Recruiting Command (see #45) is one area of the G-1's authority. Larry Strickland, Sergeant-Major to the Deputy Chief of Staff, presented this coin to subordinates as a reward for excellent service. He was killed in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, September 11, 2001.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#89 Chief of Legislative Liaison

The War Department managed the Office of Legislative Liaison (founded 1921) until the 1947 National Security Act substituted War with the new Department of Defense. Oversight of the Office was then transferred to the Secretary of the Army. Legislative Liaison squares Army objectives with Congressional policy by acquainting legislators with the Army's current needs. Activities in the House of Representatives must be closely observed since all funding legislation, including defense budgets, originates there.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#90 Third Division—Adjutant General—Ft. Stewart, Georgia

Fort Stewart's namesake, General Daniel Stewart, was a hero in the Wars of Independence and 1812 and the great-grandfather of Theodore Roosevelt. The Fort was built in 1940 to train anti-aircraft gunners as WWII loomed on the horizon. In the fall of 1941, an extensive exercise known as the Carolina Maneuvers satisfied leadership of U.S. preparedness. At first, Women's Airforce Service Pilots towed the novice gunners' aerial targets. Remote-controlled targets called Radioplanes later replaced them. After WWII and the Korean War, missiles were used to destroy enemy aircraft and Fort Stewart turned to ground artillery training. During the Vietnam years, the Fort ran an Army helicopter flight school. A Ranger battalion has been stationed there since 1974, corresponding with the rise of the Special Forces. The legendary Third Infantry Division (see #5) was moved to Fort Stewart at the same time. On this coin, the seal next to the blue and white stripes signify an Adjutant General Corps regiment (see #9) attached to the Third Division.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#91 U. S. Army War College

Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of War, Elihu Root, chartered the Army War College in 1901 as a response to leadership failures in the Spanish-American War. Unlike West Point and Citadel, which are four-year institutions for training young officers, the War College is a professional school for Army colonels and Navy captains with at least 17 years' experience. Housed at Washington Barracks in D.C. for its first fifty years, the college numbered Generals Pershing, Eisenhower, and Patton among its alumni. Its current home, Carlisle Barracks, began as a frontier outpost in 1757. George Washington suggested the site for the federal military academy, but planners passed it over in favor of West Point. Carlisle Barracks filled multiple roles before the War College moved there in 1951: Revolutionary cannon foundry, Army cavalry school, Civil War supply post (and Confederate prize at Gettysburg), Indian high school, WWI rehabilitation hospital, Army medic school, and top-secret intelligence academy. Today officers from all branches of service finesse their skills at the War College. The Great Seal eagle, head inclined toward the olive branch, and circled by Elihu Root's quotation, "Not to promote war but to preserve peace," backs this coin.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#93 544th Maintenance Battalion

The 544th Quartermaster Battalion was once a black unit in WWII. They were successively stationed in England, Northern Ireland, France, and later Germany as part of the postwar occupation. The *fleur de li* and trivet on this coin reflect their French and German service. The battalion was reformed and renamed the 544th Maintenance Battalion in 1965 at Fort Hood, Texas. In their latest mission as part of the 13th Corps Support Command under General Vincent Boles, they supplied Iraq's interior with food, fuel, and supplies. Altogether, the 13th Command's vehicles travelled the mileage of 1,300 round trips to the moon. The 544th Battalion earned a merit citation for preceding the force into Iraq, driving a perilous 600-mile northward route. They returned to Fort Hood in 2004.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#94 U. S. Army Garrison, Fort Riley, Kansas

Fort Riley, a military base in eastern Kansas, was surveyed in 1852. The Garrison's purpose was to protect traders, pioneers, and the U.S. mail from attacks by Indians or badmen. When violence between Kansas slaveholders and abolitionists erupted in the prelude to the Civil War, soldiers acted as police to restore order. After the war, Fort Riley was home to the Buffalo Soldiers, America's first permanent black regiment. These men fought hostile Indian tribes, safeguarded westbound stagecoaches, constructed forts and roads, and fenced and mapped newly-opened regions. General George Custer, leader in the tragic Battle of Little Big Horn, was stationed at Fort Riley in 1866. The Fort opened the most famous of the U.S. Army cavalry schools in 1887. Horsemen and steeds practiced maneuvers on challenging obstacle courses and enacted brilliant displays for the garrison. Fort Riley switched to teaching tank warfare as the cavalry age ended. By 1946, all equestrian units were replaced with mechanized ones. The mammoth First Infantry Division arrived in 1955 and stayed the duration of the Cold War. In the Iraq and Afghan campaigns, Fort Riley acquired the nickname, "America's Warfighting Center."

