



PASS IN REVIEW

"Shedding Light On Idaho's Military History"

1st Quarter

March 2011

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This has been a very busy quarter at the Museum. The IMHS was tasked with firing the guns for the Governor's Inauguration on January 7, 2011. The crews for the two World War II 75mm pack howitzers were made up of Museum volunteers.



One round was fired every three seconds for the 19 gun salute. The crews trained extensively beforehand and every round was on time.

The Museum has two interns from Boise State University this semester. Matt Fullmer and S. Corey Cline are both Juniors in the History Department. They are learning and doing a number of different Museum tasks throughout the spring. By the time you receive this, there will be a new exhibit on Idaho during the Spanish-American War in the Philippines.

After years of effort, the Museum will finally have highway signage on I-84! The signs will direct people to get off at the Orchard St. exit and then have follow-up brown signs to the Museum. We would like to thank Board Member **Bill Beck** for making this possible. You can read more about it on page 2.



Pending Orchard Street sign

After a protracted fight the Museum has gained the WWII PT-23 aircraft and will be moving it to Boise shortly. To house the aircraft in the Museum will take a complete change of the existing floor plan. Some exhibits will be consolidated while others will be changed completely. We will probably be asking for volunteers when we get to the moving stage.

The Museum recently received a large donation to the library. The estate of Howard A. Blum, a Marine Corps veteran, gave approximately 300 books to the IMHS. The books focus on WWII in the Pacific, especially the treatment of POWs and captured civilians by the Japanese. Is there someone that would like to volunteer to work on this collection and the library in general? Please contact me at 272-4841. - Ken Swanson★

NEW MEMBERS

Special Welcome to:

- ★ **Evan E. Filby**
- ★ **Paul March**
- ★ **Sabra Page**
- ★ **Nikki Thornton**
- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MUSEUM RECEIVES PT-23!



The Idaho Military History Museum has just acquired a beautifully-restored Fairchild PT-23.



Our plane in a hanger awaiting transport to the Museum

This aircraft, once owned by Micron Technology's Steve Appleton was gifted to the Museum three years ago, and a recent court decision has awarded the Museum possession. The aircraft should be on display by June. - Bill Miller★

Inside This Issue – Highlights include:

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**COMING SOON TO
A ROAD NEAR
YOU!**

THIS SIGN WILL SOON APPEAR ON
I-84



We are pleased to announce that we have been told by the IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT that there will be new “brown” information and directional signs installed near the new Orchid Street overpass telling the passing drivers that we exist and where we are.

We do not have a firm time frame for when they will be installed but we expect it will be sometime this summer or fall as the Interchange is completely finished. As an added plus, the ITD is doing the installation under their budget.

We are beyond pleased and excited because we are very hopeful that the signs announcing the existence and location of the Museum will increase our exposure in the local community and increase the number of people visiting the Museum.

This project started in April or May of 2007 as a project that I started as a general member. The first challenge was to find someone in the decision making process willing to discuss it. It was a slow pull; several people volunteered to help. Most were well intentioned but

could not follow up. I kept pursuing it- talking to anyone who appeared to be able to help.

In Dec of 2010, over coffee with a business friend, I was given the name and number of the man who could make it happen. That business friend also gave his endorsement to call that contact which helped pave the way.

As of this newsletter, and almost 4 years later, we have a commitment to get the “brown” interstate signs. Persistence does pay off! - *Bill Beck* ★

**MEDAL OF
HONOR HIGHWAY**

On 10 March 2011, Idaho’s Governor Otter signed into law Senate Bill 1050.

This bill, sponsored by Senator John W. Goedde, designates Idaho State Highway 3 as the North Idaho Medal of Honor Highway.

The Bill reads in part: “State highway 3, connecting U.S. highway 12 near Spalding with interstate 90 near Rose Lake, shall be designated as the “North Idaho Medal of Honor Highway” to honor Idahoans awarded the congressional medal of honor for their service in our armed forces.”

Col Bernie Fisher and three of Boise’s TV stations were on hand to witness the event.



