

FAWMA Focus

Friends of the U. S. Army Women's Museum ASSOCIATION

A Quarterly Newsletter

2nd Quarter of 2022

From the Co-Presidents...

Hello Friends!

On June 23, 2022, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the signing of Title IX into law, which was part of the Education Amendments Act. I was seven years old at the time and didn't realize how this would positively impact my life--I would have many more opportunities than women who came before me. And that made me realize how much more impressive the accomplishments were of those brave and patriotic women who served before me in the Army!

As I listened to the news stories covering the anniversary of Title IX, I watched an interview with tennis great, Billy Jean King. She said, "the more you know about history, the more you know about yourself." And that, my dear friends, is why telling Army women's stories in the Army Women's Museum is so important! It helps us understand the context of how women, and women's accomplishments, have evolved not only in the Army but across our great country.

And speaking of accomplishments, we have some to share: The Education Team is going strong, booking 96 programs and 5,491 participants to date. Additionally, our digital educator, Micaela, has delivered programs locally, across the country and overseas! The digital "reach" of the Live Broadcast Studio that you funded is global!

In addition to the Marketing Grant FAWMA was awarded by the Cameron Foundation in November, we were recently invited to submit a proposal for a Sustainment Grant for the Live Studio—and we did.

Continued on Page 2

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FRIENDS OF THE ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM
ASSOCIATION P.O. BOX 1027, PRINCE GEORGE, VA 23875

PHONE: 804.734.5742

E-MAIL: ltfawma@gmail.com

Co-President's Message continued...

The finishing touches for the "Hello Girls" exhibit are complete with the addition of the uniform and archival collection of former Hello Girl, Marie Louise Ruffe—courtesy of your donations.

Perhaps most exciting, Fort Lee may be renamed Fort Gregg-Adams, after LTG Arthur Gregg and LTC Charity Adams, former commander of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, and who is featured in the AWM. The Naming Commission will send their recommendations to Congress this fall.

Riding the wave of enthusiasm surrounding the renaming of Fort Lee and the interest in LTC Charity Adams and the 6888th, the AWM is planning a new exhibit showcasing the Six Triple-Eight. This news is literally "hot off the presses!" Last, but certainly not least, we would like to thank the FAWMA Team, and you, our wonderful donors and supporters! Title IX continues to fuel the contributions of women, and Army women to this nation. Billie Jean King would be proud that we are sharing history and learning more about ourselves in the process.

"Teamwork Makes the Dream Work."

Aimee and Cydnee
FAWMA, Co-Presidents



Co-Presidents Cydnee Gentry and Aimee Kominiak

Curator's Corner

We have had a busy few months here at the museum with lots of exciting news to report. In May, The Naming Commission announced their recommendations for nine Army installations named in commemoration of the Confederacy. The suggested new name for Fort Lee is Fort Gregg-Adams after LTG Arthur Gregg and LTC Charity Adams. A representative from the commission told me, "Women featured prominently in the candidates for Fort Lee, in large part due to the presence of the museum." Early in the renaming process, the AWM submitted a brief nominating LTC Adams, commander of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion in World War II, to the commission. The museum hosted the commission on their visits to Fort Lee and our staff diligently attended all community engagement events to advocate for LTC Adams so we were thrilled with this announcement. The commission also acknowledged other women by recommending that Fort A.P. be renamed after Dr. Mary Edwards Walker and Fort Benning be renamed in commemoration of LTG Hal Moore and his wife, Julia Moore. These recommendations will be sent to Congress by October 1, 2022.

Thanks to the generous financial support of FAWMA, we were able to install Marie Louise Ruffe's uniform in the Origins of Service Gallery. Ruffe served as a Telephone Operator during WWI. Her uniform completes the museum's "Hello Girl" exhibit which features Ruffe's archival collection.

Finally, I have the honor of representing the museum as a liaison to the United States Mint for the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Congressional Gold Medal. Nominated by the sponsors of the "Six Triple Eight" Congressional Gold Medal Bill, Senator Jerry Moran and Representative Gwen Moore, I am on a team with COL Edna Cummings, USA (Ret) and CDR Carlton Philpot, USN (Ret). Our role is to collaborate closely with the Mint staff for the medal design. It is an honor to work on this symbol of the nation's gratitude to the members of the 6888th.

With the spotlight on our recommended new base name and the 6888th Congressional Gold Medal, the AWM is planning for a LTC Charity Adams and Six Triple-Eight exhibit. We hope to open this exhibit before the end of 2023 and will keep you posted about opportunities to support the effort!

I want to close with a heartfelt thank you to all our FAWMA friends – you all are the best.

Sincerely,
Tracy



Spotlight...

Women's Health Clinic at Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Salem, Virginia renamed in honor of Veteran MSG (R) Silverine Vinyard James, an African-American WAC.

The Salem Veterans Affairs Medical Center dedicated its Women's Health Center on June 6, 2022, to local resident MSG (Ret) Silverine Vinyard James. Her military uniform now hangs in a glass case outside the Center.

James was born in Vinton, Virginia, a small-town east of Roanoke, Virginia in 1929. She joined the Army in 1949, following in her brother's footsteps in serving her country. At age 20, she enlisted as a WAC (Women's Army Corps). She trained at the WAC training facility at Camp Lee, now Fort Lee, an Army base south of Richmond. She belonged to a segregated company of black women living during Jim Crow discrimination.



MSG(R) Silverine Vinyard James pauses near the entrance to the Women's Health Center named in her honor.