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#95 Bugles Across America

A 2000 Act of Congress made all U.S. veterans eligible for military honors at their burial. At the family's request, two uniformed servicemen fold an American flag, and "Taps" is played while the casket is lowered into the grave. This familiar lights-out bugle call is unique to the U.S. military. Although several beautiful myths recount its origin, it was probably first composed by Union General Daniel Butterfield, following the Battle of Harrison's Landing in July 1862. Marine Corps veteran and musician Tom Day, dissatisfied with the poor, shrill tone of "Taps" recordings, founded Bugles Across America to provide live buglers at veterans' funerals. Volunteers charge no fee for their services. The phrase "Duty, honor, country" on the back of this coin is the motto of West Point, memorably quoted by retired General Douglas MacArthur in a 1962 address to the school's cadets.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#96 Mortuary Affairs Center

In 2008, the Joint Mortuary Affairs Center at Fort Lee, Petersburg, Virginia assumed responsibility for the dead of all the armed forces by order of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics. Since the Korean War, the policy of concurrent return has meant all fallen soldiers are returned to the U.S., and the Center now supervises the process for all military branches. In the aftermath of certain accidents, the JMAC may care for deceased civilian contractors as well. Mortuary affairs is one of the most overlooked, yet most wearing roles in the forces, especially in wartime. It continually immerses the specialist in gruesome sights and smells. Duties include reassembling shattered bodies; a particularly affecting task is sorting and returning a soldier's personal belongings. The flag on this coin is folded as part of military funeral honors, thirteen times for the thirteen colonies. Each fold is also a tribute to some aspect of U.S. patriotism.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#97 U. S. Total Army Personnel Command

The U.S. Army moved its first centralized personnel center to St. Louis, Missouri from Washington, D.C., following WWI. Early on, the center's main function was record-keeping. Eventually, the St. Louis office became part of the Reserve Personnel Command. The Total (Active) Personnel Command was based in Alexandria, Virginia. In July 1973, a dropped cigarette ignited a fire at the St. Louis facility, destroying three-quarters of the stored files. Millions of individual service papers from WWI and WWII were lost. As computing capabilities grew, the Total Personnel Command's mission expanded from laborious manual record-keeping to broader human-resource administration. In 2003, the Total and Reserve Commands were consolidated to form the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, which recruits both active and reserve military. It is the world's largest H.R. department. Several versions of their insignia depict soldiers of different eras, Revolutionary to present, in front of a globe.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#99 Military Traffic Management Command

Before the War Department created the U.S. Army Transportation Corps in 1942, military transportation fell to the Quartermaster Corps, the Corps of Engineers, and the Motor Transport Corps (added 1918). The Armed Forces updated their mobilization arrangements during WWII. Thousands of soldiers were moved from home bases through ports to the front. Invasions relied heavily on landing craft, as occupiers had blocked the harbors. U.S. Air Force bombers had wrecked railroads in newly-liberated territory, but the Transportation Corps hastily built roads along which fleets of trucks conveyed supplies. A critical accomplishment was the Ledo Road, one of two routes connecting British India with Allied China. The war taught leadership the value of swift, efficient, and coordinated transportation. Over the next three decades, a central command evolved to supervise it. The Military Traffic Management Command operated from 1974 until 2004, when it was absorbed by the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

Loaned by Harry Campbell.



#100 Port of Miami

Bounded by several long sandbars, the Bay of Biscayne faces the Atlantic Ocean near the tip of Florida. In 1835, a hurricane tore through today's Miami Beach, leaving a broad channel into the bay. The city of Miami was founded on the shores of Biscayne by a local landowner, Julia Tuttle, and a railroad magnate, Henry Flagler, in 1896. Besides bringing rail service to the area, Flagler owned the *Key West*, the first passenger ship to dock in Miami. Tourism and commerce by land and sea became the city's mainstays. Congress approved the so-called Government Cut, a widening of the harbor channel, completed in 1912. The previous year had seen Miami hire its first state-licensed maritime pilot. Prosperity reigned until the Depression. In 1960, neighboring Dade County bought the dilapidated port, constructing new facilities on Dodge Island. Carnival, the world's first pleasure-cruise line, debuted there in 1972. Today, Miami is the world's largest cruise port and Florida's largest cargo port, with traffic from the Caribbean, South America, Europe, and through the Panama Canal to Asia.