Pictured here are Governor Otter, Col Fisher and Senator Goedde, the bill’s sponsor. ★

**A NEW IDNG UNIT-
NEW HELICOPTERS**



The Idaho Army National Guard is welcoming two new helicopters to Gowen Field.

Fresh from the factory, two new helicopters arrived at Gowen Field on Friday, 18 March. The helicopter is designated as the UH-72A “Lakota” – it is a light utility helicopter designed specifically for the medical evacuation mission the Idaho Army National Guard performs as part of our training mission and will also be used in support of civilian emergency operations throughout the state.

The UH-72A helicopter is built by American Eurocopter in Columbus, Mississippi and is known in the civilian world as the EC-145, in daily use with security agencies, emergency medical service providers and corporations throughout the world.

With its rear-loading clamshell doors, an externally mounted rescue hoist and cabin space that can accommodate two stretchers and a medical attendant, it is considered an optimal choice for its designated National Guard mission.

The two helicopters will operate under the newly formed Detachment 1 of D Company, 1-112 Security and Support Battalion, Idaho Army National Guard.

This new unit and its helicopters will join two other Army aviation units at Gowen Field; those units fly the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter and the UH-60 Blackhawk utility helicopter. The aircrew members who will operate the Lakota have experience in those other two helicopters.

The UH-72A Lakota is not designed for combat operations, it is specifically designed to be used for medical evacuation missions.

Additional info about the Lakota can be found at <http://www.uh-72a.com/index/index.asp>

- Col Tim Marsano★

ARTHUR J. JACKSON DAY



Medal of Honor Recipient Arthur J. Jackson in the Well of the Senate as Lt. Gov. Brad Little reads the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, Idaho citizen Arthur J. Jackson was born October 18, 1924 and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1943 and is one of only two living United State Marines from World War II who received the Medal of Honor; and

WHEREAS, in the fall of 1944, on the Island of Peleliu, Private First Class Arthur J. Jackson boldly charged and wiped out 12 pillboxes and 50 Japanese soldiers, essentially annihilating the enemy in the southern sector of the Peleliu, as a result receiving the Medal of Honor – the highest military honor awarded; and

WHEREAS, for Arthur’s heroic service he received the Medal of Honor and other decorations including two Purple Hearts, a Letter of Commendation, and countless medals; and

WHEREAS, Idaho citizens deserve an opportunity to recognize and thank Arthur for his valiant military career and deep devotion to the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, C.L. “BUTCH” OTTER, Governor of the State of Idaho, do hereby proclaim February 24, 2011 to be

Arthur J. Jackson Day

in Idaho, and I encourage Idahoans to honor this courageous citizen who is the embodiment of the true American hero and who ensures and reminds us of all that is wonderful about Idaho and this great country.



Following the reading of the Proclamation, Mr. Jackson received a standing ovation which he gratefully acknowledged. Photos courtesy of Jon Hanian, office of the Governor.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS



Mel and Pat Adamson recently celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with a trip to Hawaii. Congratulation to the both of you!★

UPCOMING EVENTS

Here are highlights of upcoming events or activities that the IMHS will be involved in. More details will be posted on the webpage as more information becomes available.

 **16 April - Idaho State History Day. IMHS Team to judge Military History Senior Entries; College of Idaho.**

 **26 May – Gowen Field Memorial. The next brick dedication will take place on 26 May 2011. [These bricks must be purchased by 1 April 2011.](#)**

 **27 May - Larry Gebert of Channel 7 will be doing his morning show, highlighting our D-Day open house and WWII battle reenactment at the Museum.**

 **30 May - Memorial Day. Ceremonial Artillery Battery: 21 Gun Salute to Our Fallen Veterans, Idaho State Veterans’ Cemetery.**

 **4 June – D-Day Open House and WWII Battle Re-enactment at the Museum.**

RECENT DONATIONS

Janet Dougherty-Smith – Paul Gowen’s footlocker.



