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# “Band of Hands” Quilts

*By Mr. Jim Rogers*

The Military Police Museum received an unusual donation last September—six quilts representing the six platoons of the deployed 630th Military Police Company. The fabric pieces feature handprints that were applied by unit members during their deployment to Iraq, April 2004–April 2005.

When the 630th deployed to Iraq, Ms. Catherine Roberts began the “band of hands” quilt project to honor the unit service members and to help her stay connected with her Soldier son.

Quilters across the nation donated batik fabric squares. Garnering the support of the unit leadership, Ms. Roberts asked the Soldiers to make imprints of their hands using the fabric and a paint color of their choice. Along with their handprints, Soldiers penned their names. Many even wrote comments about their experiences in Iraq.

Four months into their deployment and not long after the quilt project was underway, Specialist Danny Daniels of the 1st Platoon “Regulators” was killed in action. With Daniels’ quilt piece left undone, the leadership decided that a single star would be used to signify his piece. On the “Regulators” quilt, each of the handprints faces Daniels’ star.

In March 2005, the company suffered the loss of three more Soldiers—Sergeant Ashly Moyer, Sergeant Brandon Parr, and Sergeant Michael Peek. On the 2d Platoon quilt, Parr’s and Peek’s handprints are marked with black ribbons. A handprint was not available for Moyer because she joined the unit after the quilts had been completed; however, she is honored with her unit in the museum exhibit.

The 630th provided security in Mosul, Iraq, during the first Iraqi national elections. On a daily basis, the company provided training and support to fledgling Iraqi police forces and security against counterterrorist and insurgent activity, including operations to prevent the proliferation of improvised explosive devices. Some worked with prisoners, gathering operational intelligence. Others provided personal security to high-ranking U.S. military leaders.

Due to their large size, only one or two of the quilts are on display at the museum at any one time, although all are represented through photographs.

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*Mr. Rogers is the director of the U.S. Army Military Police Museum at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.*



**First Sergeant James Eakin with his handprint on the 1st Platoon quilt at the Military Police Ball in September 2007. Eakin was in the vehicle with Daniels when it was struck by an improvised explosive device.**



**Handprints of Sergeant Brandon Parr and Sergeant Michael Peek marked with black ribbons on the 2d Platoon quilt.**