Loaned by Jorge Roviroso.



#101 & #105 U. S. Naval Communications Detachment

Naval communications technology began to be developed during WWI, when intelligence officers used medium-frequency direction finders to track German submarines. However, radio was still in its formative stage and code-breaking a matter of paper and pencil. Electronic decoding and cipher machines were invented after the First World War. Radar followed during the second. In the 1920's, "radiomen" were trained on the roof of the Washington, D.C. Navy building. The first Communications Detachment was posted to Peiping, China in 1927 to monitor the increasingly belligerent Japanese. Today, detachments staff sophisticated intercept stations throughout the world. Each station also handles peaceful communications, acting as a naval internet and telephone company within its respective region. The Chinhae station is located on 90 acres near South Korea's national naval base. Two dragons flank the back of this coin, representing the U.S.-South Korean alliance.

Loaned by Scott Cole.



#102 U. S. Navy Installation Excellence—Chinhae, Korea

President Ronald Reagan established the Installation Excellence Award in 1985. Each year, the Secretary of Defense nominates the winners, and the President gives the prizes in his capacity of Commander of the Fleet (or of the other armed forces). Three large and three small installations are recognized yearly for surpassing their commander's standards for combat readiness, living conditions, and base improvements. This coin was presented to the personnel of the Chinhae, Korea Naval Communications Detachment (see #101). The craft shown on this coin is a "turtle ship," or historic Korean warship, operated by two sail and 60 rowers. Similar to Viking longboats in design and function, but with covered decks for the gunpowder age, they warded off Japanese assaults on Korea's independence from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries.

Loaned by Scott Cole.



#103 U. S. Air Force First Sergeant

In the U.S. Air Force, First Sergeant is the most senior of the non-commissioned officers. Formerly, it was a distinct rank, but in 2002, it became a special duty assignment, granted to non-coms with varied skills but good leadership ability for a definite term. History suggests that the First Sergeant rank descends from the Prussian *Feldwebel* and was brought to America by George Washington's volunteer drillmaster, Baron von Steuben. The First Sergeant works closely with the Chief Master Sergeant, another non-com, and the squadron commander, a commissioned officer, briefing them regularly on the preparedness, health, and morale of the enlisted men. Since a force that is distracted by internal crises easily fails in its mission, airmen are encouraged to discuss personal problems with the First Sergeant. Bad behavior is reported but good conduct is commended. First Sergeants in the Air Force wear diamond chevrons similar to those of the Army (see #58). They are sometimes oddly monikered "First Shirts."

Donated by Jim Davidson.



#104 USS Chicago

The USS *Chicago* had two lives. The first was as a Baltimore-class cruiser, commissioned just in time to fight WWII's final battles. In the summer of 1945, she guarded aircraft carriers, sheltered seaplanes, screened air strikes, and bombarded the industrial cities of Tokyo, Honshu, Hokkaido, and Kamaishi on the Japanese coast. When the war ended, *Chicago*'s crew participated in the disarmament and occupation of Japan. *Chicago* returned home in 1947 and lay in reserve for eleven years, until it was decided to refit her as a guided missile cruiser. She was equipped with computer systems, guided torpedoes, missile launchers, and helicopter support capabilities. The masts and smokestacks, relics of the steam-and-sail age, were streamlined into single towers called "macks," greatly altering her appearance. *Chicago* joined the First Fleet in 1964 and became its flagship. After assisting in several underwater missile tests, she sailed for Vietnam on May 12, 1966. All told, she would make five cruises in the Gulf of Tonkin, controlling friendly air traffic while surveilling the vast expanse of water with her powerful radar. Technologically inexorable, the cruiser was threatened more by typhoons than by enemy aircraft. After the Vietnam War, needed repairs proved too expensive, and *Chicago* was decommissioned in 1980. Although the hull was scrapped, the anchor remains on display at her namesake city's Navy Pier.

Donated by Frank Williamson.