Janet received the footlocker as a gift from Paul Gowen’s widow when she left for college in 1969. With the gracious approval of Paul’s daughter Stephanie, the locker has joined the rest of the Gowen collection at the Museum. ★

ENDOWMENT UPDATE



Our Endowment balance currently stands at **\$53,354.00**

Recent Endowment Donors include:

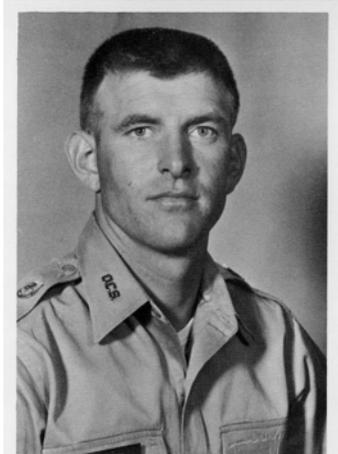
- Joe Icenhower**
- John & Stephanie Locke**
- Lei Lonnie Wood**

Don't forget the next time you purchase something on line, check this webpage to see if the retailer is listed so the Museum can receive a commission on your purchase. New retailers are being added everyday!



Thank you for supporting The Idaho Military History Museum. ★

FOLLOW UP TO DO YOU KNOW...?



CLEMENT L. OTTER Caldwell
Trp B, 116th Armd Cav Nampa

This prominent Idahoan was enrolled in the 1969 class at the Idaho Military Academy. Can you name him?

This uncaptioned photo and question appeared in our last newsletter. Congratulations to everybody who guessed correctly. ★

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Don't forget, it is now time to renew your membership! Check the label on your newsletter if you aren't certain you have renewed. It will give you the date your renewal is due.

If you receive your newsletter electronically, contact Gayle or Jeff for your renewal date. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, send Gayle your e-mail address. With another postage rate increase under discussion, every little bit helps.

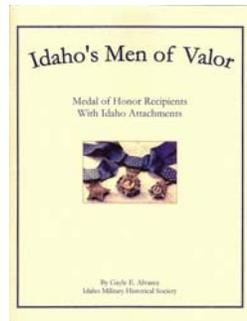
- Annual renewals are:
- General Membership: \$25**
 - Senior (60+): \$15**
 - Associate (Spouse): \$10**
 - Student: \$10**
 - Lifetime Membership: \$375**

Lifetime payment may be spread out over a one-year period.

The Idaho State Tax Commission offers a tax credit for contributions to Idaho Educational Entities which include "An Idaho public or private nonprofit museum."

The Idaho Military Historical Society is such an organization and donations to the Society qualify for this credit. Please remember the Museum as you plan your donations for the year. ★

MEDAL OF HONOR UPDATE



Gayle's book *Idaho's Men of Valor*, Medal of Honor Recipients with Idaho Attachments is back in print and in stock in the

gift shop.

There are now 46 known Medal of Honor Recipients with strong Idaho attachments. One of the recently

discovered recipients is Charles A. Varnum, an Indian Wars recipient, who was attached to the Idaho National Guard in 1908. It is also recorded that the Governor sought to make him a member of his staff.

Another is Nicholas Maher also an Indian Wars recipient, who was living in the Idaho Soldier's Home in Boise when he passed in 1916. His name was misspelled on his Medal of Honor documents and he went down in history as Nicholas Meaher. An application for a MoH marker has been submitted to the VA. ★



VA POLICY CHANGE

On 1 Feb 2011, Mr. Don Murphy, Acting Director of the VA's Memorial Programs Service, wrote what amounts to a cease and desist letter asking that no further Medal of Honor marker (headstone) applications be submitted. They are currently reviewing 23 applications, one of which is for our recently discovered Nicholas Maher.

The VA is reviewing their policies on 1) is a cemetery official qualified to sign the application and 2) should they continue the marker program for those recipients who already have a marker, even though there is no mention of the Medal of Honor on it. The VA has not provided a timeline for their decisions.

