



# Newsletter

## Medal of Honor Returns Home

**F**irst Sergeant (1SG) David McNerney assumed command of his company on a fateful March day in Vietnam. Little did he know that, not only would his selfless and heroic efforts save his men's lives, but he would establish an historical precedent too. The story is as remarkable as the man himself:

When his unit was under attack by a North Vietnamese battalion, 1SG. McNerney ran through a hail of enemy fire to help develop a defensive perimeter. He was gravely injured when a grenade exploded and blew him from his feet. In spite of the injury, he assaulted and destroyed an enemy machine gun position that had pinned down five of his comrades and killed his commander and artillery forward observer. Repeatedly braving enemy fire, he pulled his wounded men to safety. And, with bullets flying all around, he climbed a tree to mark their location for rescue aircraft. Then, he collected explosive materials to clear a safe landing spot for the helicopters to evacuate his wounded comrades.

Ignoring his painful injuries, 1SG McNerney refused evacuation so he could remain with his unit until the new commander arrived the following day. For his distinguished leadership and heroism, 1SG. McNerney earned the Medal of Honor, but never felt that it was really his. He often told his comrades that, even though he had the honor of wearing the medal, it actually belonged to all of them equally. When he died in 2010, 1SG McNerney's will asked that the medal be returned to his old company, now stationed at Fort Carson. The medal, now displayed at the Mountain Post Historical Center (MPHC), established an historical precedent with its return.



Soldiers w/Fort Carson's A Company 1-8 Infantry salute as 1SG David McNerney's Medal of Honor is carried to the MPHC by SGT Julio Chavez

1SG David McNerney

Soldiers with Fort Carson's A Company of the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Unit stood at attention while approximately 40 surviving members of McNerney's A Company passed

the medal from person to person to remember and recognize the First Sergeant's leadership and heroism. With Soldiers of A Company lining the way, the medal was then ceremonially carried to the museum and placed on its pedestal of honor.

As this is the first time a Medal of Honor has been returned to its Company, a special ceremony was created to afford proper honor to its return. The unique ceremony was as thoughtful and inspirational as the man who had inspired it. As 1SG Andrew Whittingham, who currently holds McNerney's position, commented, "I have some huge shoes to fill."

The medal is a reminder to current and future soldiers of the commitment and qualities it takes to serve as a Soldier and of the bravery and sacrifice it requires.

### A VERY SPECIAL GIFT, INDEED

The holiday season is a time of joy and sharing. **Please take a moment to consider making a gift in honor of Fort Carson Soldiers, who have fought so hard and sacrificed so much to protect the freedoms we appreciate today.**

They have given us priceless gifts – such as freedom, service and deep dedication to our country. Help us honor their service by giving a gift of your own to the Mountain Post Historical Center this holiday season.

Make your gift online through our secure PayPal link <http://www.mountainposthistoricalcenter.org/gift-giving-options> or send a check to the Mountain Post Historical Association; 1630 Mesa Avenue, Suite A; Colorado Springs, CO 80906.

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# History of the Medal of Honor Source: U.S. Department of Defense website

On August 7, 1782, General George Washington established the Badge of Military Merit. It was the first formal system to reward acts of individual gallantry by the nation's fighting men. The award, designed to recognize "any singularly meritorious action," consisted of a purple cloth heart. Records show that only three persons received the award: Sergeant Elijah Churchill, Sergeant William Brown, and Sergeant Daniel Bissel Jr.

Although the Badge of Military Merit fell into disuse after the Revolutionary War, the idea of a decoration for individual gallantry remained. With the outbreak of the Mexican-American War in 1847, a "certificate of merit" was established for any soldier who distinguished himself in action. No medal went with the honor. After the Mexican-American War, the award was discontinued, which meant there was no

military award with which to recognize the nation's fighting men. Early in the Civil War, a medal for individual valor was proposed to General-in-Chief of the Army Winfield Scott. But Scott felt medals smacked of European affectation and killed the idea.