#106 Vietnam War 50th Anniversary

March 29 marks Vietnam Veterans' Day—that bitter day in 1973 when U.S. forces were finally withdrawn from the overrun country (see #71). A fifty-year commemoration commission operating under the Department of Defense was set up in 2012 to honor, without brazen fanfare, the war and its heroes. The commission will continue its work through Veterans' Day in 2025, following the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. Objectives include (foremost) thanking veterans; displaying the accomplishments of the various service branches; and exhibiting the contributions of America's home front, her various allies, and the vast scientific advances she made in a time of strife. An official lapel pin has been minted for Vietnam veterans, and Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump have given lengthy speeches of tribute.

Donated by Don Studer.



#107 First Salute Silver Dollar

In U.S. military tradition, the newly-commissioned second lieutenant presents the first enlisted man to salute him with a silver dollar. The custom is too old to trace, but may come from the ranks of the British Army in the eighteenth century. In those days, inexperienced lieutenants often paid senior enlisted soldiers a small sum for advice on their new profession. The gift eventually came to symbolize the lieutenant's leadership. Today, the young officer chooses an active or veteran enlisted soldier to give the first salute. The officer shakes hands with the soldier while placing the dollar in his left hand. The coin may date from the year of the officer's birth or commission, or from a hundred years prior. Since pure silver dollars have become increasingly rare since the 1960's, Eisenhower dollars, Silver Eagles, or challenge coins like this one are often used instead.

Donated by Don Studer



#108 Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Following WWI, it was impossible for the European countries to return their countless casualties for burial. To ease the sorrow of the populace, France and Britain selected one unknown soldier each to commemorate the deaths of thousands of others. Although American policy already allowed the return of bodies to the States, Congress determined in December 1920 to inter one unknown soldier at Arlington National Cemetery to “typify the soul of America and the supreme sacrifice of her heroic dead.” Sergeant Edward F. Younger chose the body from four indistinguishable caskets. The white marble tomb is carved with three figures representing peace, victory, and valor and with the famous inscription “Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God.” Also visible are six laurel wreaths representing the major WWI campaigns. Remains from WWII and the Korean conflict were added simultaneously in 1958. Michael Blassie, the Vietnam War unknown, was added in 1984 but exhumed in 1998 after he was finally identified (see #84). Since 1926, rigorously-trained soldiers have guarded the tomb, marching exactly twenty-one steps from one end to the other. The steps imitate the twenty-one-gun salute which is the military’s highest honor. The tomb is a favorite site for quiet contemplation and wreath-laying ceremonies.

Donated by Don Studer



#109 Our Military Men and Women

America has been celebrating Armed Forces Day on May 20 since 1950, highlighting a different patriotic theme each year. The inception of the holiday occurred after the four branches of service were unified under the new Department of Defense. Previously, each service branch had observed its own holiday. Troops paraded by thousands in U.S. cities, accompanied by brilliant receptions and airshow demonstrations. The holiday demonstrated America's strength against potential threats, but also honored the country's men and women in uniform. (In 1950, women had been serving in the Army for almost fifty years. The first role open to them was nursing. During WWI, they were also accepted into the Navy and Marines as clerks or radio operators. Congress established an all-female division, the Women's Army Corps, to aid in winning WWII. Men and women have served the country on a completely equal basis since 1978.)

Donated by Don Studer.



#110 U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit

Concerned about the growing renown of Soviet marksmen, President Eisenhower created the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit in 1956. They quickly proved their accuracy in international competitions, carrying off six Olympic Gold Medals by the year 1978. Today they comprise half of the U.S. Olympic shooting team. Classifications include service rifle, action shooting, international rifle, service pistol, and shotgun. In recent years, the unit has also participated in recruiting and prepared soldiers to use weapons in combat. Shooting, for them, is an art form, calling for constant practice to develop proficiency. This 25th anniversary coin pictures a Continental soldier loading his flintlock musket, a reminder of the centrality of the armed citizen in America's past and present wars for independence. Their official seal features an ancient precision weapon, the crossbow, colored gold to represent excellence.

Donated by Don Studer.