Some individuals who have become aware of this pending decision have contacted their Congressional Representatives and expressed their concerns over the pending decisions. We have also received reports that the National Governor's Association plans to weigh in on the matter. If you would more information on this matter, please contact Gayle. ★

**IDAHO FILE
INTO HISTORY**

**THE IMHS SALUTES WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH.**



**Jessica Ann Ellis
Bronze Star Recipient**

Bronze Star Citation: for meritorious service from 17 October 2007 through 11 May 2008, while assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2d Brigade, Special Troops Battalion, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Her commitment contributed to our Nation's continual war on terror and her actions represented her dedication to the security of the United States of America. Her sincere desire to bring peace and stability to a foreign nation is an example of what all American Soldiers strive to achieve. No greater honor can be demonstrated by her ultimate sacrifice and she will be forever remembered for her actions. Corporal Ellis' duty performance and selfless service are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon herself, the Multi-National Corps-Iraq, and the United States Army.

Jessica Ann Ellis was born to Steven and Linda Ellis in Burley, Idaho on June 26, 1983. She joined older brother Cameron; later younger sister Amanda joined the family.

Steve Ellis worked as a forester with the BLM and when Jessica was three years old, the family moved to Boise where they lived for four years before Steve was transferred to Twin

Falls where the family then lived for five years.

In 1992, Steve's job took the family to Washington DC. On weekends, the entire family would "escape" the city and go fishing for smallmouth bass on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River in Virginia. After a 'hard' day of fishing, they would paddle to shore, drag the canoe out of the water, and roast marshmallows over a small campfire. According to Steve, "Jessica loved that."

In 1997 the family moved to Oregon where Jessica attended Lakeview High School. While there, she was active in cross country, track and field (she lettered in both) and was a member of the swim team.



Jessica Ann age 18

Lakeview High School's Principal (then Vice-Principal) Bob Nash stated that Jessica was "the most friendly kid you'd ever want to meet...she was friends with everybody in the school. The typical barriers that separate certain types of people did not have any impact on her. ...Whether they were a good student, a bad student, a top-notch athlete, she got on very well with everybody."

Bobbie Steninger, who coached Jessica in track and field as well as cross country, said Jessica was a supportive team member. "You could always count on her. Some people are good in a wide variety of ways, and she was the kind of person who always had a smile on her face." "She was just a marvelous young lady who worked very, very hard...she was the kid you couldn't help but love."

Steninger also recalled her as someone "who always lit up the room when she walked in...a hard worker who always practiced hard...she's a sweetheart!" Jessica also served as an inspiration for her teammates.

From 1997 until she graduated high school in 2002, Jessica was enrolled in Lakeview School of Dance with her sister Amanda and took jazz, tap and ballet classes. Her instructor Linda Conroy remembered her as a hard worker. "She was a joy," Conroy said. "She was always helping, and she was just part of the group, a team player."

After graduating high school, Jessica enrolled in Central Oregon Community College in Bend, while working summers as a U.S. Forest Service firefighter in the Fremont-Winema National Forest. Jessica studied at C.O.C.C. until the spring of 2004, pursuing an Associate of Arts Degree.

"Jessica was also adventurous and hardworking, too." Jan Rekow, whose daughter Corri was close friends with Jessica and who ran cross country with her, stated, "She was never afraid to try anything." "I remember a time when she was applying for a fire crew position, and every day I would see her running up and down the road to get in shape and get ready for fire season."

In 2003, Steve became the forest supervisor of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and the family moved to Baker City, Oregon. Jessica's mother Linda became a family nurse practitioner for Eastern Oregon Medical Associates.

In September 2004, Jessica entered the U.S. Army with the goal of becoming a Medic. Her dance instructor was not at all surprised to learn that Jessica had enlisted in the service. "She was always a person who liked to help people, so I would imagine that would be a field that she would take to liking. That would be a way she could help people."

Steve stated, "I think she was looking for an adventure." Jessica attended her basic training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri.



