

My Take: Taking Up The Flag

Written by Jane Alexander, Editor-In-Chief
Thursday, 14 July 2011 10:06



It was the 4th of July, 2000. George Scofield, an elderly resident of Columbus, NC, stood silently and respectfully as the “Stars and Stripes” and other flags were carried past him in the town’s Independence Day parade. Sadly, despite the solemnity of the moment, he noticed that most of his fellow spectators continued talking—and he saw none of them standing to honor the passing flags and what they represented.

Mr. Scofield’s experience at the parade led him to rally support of the local VFW Post, assorted veterans, community leaders and citizens to educate the community on flag respect, honor, history and meanings. Hosting tours for school children, scout groups, parents and others and presenting classes and programs on flags were all part of the vision Scofield put forth. That vision eventually turned into what is now known as the “House of Flags Museum” in Polk County, NC.

By 2005, more than 3000 visitors had passed through the museum, which was housed in an unheated warehouse, located in a remote area of the county. Clearly, the “House of Flags Museum” deserved better (and needed to be more accessible to the public at large). Thus, a number of initiatives—*fueled primarily by hardworking volunteers and roughly 200 individual donors*—were undertaken to move the operation to better digs. It took a while.

To make a long story short, this Veteran’s Day, November 11, 2011, the “House of Flags Museum” will reopen in a beautiful new home—*a remodeled firehouse in downtown Columbus*. George Scofield, however, won’t be on hand to join in the celebration. He passed away in 2008, at the age of 83. The new facility will be dedicated to his memory.

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Why have I taken up your time with this patriotism-laced story? The “House of Flags Museum” has a strong connection to MT: Our beloved contributing editor Bob Williamson is chairman of its Board of Directors. Bob tells me that the museum’s current collection numbers “well over 300 individual flags.” These faithful reproductions and special displays reflect flags from military branches, veterans’ organizations, religions, pre-Colonial and Colonial times, the Revolutionary and Civil War eras (including “Rattlesnake Flags” of the American Revolution), as well as a host of other national, state, territorial and commemorative reasons.

The business model is simple: Donations are welcome. According to Bob, the museum offers flag sponsorships and memorial opportunities to individuals and corporations that wish to contribute to the collection and further its educational mission. If that’s you or your company, please log on to www.houseofflags.org to learn more. Or, contact Bob via flagmuseum@gmail.com.

In the meantime, if you find yourself in the Columbus, NC, area, be sure to drop by this jewel of a museum—the *only “House of Flags Museum” in the country*. It will warm your heart and, in a very colorful way, remind you again of why you’re so proud to be an American.

MT

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jane".