#III The Citadel

South Carolina's famous military college, The Citadel, was founded by the state's legislature in 1842. It was built on the site of a Charleston fortification, which became the city armory during a later period of slave rebellions. At first, the Citadel did not grant any particular degree. Instead, it offered military training and a liberal arts education that "eminently qualified" a cadet for any role he was called on to fulfill. Technical specialty was in greater demand than finished scholarship by 1900, when the school began awarding engineering degrees. Citadel graduates fought in every war beginning with the Mexican-American conflict. During the Civil War, the cadet body was called into the field on behalf of the Confederacy. Cadet-soldiers never surrendered to the Union, but were simply dismissed by the governor of South Carolina when the southern cause proved hopeless. The federal government did not allow the school to reopen until 1882. All the graduates of the years 1917-18 served in WWI, and most of the living 1940's graduates in WWII. In 1954, General Mark Clark of Italian campaign fame became the Citadel's president. The modern honor code, based upon that of West Point, emphasizes duty and responsibility rather than blind obedience as marks of an honorable soldier. Cadets who enter the Citadel on a scholarship must teach in the public schools for two years after graduation.

Donated by Don Studer.



#112 USAF Thunderbirds

In American Indian culture, the Thunderbird, a mythical giant eagle, guarded mankind against evil spirits. The bird exercised its powers through rain, storm, and lightning, nurturing and protective when obeyed, wrathful and destructive when displeased. Its alleged speed and wingspan made it a fitting emblem for the U.S. Air Force's aerobatic demonstration team. Established 1953, the Thunderbirds are the second squadron of their kind in the U.S. military. Admiral Chester Nimitz had already commissioned the Navy's Blue Angels in 1946. The Thunderbirds' first plane was the Thunderjet, the strike aircraft of the Korean War (covered in #48). In 1956, they adopted the F-100 Super Sabre, breaking the sound barrier at many shows. Their chosen craft today are the needle-like F-16 Fighting Falcons, painted white to deflect heat and striped with red and blue. Fighting Falcons execute rolls, passes, and other maneuvers, fly in coordinated formation, and draw intricate contrail patterns across the sky. The Thunderbird Squadron is based at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, where they carry on their mission of representing the U.S. Air Force and demonstrating its skill to the public.

Donated by Don Studer.



#113 American Airlines

In 1926, a year before his famed transatlantic crossing, Charles Lindbergh was American Airlines' first pilot, transporting mail from Chicago to St. Louis. An engineer named Donald Douglas partnered with the company's founder, C. R. Smith to create the radial-engined DC-3. They dubbed the world's first workable passenger airplane their "flagship." American Airlines became a public company in 1939, and thereafter their fortunes soared. They made their first transatlantic flight in 1945, their first transcontinental in 1953. Known for implementing unique new ideas, American Airlines established a special school in Dallas for the training of stewardesses, set up ambient airport lounges exclusively for its passengers, and hired Dave Harris, the first black commercial pilot, in 1964. The company acquired jets in the 1960's, and the celebrated Boeing 747 was their mainstay aircraft until 1994. Two flights were hijacked into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on the tragic morning of September 11, 2001 (see #24). Today, American Airlines has the world's largest passenger fleet, numbering 950 planes.

Donated by Don Studer.



#115 Wounded Warrior Project

Watching TV footage of Iraq War casualties recalled to former Marine John Melia his bleak experiences when he was injured in a helicopter crash in the early 1990's. He believed America's wounded warriors should receive comfort beyond what the military can provide. In 2002, Melia began delivering care packages to the D.C. area hospitals Walter Reed and Bethesda, containing extra clothes and pastimes such as music or games. Later, Melia and his colleagues ran programs to help the wounded readjust to everyday life following their discharge. Included in the programs were veterans suffering from all types of injuries, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Wounded Warrior Project promotes participation in activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, cycling, and sports, adapted for wheelchairs when necessary. More fulfilling than conventional rehabilitation, the activities are designed to maximize the veterans' sense of independence and enjoyment. The Project also helps deserving warriors with business, scholarship, and government opportunities. Unlike the similar, hundred-year-old Disabled Veterans of America, Wounded Warrior focuses only on Iraq and Afghan War veterans, and is a donor-funded charity rather than a membership organization.

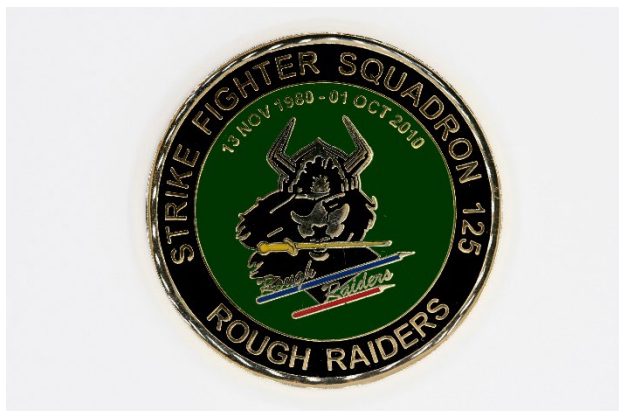
Donated by Edwin Click.