Steve and Jessica Ellis at Ft. Leonard Wood Missouri right after Jessica graduated basic training

After graduation from Ft. Leonard Wood, Jessica attended Combat Medic training at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas. She was then assigned to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

In 2005 Jessica left for a 12-month combat tour in Iraq. She was assigned as a Combat Medic with the 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). While in Iraq, she earned a Combat Medic Badge “for performing medical duties while engaged in active ground combat operations under enemy hostile fire on 27 December 2005.”

In March 2006, her convoy was hit twice by a bomb exploding near the vehicle she was riding in. Jessica dismounted and treated the casualties. Her fellow soldiers reported that Jessica was usually the only medic on the convoy which normally numbered 32 personnel. They also reported that there were many times that Jessica not only treated American soldiers but also Iraq casualties and Iraq civilians.

The usual image of a combat medic is an unarmed soldier accompanying troops into battle. Jessica however was equipped with an M-4 rifle, a 9-mm pistol and body armor in addition to her medical/aid bag. (of note, she only carried the pistol on the first tour)

She often went on patrol with combat engineers who cleared away

roadside explosives. Her reason for accompanying them was to provide emergency medical treatment to casualties on the battlefield however Jessica also trained on the 50 cal machine gun-turret gun. A soldier never knew when they would be the one needing to step up. Her priorities were suppressing fire first, being a medic second. When not on patrol, Jessica often worked in the Riva Ridge clinic at FOB (Forward Operating Base) Liberty.



Fellow soldier Joy Kroemer and PFC Ellis at Camp Stryker Iraq in 2006

In the fall of 2006, Jessica returned to the United States and was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. When on leave, she paid visits to her family in Baker City, Oregon. She was noticeably much more serious. Steve remembered that “she seemed detached at times, like she was doing a lot of thinking.” When he broached the subject, Jessica stated, “I’m there for my buddies.” She firmly believed that if she wasn’t there, she would be letting her buddies down. Her “guys” looked out for her and she helped them. They had trained together at Fort Campbell and were a tight knit group. She had also seen some of them killed in combat.

In October 2007, Jessica left for what was to be a 15-month second tour in Iraq. She was assigned to the same element in the 101st Airborne Division she had served with previously. Her fellow soldiers called her “Doc” Ellis and according to one friend, Jessica “loved what she was doing.”

In April, 2008 Jessica was on a night time “road clearing” operation in

Baghdad. The military term for the vehicle she was riding in is Buffalo MPRC which stands for: Mine Protected Route Clearing Engineer vehicle. It is a heavily armored vehicle that is primarily used by combat engineers to clear roadside bombs. Their vehicle, often referred to as simply a Buffalo, was struck by a roadside bomb. The Buffalo burned as did Jessica’s Medic (Aid) bag and rifle. Even so, Jessica returned to road clearing duties as soon as she was able. Jessica’s fellow service member SPC Roberson stated, “Even though her job was dangerous, and she knew it was, she always wanted to be out with ‘her guys’ rather than working in the clinic.”



Jessica on combat patrol in a Buffalo on her second tour in 2008

Jessica called home shortly afterwards and told her parents, “this is a very dangerous place to be” and that “it was heating up again.” Her comment was, “she got her bell rung.”



Jessica, 3rd from the right, and some of “her guys” next to a Buffalo in 2008

Then dawned May 11, 2008; a short three weeks since her encounter with the roadside bomb. It was Mothers Day. That evening, Jessica was accompanying a group of engineers, her buddies, on another mission in North West Baghdad when their convoy came under attack.

The Buffalo in which Jessica and four others were riding was struck by multiple

EFPs, (Explosively Formed Penetrator warheads). Jessica was seated behind the driver when the devices exploded. Jessica did not survive; she was 24 years old.

Jessica was the second woman from both Idaho and Oregon to be killed in the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kuwait.



She was posthumously awarded the **Bronze Star** and Purple Heart. Her other awards and decorations include: Army Commendation Medal; Army Good Conduct Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Iraq Campaign Medal; Meritorious Unit Citation; Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Army Service Ribbon; Overseas Service Ribbon; Combat Medical Badge; and Weapons Qualification, and M4 expert.

