



Military Police Museum Begins Exhibit Improvements

The museum's introductory cases present the five modern military police functions of area security, police intelligence operations, internment/resettlement operations, law and order operations, and maneuver and mobility support. The mannequins depict Soldiers from different time periods of military police history.

By Mr. Jim Rogers

In 2006, the staff of the U.S. Army Military Police Museum at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, began a comprehensive exhibit upgrade process that will eventually encompass the entire exhibit gallery. The exhibit improvements will employ new graphics, photos, artifacts, and interpretive panels. Existing dioramas and exhibit cases will be improved with better materials, lighting, and display techniques. The focus of the improvements will be the incorporation of artifact-friendly exhibit furniture and techniques.

The first step was the installation of a new introductory exhibit at the gallery entrance, featuring the five modern military police functions in a historic context. A graphic timeline of the military police heritage from 1776 to 2006 is also featured in this entry area.

The museum's World War II area was the first existing exhibit to be targeted for improvement. This area incorporates a relatively large gallery in order to accurately portray a significant portion of military police history. The exhibit interpretation focuses on the birth of the Corps, home front security, operations in the varied theaters of war, African-American military police, Ludendorff Bridge operations, amphibious operations, circulation control, military police helmet markings, security at war crimes trials, and postwar occupation service. Frequently, the biggest challenge for the museum staff is to condense huge amounts of historical information to a text length and type size designed for comfortable reading by museum visitors. New and colorful graphics are included whenever possible, including large photos of applicable campaign medals. Artifacts chosen for

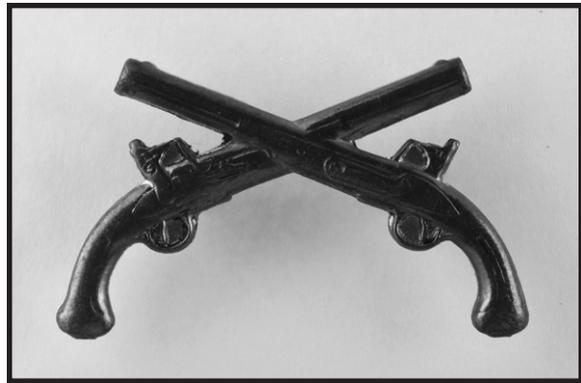


The new museum entrance sign features the branch symbol with a photo of the museum's Harper's Ferry pistols and the museum's mission statement.

the exhibit include military police uniforms, equipment, awards, insignia, and enemy equipment.

The museum's "immersion" or walk-through diorama, featuring military police operations at the Ludendorff Bridge in March 1945, has always been popular with visitors. During this renovation, the diorama received a face-lift featuring new mannequins and more authentic props. The armored car and jeep now have drivers, and the two military police mannequins represent the military police of the 9th Armored and the 9th Infantry Divisions. All mannequins were refitted with well-researched replica clothing and equipment. Both of the military police figures are based on contemporary historic photographs of the operation. During the research to support the diorama improvements, museum staff had the unexpected benefit of the recollections of a veteran of the operation, retired military police Colonel John Hyde. As a first lieutenant, he commanded the 9th Military Police Company, 9th Armored Division, during the first critical day at the bridge. His input contributed to several aspects of the diorama layout and details, including the green stripe on the replica helmet on the 9th Armored Division military police mannequin, an unusual marking color that had been unknown to the museum staff.

The end result of this and future exhibit renovations is intended to educate and inspire military police Soldiers, family members, and other visitors to the museum. The next gallery slated for renovation is the Civil War exhibit area.



This insignia was worn by First Lieutenant John Hyde of the 9th Armored Division military police during his service in the European Theater in 1944-45.



The Ludendorff Bridge diorama depicts a 9th Armored Division military police Soldier at the left and a 9th Infantry Division military police Soldier in the center, plus an impatient jeep driver at the right. Military police Soldiers and drivers were often under fire while on the bridge.