#116 Strike Fighter Squadron 125 Rough Raiders

The Rough Raiders were formed in 1959 to train replacement pilots for the U.S. Navy. A twin unit, the Flying Eagles (Squadron 122, on the back of this coin) later joined them at Lemoore Air Field in California, where the Pacific Fleet's entire Strike Fighter Wing is based. Strike fighters are single-seater craft which form the vanguard of an aerial attack. They are designed to take off and land from a carrier's deck. In the 1960's, the Rough Raiders flew the F-9 Cougar and the Skyhawk, early swept-wing ships, while the Flying Eagles retained the Skyraider, a versatile legacy of the propeller era. During the Vietnam War, both units transitioned to flying the more streamlined Corsair. Obsolescence threatened the squadrons in the 1990's, when the Corsair, now their mainstay craft, was phased out. The Navy planners came to their rescue with an improved version of the F/A-18 Hornet, the Super Hornet, flown in the Iraq and Afghan Wars. The Super Hornets have recently been succeeded by the F-35 Lightning IIs. These stealth fighters track enemies in the sky and on the ground, absorb searching radar waves into their composite surface, and penetrate guarded airspace without detection. Supremely maneuverable, they writhe through the air like swallows in their native element. In 2010, the Rough Raiders merged with the Flying Eagles, creating the world's tenth largest air force.

Donated by Chris Bewall.



#117 Petty Officer SNCO

The Navy's non-commissioned officers are known as Petty Officers. Like the First Sergeants of the Army and Air Force, they fill the gap between commissioned officers and enlisted men. As instructors of young sailors, they pledge to "make things happen." Their rank evolved in the Napoleonic-era British Navy, where such roles as boatswain, gunner, and carpenter had their respective mates, or assistants. Sailors dubbed the mates "petty officers," a term used for civilian police at the time. Following the Royal Navy, the United States established the Petty Officer insignia with its small eagle in 1893. An increasing number of chevrons mark the ascending grades of Petty Officers from third-class to Chief. Loretta Walsh, the first woman to serve in the Navy in a non-medical role, became a Chief Petty Officer in 1917. Petty Officers wear a double-breasted coat and visor cap, once easily distinguishable from sailor's garb, and eat at a separate mess aboard ship. Prior to refrigeration, goats were kept at sea to dispose of garbage and supply meat and milk; and to this day, the Chief's mess is termed the "goat locker." Traditionally, sailors subject sworn-in Petty Officers to unpleasant initiation rites similar to equator-crossing ceremonies.

Donated by Chris Bewall.



#118 U. S. Department of State Special Agent

George Washington created the State Department in 1789, recalling ambassador Thomas Jefferson from Paris to become its first Secretary. Future presidents Madison, Monroe, Quincy Adams, Van Buren, and Buchanan followed Jefferson. Pursuant to non-interventionist ideals, the Department disentangled America from problematic European alliances, resisted the wiles of a conniving Napoleon, and doubled our internal boundaries with the Louisiana Purchase. Civil-War intricacies impelled Lincoln to rely on his expert Secretary of State, William Seward. Seward gained the cooperation of foreign governments in blockading the South, ensuring its isolation and defeat. After the war, expanding commerce focused the Department's attention on consular service, imports, and exports. Ambassadors represented the U.S. in all developed nations by 1893; although few disputes arose, growing power created tensions. Under State Department auspices, Theodore Roosevelt negotiated the acquisition of Panama, the Russo-Japanese War settlement, and the open-door policy with China. John Quincy Adams had introduced the Department's first management protocols; by 1920, they operated a modern system of telegraphy, ciphers, and classified documents. Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary Cordell Hull, architect of the United Nations, expanded the size of the State Department. His successors would implement the Marshall Plan, combat Communism, and free third-world nations. The State Department has a history of great accomplishments, but also of backdoor dealings that have periodically invited suspicious scrutiny. Indeed, one of the tasks of a Special Agent is investigating other agents for corruption. He also protects visiting dignitaries and enforces passport and visa rules. This coin comes from the Department's Detroit, Michigan residence office.

Donated by Jack May.