Following a funeral in Baker City, Oregon, she was buried in Section 60, Site 8659, in Arlington National Cemetery.

She was gone but most definitely not forgotten.

On Veterans Day in 2009, the city of Bend, Oregon dedicated a memorial to its fallen soldiers from WWI forward.



Jessica's name is engraved on the monument on the water's edge-Photo courtesy of Dick Tobiason

The state of Idaho also erected a memorial to its service members who paid the ultimate price in the Global War on Terror.



The memorial includes two pillars with the names of Idaho's fallen. This is the pillar with Jessica's name engraved upon it. Pictured here, her name is the 3rd up from the bottom-Photos courtesy of George Johnson and Gayle Alvarez.

On September 10, 2010, the families of Idaho's fallen warriors gathered for a private preview of the memorial. Each family was presented with a black granite plaque with their loved ones name engraved upon it.

The granite and engraving were identical to that on the memorial. They also received a certificate of condolence and recognition from the state of Idaho, and a U.S. Flag that had been flown over the U.S. Capitol in their loved ones honor.

The next day, September 11, 2010, the anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the memorial was publically unveiled. Steve and Linda had been unable to attend the proceedings on the 10th and received the tributes to Jessica on the 11th.



General Gayhart presents Steve and Linda Ellis the black granite plaque with Jessica's name engraved upon it-Photo courtesy of George Johnson

Jessica is also remembered at the Wildland Firefighter Memorial in Boise, Idaho.



In November 2010, Jessica's unit was relocated to Afghanistan. In her memory, the new Battalion Aid Station at FOB Wilson, picture here, was named in her honor. In December 2010, U.S. Navy Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Afghanistan and the CPL Jessica Ellis Battalion Aid Station. On the left is Mrs. Mullen, wife of Admiral Mullen and SGT Hillway. The name of other soldier is unknown. Photos courtesy of Joint Chief of Staff webpage and *The Nighthawks Report* Vol #1, December 2010.

Additionally, Central Oregon Community College contacted Steve and Linda. It turned out that Jessica was just six credits shy of her degree when she enlisted in the military. Steve and Linda were then told that the College included Jessica's time in the service towards her degree and as such were awarding Jessica her degree, albeit posthumously.

Ft Campbell, Kentucky also built a memorial to Jessica and every May 11th as well as every Memorial Day, it is covered with flowers and mementoes.

Editors Note: A very special thank you to Steve Ellis for sharing Jessica's story with us. ☆

MOST WANTED



➤ **Volunteers and Docents** – our Docent shortage is critical, especially on Saturdays.

We are also looking for help in the

Library.

If you can spare 4 hours a week, we can **really use your help**. Please call Ken at 272.4841. ☆

Produced By: Idaho Military Historical Society
Feature Stories, Editor & Production: Gayle Alvarez
Comments or article suggestions are welcome, contact us at 272-4841 or visit our web site at: <http://museum.mil.idaho.gov>

JUST IN CASE Have you sent in your renewal for 2011? Don't forget, *donations are tax deductible*. When is your membership due for renewal? Check the date just above your name on the address label or contact Gayle.

	IDAHO MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY		
	4040 W. Guard Street, Boise, Idaho 83705-5004		
Donation/Membership Application/Renewal Form			
YES! Please enter my tax deductible membership application/renewal in the category checked below. I have enclosed a check or money order in the amount indicated.			
INDIVIDUAL:	\$ 25 <input type="checkbox"/> General	\$ 375 <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	\$ 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Student
	\$ 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Associate (Members Spouse)	\$ 15 <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (60+)	
ORGANIZATIONAL:	\$ 500 <input type="checkbox"/> Platinum	\$ 100 <input type="checkbox"/> Silver	
	\$ 250 <input type="checkbox"/> Gold	\$ 50 <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze	
OTHER: (<i>Endowment, Contributions, etc.</i>)			
\$ _____	FOR: _____	TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED:	\$ _____
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Heroic Past...Proud Future