James had a distinguished career in the Army with duty stations in New York, Japan, Germany, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia. After the Army she worked at the Salem VA Medical Center and for the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

MAJ (RET) Flo Dunn, FAWMA Board member is proud of her fellow WAC, noting that they became friends while serving at Fort Eustis in the Public Affairs Office under the U.S. Army Transportation Training Command in the late fifties. MAJ (RET) Dunn believes it is fitting for the VA Women's Health Center to be named for Silverine after her decades of dedicated service to the country and the Army.

For more information or to read more about MSG (RET) James: The Roanoke Times June 6, 2022 article: https://roanoke.com/news/local/salem-va-hospital-renames-womens-health-clinic-in-honor-of-female-veteran/article_55dc73b8-e5c3-11ec-8ae3-639782fa3cc6.html

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PMI (PROPERTY MANAGEMENT INC)

Welcome FAWMA Admin Assistant, Danna Oronoz



Welcome aboard to our new Admin Assistant, Danna Oronoz! Danna is a military wife and comes to us with a wealth of knowledge in non-profit organizations. An Army brat and now an Army spouse, Danna spent her whole life moving. Curiosity was the driving force in pursuing a career that would allow her to share a thirst for knowledge with others. As a first-generation Puerto Rican migrant, she grew up speaking Spanish and English interchangeably. Frequent relocation and travel exposed her to many regions and cultures, providing countless opportunities for absorbing new experiences, igniting and fueling her lifelong passion for learning. Her childhood bedroom, wherever located at the time, was carefully curated with souvenirs and books she obtained throughout her travels: a Bible from Jerusalem, the complete collection of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales from his home in Copenhagen, a book about the world's Seven Natural Wonders from the Grand Canyon, to name just a few.

Danna's wide-ranging interests have led her in many directions. Since graduating university, she has found employment in a diverse range of fields including customer service, public relations, education, tech support, and marketing. As a result, she has learned to work with people in varied environments, from teaching and mentoring middle-school students, to bringing new technology and media to broaden community outreach. Her journey so far has prompted a desire to pursue a graduate education, channel passions, and realize professional goals. She is excited and grateful to have been given the opportunity to work with the Friends of the Army Women's Museum Association and looks forward to the unique experiences that her time with the organization will bring!

BRICK CAMPAIGN

Do you want to be a part of history? Order a customized brick that will be placed in the landscape areas around the outside of the US Army Women's Museum. Donate a brick as a lasting tribute to honor a service member, a civilian, a spouse, a friend, a family member, a retiree or yourself in support of our country, our service and our museum. For more information go to our website at: <https://www.thatsmybrick.com/armywmnsva>



IN MEMORY/ HONOR OF DONATIONS ARE WONDERFUL WAYS TO RECOGNIZE A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER AND SUPPORT THE U.S. ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM! WHEN YOU MAKE AN IN MEMORY/ HONOR OF DONATION, PLEASE LET US KNOW THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE PERSON YOU WISH TO HAVE NOTIFIED ABOUT YOUR DONATION.

Happening at the Museum...

6888th Exhibit Coming Soon!!



The AWM and FAWMA are celebrating the achievements of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion and LTC Charity Adams. The Naming Commission is recommending a new base name in her honor and the 6888th Congressional Gold Medal has been approved by Congress. The AWM with FAWMA's support are planning to honor both the Six Triple-Eight and LTC Adams with an exhibit opening late 2023. Please help support our efforts!



AWM Team prepping Ruffe uniform for the new Hello Girls Exhibit



Louise Ruffe, Hello Girls telephone operator 1918 uniform on exhibit at the AWM.

Hello Girl Exhibit – now open to the public!



The Hello Girls are on exhibit at the Army Women's Museum!

More Happenings...



WWII WAC Emily Drake

A WWII WAC veteran, 97-year-old Emily Drake, visited the AWM from Pittsburgh. This trip was a special request from Emily as she “desperately wanted to visit the Army Women’s Museum” while her health is still good. The Education Specialist welcomed Ms. Drake and gave her a tour. Ms. Drake attended the opening of the museum in 2001 and marveled at the redesigned galleries. She enjoyed share some of her experiences as a WAC.

Twenty representatives from Virginia Welcome Centers across the state visited the AWM in June. This Familiarization Tour, sponsored through a partnership between the Virginia Tourism Corporation and Petersburg Area Regional Tourism, was designed to introduce front line workers state attractions that they can then encourage travelers to visit. Virginia is for Lovers!

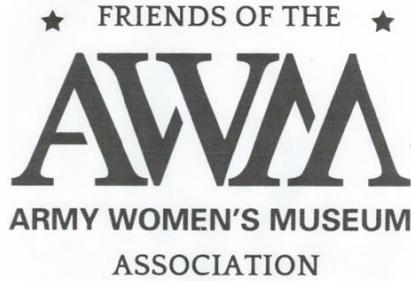


Virginia Tourism Team visit to AWM



BG Niave Knell, Commandant,
US Army Military Police School

In April, BG Niave Knell, Commandant of the U. S. Army Military Police School, visited the AWM. BG Knell is getting ready to serve as the 1st Infantry Division’s first female Deputy Commanding General at Fort Riley. BG Knell was pleased to see so many history making MPs featured at the museum. She is a founding member of the Women of West Point – an organization with whom the AWM is building a relationship.



Yes, I will support the U.S. Army Women's Museum with my tax-deductible donation!

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The Friends of the Army Women's Museum Association is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit, educational organization. Financial documents are available from: State Division of Consumer Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218

Mailing Address:

FRIENDS OF THE ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1027, Prince George, VA 23875

804-734-5742 or email us ltfawma@gmail.com

**FRIENDS OF THE ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 1027, PRINCE GEORGE, VA 23875**