#119 Thank You for Your Service

This veteran-commemorative coin features a famous quote of unknown origin which compares enlistment to signing a “blank check.” Everything, including the soldier’s life, is pledged in the act of signing. War claims lives in subtle ways. The check may be cashed on the soldier’s death in action, or it may be cashed through his loss of opportunities, abilities, or happiness. Both sacrifices are heroic. On the other side of the coin, the Army values entwine the head of a bald eagle. The ROTC honor code reminds us these values do not blossom overnight. Rather, they are habits to practice. When a person consistently acts on honor, courage will follow. Likewise, a strong sense of loyalty impels respect. The eight values are components of a single quality—heroism.

Donated by Tom Del Valle.



#120 & #121 National D-Day Memorial

Bedford, Virginia, claims the somber honor of the highest per-capita losses on D-Day. The 116th Infantry, a regional national guard regiment, has served in every conflict in U.S. history. The 34 “Bedford boys” comprised Company A, the first unit to land on Omaha Beach during the invasion. Nineteen men were shot or drowned as they waded ashore; four more were killed as the invaders pushed inland. Yet others were wounded. The town telegraph office could barely handle the volume of casualty reports when they arrived a month later. In 1987, D-Day veteran Robert Slaughter favored a Roanoke site for his envisioned memorial. Since Roanoke showed little enthusiasm, the memorial committee selected Bedford, the subject of deserved media attention during the fiftieth commemoration of WWII (see #21). The project gained Congressional approval, but was privately funded. Donations from Charles Schulz, Stephen Ambrose, and Steven Spielberg allowed construction on a much grander scale than Slaughter had planned. Set on 88 acres surrounded by the serene mountain landscape, the memorial’s encircling spaces symbolize the succeeding stages of the invasion. At the back, a larger-than-life statue of Eisenhower, flanked by busts of his commanders, stands guard over an English-style garden. In the center, realistic statuary struggle across a reflecting pool, echoing the bloody charge through the Omaha surf. The hill is crowned with a 44-foot victory arch inscribed simply: “Overlord.” President George W. Bush dedicated the memorial on June 6, 2001. On the back of coin #120, the qualities of valor, fidelity, and sacrifice are represented severally by a lion, a dog, and a phoenix. On the back of coin #121, the flags of all Allied nations that participated in the invasion are represented.

#120 Donated by Paul Bloomfield.

#121 Donated by Rich vanBremen



#122 Blue Water Navy Association — Susie Belanger

Blue Water Navy Association is an organization under the umbrella of the MILITARY VETERANS ADVOCACY Organization. Together along with other like-minded groups, they fight for military personnel afflicted with Agent Orange issues from the War in Southeast Asia. Through raising public awareness and lobbying Congress, they have helped pass numerous legislative bills that assist veterans who not only served in Vietnam proper, but other areas associated with the tangent effects of Agent Orange exposure. www.bwnvva.org



Susie Belanger was a 20+ year volunteer for the Blue Water Navy Association and to honor her commitment to Veteran's rights, this retirement coin was produced. Her story was shared on the Military Veterans Advocacy website:

<https://snchga.org/military-veterans-advocacy-founder-susie-belanger-retires/>

This challenge coin was donated by Larry Miller of Staunton, VA, a US Navy veteran from 1965-1973.

Donated by Larry Miller



#123 Fallen Patriots 5K

Fallen Patriots is an organization, whose mission is to provide college scholarships and educational counseling to children who have lost a military parent in the line of duty. One of the ways in which it accomplishes this mission is through its support of various fundraising efforts for specific scholarships. A popular fundraising activity is a “RUCK” – a derivative of the US Army’s forced marches with a full ruck sack. Participants sign up with sponsors and/or an entry fee and walk a pre-determined route, while wearing a loaded ruck sack, to raise funds. Often times these are conducted in the name of a fallen service member.

This particular challenge coin was struck for a 5K “ruck” to support the MSgt. George A Banner Scholarship, given in memory of an Orange County, VA native who served his country honorably in the United States Army Special Forces. Master Sergeant Bannar died Aug. 20, 2013, of wounds received from small-arms fire in Wardak Province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to Company C, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Bragg, N.C., and was deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. This was Bannar’s fifth deployment to Afghanistan. This scholarship, in the amount of \$1,000 is awarded to a senior member of the Orange County High School Army JROTC program who plans to attend a four-year college, community college or trade school.