The medal found support in the Navy, which perceived a need for recognition of courage in strife. President Abraham Lincoln signed Public Resolution 82 into law on December 21, 1861. It contained a provision for a Navy medal of valor "to be bestowed upon such petty officers, seamen, landsmen, and Marines as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry and other seamanlike qualities during the present war."

A similarly worded resolution was introduced on behalf of the Army. Signed into law July 12, 1862, the measure provided for awarding a medal of honor "to such

noncommissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action, and other soldierlike qualities, during the present insurrection."

The Badge of Military Merit fell into oblivion until 1932 when General Douglas MacArthur, then Army Chief of Staff, pressed for its revival. The now-familiar Purple Heart was officially reinstated on February 22, 1932 as an Army award, given to those wounded in World War I or those with a Meritorious Service Citation Certificate. In 1943, the order was amended to include Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel. Coverage eventually included all services and "any civilian national" wounded while serving with the Armed Forces.

Since its inception, approximately 3,400 men and one woman have received the award for heroic actions in the nation's battles since that time.

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

By Steve Ruhnke

## Historical Artifacts Donated to the Mountain Post Historical Center

The museum recently received several unique and exciting artifacts for our collection. A few of these include:

- WW II era baseball with its own storied history – The ball and a glove were given to a family in Devon, United Kingdom by a soldier of the 2nd Battalion 8th Infantry Regiment, 4ID, prior to his departure for the Normandy Invasion. The family had befriended the soldier and as a parting gift, he gave the ball and mitt to their two young boys. Sixty-seven years later, the ball was discovered during a house move and the Turner family decided to return it to the Division.
- WWI officer's Swagger Stick, First Aid Pac, and captured German knife – These items belonged to LT Howard Randall, who served in the 4th Division AEF in 1917-1918 during WW I. The Swagger Stick has the crossed rifles Infantry insignia attached to signify his branch. The First Aid Pac is also unique as it was damaged by rifle fire.
- 1SG McNerney's Medal of Honor – In addition to the medal, several personal items and artifacts were donated by 1SG McNerney's family. These items, which date from his service in Vietnam, include a bloodstained Topographical Map used by 1SG McNerney and then-LT Richard Sauer to coordinate artillery strikes near their position during the battle at Polei Doc on 22 March 1967.

Our museum continues its efforts to locate and add pertinent artifacts to our collection to better preserve and tell the story of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson. We are particularly interested in Fort Carson-related material. Our collection is small and additional artifacts are needed to populate the new facility once it is built. If you have items you would like to donate, call the museum, (719) 524-0915.



Some of the interesting artifacts recently donated to the Mountain Post Historical Center.

# JOIN US! BECOME A MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN POST HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION TODAY.



The Mountain Post Historical Association (MPHA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to build and support the Mountain Post Historical Center (MPHC) at Fort Carson, CO. The Center will help preserve the history of Fort Carson and serve as a tribute to Fort Carson Soldiers, past, present and future. Please join us and help build a tangible salute to the brave men and women who proudly protect the freedoms we enjoy every single day.

USE THIS FORM FOR NEW MEMBERSHIPS OR TO UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION BY MAIL Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONAL INFORMATION: (PLEASE PRINT)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Business/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip + 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Credit Card:  Visa  MasterCard Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Digit Security Code (on back of card): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to "Mountain Post Historical Association."**

Mail check, along with this form, to: 1631 Mesa Avenue, Suite A, Colorado Springs, CO 80906

## MEMBERSHIP SELECTION/BENEFITS:

- Individual Basic** (\$25/year)
  - MPHA Lapel Pin
  - Newsletter/project updates
  - Invitation to the MPHA annual board meeting
- Individual Sustaining** (\$50/year)
  - MPHA Lapel Pin
  - Newsletter/project updates
  - Invitation to the MPHA annual board meeting
  - Invitation to the MPHA annual celebration/recognition event
- Individual Lifetime** (\$500, one-time)
  - MPHA Lapel Pin
  - Newsletter/project updates
  - Invitation to the MPHA annual board meeting
  - Invitation to the MPHA annual celebration/recognition event
  - Recognition on Lifetime Member column at Mountain Post Historical Center
- Corporate** (\$250/year)
  - Corporate plaque
  - Newsletter/project updates
  - Invitation to the MPHA annual board meeting
  - Invitation to the MPHA annual celebration/recognition event

