



BANNER



I have a little poppy, as red as red can be,
 To show that I remember those who fought to make me free.
 There are not words big enough.
 There is not a hug strong enough.
 There is not a smile wide enough.
 All I can offer is thank you.
 You are my hero.
 You are in my thoughts.
 You are in my prayers.
 For all you've done, thank you.

Our hallway is filled with uniforms that were worn by persons who served and sacrificed to ensure we would have the freedoms, rights, responsibilities, and possibilities of an American Dream. A few of those men never made it back to Nebraska. Some of them came back to Dawson County and became community leaders. Walking past those uniforms and seeing their names every day is daunting and inspiring at the same time. I'm awed to realize that the men who filled out these coats actually lived battles I've studied and taught to a younger generation. My heart is filled with gratitude and respect for generations of men and women who made history—from Vicksburg to Argonne to Normandy to Seoul to Saigon to Tehran. — Cheri Bergman

Give BIG Lexington 2017

Give Big Lexington is November 16 this year and we are ready to go! Every year we have to decide which project at the Dawson County Museum will take precedence to be our GBL fundraiser. This year it was easy. We're calling it "Save the Engines" and it's been put off too long.

The 1936 Lexington Fire Truck and #485 Baldwin Locomotive are outdoor exhibits that have succumbed to bad weather, bird droppings, and even sunshine for so long they are starting to show huge amounts of deterioration. These exhibits are a big part of our community's history and many people have fond memories of riding the Firetruck at Christmas time and playing on the Locomotive when it was near Highway 30. Our job at the Dawson County Historical Museum is to preserve history, not destroy it, so we're trying to raise \$26,700 to save the engines!



Last year we applied for a grant with the Union Pacific Foundation to restore the engines but for reasons unknown we were denied. So, it's up to us and our community to raise the money to save some of Dawson County's history. Will you help us?

You can give any time between now and midnight November 16th.

<https://givebiglexington.razoo.com/story/Dawsoncountyhistoricalsocietyandmuseum>

Dawson County Veterans Focus: Col. Lynn Ringenberg

Just a regular kid from Lexington with dreams of being a doctor

by Lynn Ringenberg, MD



Growing up in Lexington in the fifties and sixties will always hold special memories, from building lifelong friendships to building confidence and skills for future endeavors. I started my educational journey at Bryan Elementary School and fondly recall our dog-Fellow-patiently waiting for us on the corner of the school, and then happily escorting us north a few blocks to our home. Junior high was spent at the "old high school" on Washington street, and we had moved into a new single-story home directly across from the main double doors of the school. I could tumble out of bed and still make it to class before the last bell rang. Sports were big in our family, especially baseball where half of us rooted for the NY Yankees and the other half the NY Dodgers (before they moved). We were in school during the playoffs and World Series, but Mom would notify us if the Yankees won (seems they were always in the series back then) by hanging a white flag on the front door, and we could peer out from the second story classroom windows on the west side of the school and know that our Yankees had won! This was long before texting, but we figured out how to communicate important things!!

After graduating from the newly built Lex High School on Adams street in 1964, my educational journey took me to Kearney State College, then a short time studying biochemistry at the UN College of Medicine, and finally, my dream and goal since I was 4 years old, to enter medical school at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine in Omaha. After four years of rigorous study, late nights, challenges and rewards, it was off to residency in pediatrics at the University of Florida for 2 years, then completing my final year at Bowman Gray in North Carolina. It was here that the military bug got a hold of me. Although I had always respected & honored those in uniform, it was then that I decided to put one on myself. Dad served in the Army during the Korea conflict, my maternal grandfather served in the Army during WW II, and my brothers served in the Navy and Army, so I decided on a new direction and challenge: Medical Corps with the US Army at Ft. Bragg, NC.

After spending 2 years on active duty, I transitioned to the reserves and starting a private practice in Florida; later joining the University of South Florida College of Medicine (USF Health), and retiring as emeritus professor of pediatrics. Building a practice, hospital rounds, emergency room responsibilities, teaching medical students and residents and monthly reserve training I was in full swing, and loving all of it! The privilege and responsibility of caring for my patients/families and of serving my country as a weekend warrior kept my life full and challenging. I moved through the military educational system of Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, Command & General Staff College, Flight Surgeon School at Ft. Rucker, and the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, PA achieving the rank of colonel. Along the way I was selected to command the 73rd Field Hospital in St. Petersburg, FL and 324th Combat Support Hospital in Miami, FL (both now decommissioned) which were extraordinary experiences to provide medical care to troops around the country during training exercises and with select missions to Central America. I was called to Active Duty for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1991, and again for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, where I was assigned to the 87th Training Support Division as the Division Surgeon and medical consultant to a 2-star general.