The front of the coin bears the silhouette of an Army soldier in front of a US flag’s outline and above the name of MSgt Banner. The inscription at the top is for the FALLEN PATRIOTS organization and the charity 5k “ruck”. The reverse of the coin, bears the logo and motto of the US Army’s Special Forces (Green Berets), whom MSgt Bannar was a member. DE OPPRESSO LIBER translates to, “from (being) an oppressed man, (to being) a free one”.

The 5k ruck was begun in 2020 in support of the MSgt Bannar Scholarship and has been held annually thus far.

Donated by Jesse Dibble



#124 Virginia Civil Air Patrol

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is an Auxiliary of the United States Air Force. Created on December 1, 1941 to mobilize the nation's civilian aviation resources for national defense service, CAP has evolved into a premier public service organization that still carries out emergency service missions when needed — in the air and on the ground.

As a Total Force partner and auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, Civil Air Patrol is there to search for and find the lost, provide comfort in times of disaster and work to keep the homeland safe. Its 62,000 members selflessly devote their time, energy, and expertise toward the well-being of their communities, while also promoting aviation and related fields through aerospace/STEM education and helping shape future leaders through CAP's cadet program.

Civil Air Patrol's missions for America are many, and today's adults and cadets perform their duties with the same vigilance as its founding members — preserving CAP's 80+-year legacy of service while maintaining its commitment to nearly 1,500 communities nationwide.

CAP's National Headquarters are based out of First Air Force, located at Maxwell Air Force Base Alabama. Nationally CAP has almost 27,000 Cadet and more than 35,000 Senior Members for a total force of 62,000 members in 52 Wings across all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the National Capital Region. The Commander's coin was presented to the AMA collection by Lt Col Daniel "Bud" Oakey, AMA '70. Lt Col Oakey is the Commander of the VA-999, Virginia Legislative Squadron and is responsible for managing the governmental affairs between the CAP Virginia WING and all facets of Virginia government including the Virginia National Guard. The Squadron Logo is the Rabbit being pulled Out of the Hat signifying the motto of All Things Possible. The Opposite side reflects the logo of the Virginia Wing, and the principles CAP stands on of Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence and Respect.

Donated by Daniel G. "Bud" Oakey



#125 Virginia Task Force 2

Virginia Task Force 2 (VTF-2) is a specialized rescue organization comprised of highly trained Firefighters, Technical Rescue Technicians, EMS Personnel, Canine Handlers, Engineers and Physicians from various cities and departments located throughout the region; such as Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, James City County, Henrico County, Navy Regional, Newport News, Norfolk, Hampton, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Williamsburg and York County. VTF-2 operates under the National Urban Search and Rescue System which was established by the authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 1989. It is a framework for structuring local emergency service personnel into integrated disaster response task forces.

*Donated by Herb Maher
Safety Officer VATF-2*



#126 National Museum of the 8th Air Force

Mighty 8th Air Force Museum. The National Museum of the Mighty 8th Air Force preserves for all Americans the stories of courage, character & patriotism displayed by the men & women of the Eighth Air Force from World War II to present. Located in Pooler Georgia, just off I-95, the museum is easily accessed by travelers up and down the eastern seaboard.

The National Museum of the Mighty 8th Air Force and its associated foundation offer a wide variety of services to the visiting public. The museum welcomes over 20,000 school children from across the State of Georgia and Southeast each year for specialized tours. Through its series of elaborate exhibits and displays, the museum educates the public and strives to keep the legacy of the veterans who served in the 8th AF alive.

The Museum's Memorial Garden lies outside the rear of the museum to remember those who have served in the 8th Air Force as well as those who love and respect them. The Memorial Garden pays tribute to those who served in the Eighth Air Force during WWII and subsequent conflicts, and who are being remembered by families, friends, aircrews and others. There are many beautiful memorials throughout the garden on both sides of the reflective pool. All the memorials in the Garden have been purchased by Eighth Air Force veterans or by their families.

To the South is a memorial to the 61 fatalities that included 38 five-year old children who perished on August 23, 1944, when a B-24 bomber crashed in a thunder storm into the Holy Trinity Church of England School in Freckleton, England.

To the North of the garden is the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles, a beautiful place to take your guests and allow them to sit while the stained-glass window features are described.

<https://www.mightyeighth.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/mighty8thmuseum>



Donated by 8th AF Museum