## ADDITIONAL DONATION:

I want to make an additional donation to support construction of the Mountain Post Historical Center:

- \$100
- \$250
- \$500
- \$1,000
- \$2,500
- \$5,000
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

For additional information on sponsorship opportunities visit - **[www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org](http://www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org)**

**NOTE:** Your personal information will not be shared with anyone. It will only be used for communications from the MPHA. If you have any questions, please call us at (719) 633-2867 or contact us through our website, [www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org](http://www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org)

***Thank you for your support!***

The Mountain Post Historical Association is designated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Please consult with a tax professional to determine to what extent your donation is deductible.  
**Mountain Post Historical Association, Inc. (MPHA) • 1631 Mesa Avenue, Suite A, Colorado Springs, CO 80906 • [www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org](http://www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org)**

## Your Gift to MPHA + Enterprise Zone Tax Credit = Winning Combination!

Did you know that you can receive a tax credit on your Colorado taxes when you make a gift to the Mountain Post Historical Association? That's right, a credit – not a deduction – against your tax liability for gifts made to the MPHA. Here's how it works:

Individuals and businesses making cash contributions of \$250-100,000 can receive a 25% tax credit for their contribution. (In-kind contributions of \$250-\$125,000 qualify for a 12.5% tax credit.)

### IT'S EASY TO RECEIVE THE TAX CREDIT

- (1) Make your check payable to "El Paso County Enterprise Zone" and write "MPHA" in the memo line. To receive the tax credit, your donation must be at least \$250.
- (2) Send your check to the MPHA at 1631 Mesa Avenue, Suite A; Colorado Springs, CO 80906.
- (3) You will receive a receipt and all necessary tax documents from MPHA in time to file your Colorado tax form.

**Here's an example of just how powerful your gift can be and just how little it can cost (less than 50 cents on the dollar!):**

<b>Donation to MPHA</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	
EZone Credit	(\$250)	
Federal income tax deduction*	(\$217)	
State income tax deduction	(\$46)	
<hr/>		
Total credits and deductions	(\$513)	(\$513)
<b>After-tax cost of your contribution</b>		<b>\$487</b>

*This example is for illustrative purposes only. Please consult your own tax advisor for your specific situation.  
\*Federal deduction reduced because of the add-back effect of reduced state tax.*

The Mountain Post Historical Association (MPHA) is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to support the efforts to build the Mountain Post Historical Center, a dramatic, state-of-the-art facility to be built outside the gates of Fort Carson. The center will honor the history of the Soldiers who served at Fort Carson, past, present and future.

**To be removed from the MPHA newsletter mailing list:** Email [info@MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org](mailto:info@MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org) or call (719) 633-2867. Provide your name and address to be promptly removed.

**Help MPHA go GREEN:** To receive future editions of the MPHA newsletter via email, go to our website, [www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org](http://www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org), and click on the "Newsletter Sign-Up" tab.

**Privacy Policy:** The Mountain Post Historical Association is dedicated to protecting your privacy. We will not share your information with anyone without written permission, nor will we ever sell your personal information to anyone.



**Mountain Post Historical Association**  
1631 Mesa Avenue, Suite A  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
719-633-2867  
[www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org](http://www.MountainPostHistoricalCenter.org)

### MOUNTAIN POST HISTORICAL CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION

The Mountain Post Historical Center is currently open:

- Monday through Friday: 9:00 – 3:00
- 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month: 10:00 – 2:00

To schedule special group tours or for more information, call 719-524-0915.

### Become a Fan!

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter. Just go to the MPHHC website, click on the "Blog" tab, and sign-up for all the latest news and updates.