Lynn during training exercises



Lynn receiving The Legion of Merit

So, this kid from Lexington has had a terrific ride. Growing up in Lexington was partly responsible - good and caring teachers, a supportive and loving family, solid values and respect for all people. I'm now retired from the military after a wonderful 25-plus year career, and a medical career of almost 40 years! So, my message to any of the younger folks that might read this is: don't be afraid to dream big, study hard, stay focused on your dreams, find some good mentors and remain positive, even during the rough times, and you will have a successful and fulfilling life.



Tim researching insignia

Volunteer Blitz – Tackling Military Uniform Inventory

Thank you to these volunteers for helping us inventory our military uniforms!

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Linda Mins | Tim White |
| Jackie Pesek | Sarah Neben |
| Delphine Anthony | Patsy Meyer |
| Linda Anthony | Marge Bader |
| Martha Newquist | Julie Rickertsen |
| Sara Taylor | |

You were a great help!



Sarah documenting a uniform

We are still working on documentation for these uniforms and the men & women who wore them.

As of now, these are the numbers of veterans with uniform items in our museum:

2 Civil War, 3 UNL Cadets (pre-WWI), 14 WWI, 25 WWII, 8 Korea Era, 12 Vietnam to current.

We also have American Legion and Red Cross uniforms.



Gold Star Mother: A mother who has lost a child while serving in the military.

DCHS recently received a set of 8 military portraits. Eight brothers from the Miller family served in the US Military between 1940 and 1964. Mother, Katherine Miller, may have hung a flag with a blue star (signifying a child in active service) continuously for 24 years. Custom was that the blue star would be covered with gold if the serviceman was killed. Mrs. Miller had 2 gold stars.

150 Years of Dawson County in Nebraska: Fashion and Military

- Crystal Werger

I was in Seventh Heaven during the months of August and September! See, I have a fetish with fashion, anything from clothing to shoes, and hats to jewelry! I am in love! So, when Cheri started bringing boxes and boxes and BOXES of old clothing from the museum archives I couldn't contain my excitement. I've been dying to go through all the clothing boxes we have upstairs, but whenever I'd start, something or SOMEONE would call me away. But finally, the day arrived when I would be "allowed" to spend most of the day looking through the trunk in Grandma's attic (that's how I like to refer to it!).

As Cheri prepared for the *Fashion through the Decades* exhibit the museum had in its art gallery September-October we came across so many outfits with so many stories it was evident that it was going to be hard to decide what to include in the exhibit and what to leave for another time. Believe it or not, editing is very hard to do!

So, when Cheri came up with an idea for another display for 2018, that made me feel better about putting away some of the beautiful, fun clothing for another time.

Once the exhibit was up and ready to go we switched gears just a tad, and began our Volunteer Blitz to inventory the military uniforms the museum has in its collection. I always thought we had most of them already on display in our Military Hall of Honor, but I was very wrong. We currently have 5 clothing racks with 25-30 uniforms on each rack! Thank goodness, we had about 10 volunteers during the three weeks of Volunteer Blitz to help us! Their duties were to locate an accession number on each piece of clothing and fill out a special military inventory sheet with all the pertinent information, such as a physical description of the item, condition, donor, history of the item, branch of the military, and a description of the patches and honors on the uniform if there were any. Then they needed to take a picture of the item so when we put all this information in our museum software we will have a picture to add to it.

The history of the uniform or the dress and the person who wore it is always very important to us. It's what bonds us to the item. Seeing an historical piece of clothing is one thing, but reading and understanding the story behind it, makes it so much more real to us. Doing the research is just as much fun as pulling the item out of the box and seeing it for the first time. Researching the person who wore the clothing is like opening Pandora's Box, you never know what's going to come out of it!

One thing we both love is when we can tie things together. As we get ready for exhibits and do our research sometimes we can relate people to other exhibits we've done in the past. Like I said earlier, there's that "connection" that we love to make; so when we get to tie three people together from three different exhibits we are not just excited but sometimes amazed at how things work out at the Dawson County Museum. Earlier this year, we had an art exhibit called *Framed: a Frame by Frame Glimpse into 150 Years of Dawson County Families*, and one of the featured artists was Elgas Grim. His father, Carl Grim, was a lifelong resident of Dawson County. Carl's sister--Zella's graduation dress was featured in our "Decades of Fashion" exhibit. Then as we were working on our military uniforms we came across Zella's husband--Arthur Munson's World War I uniform! We knew right away that we needed more history on this family!

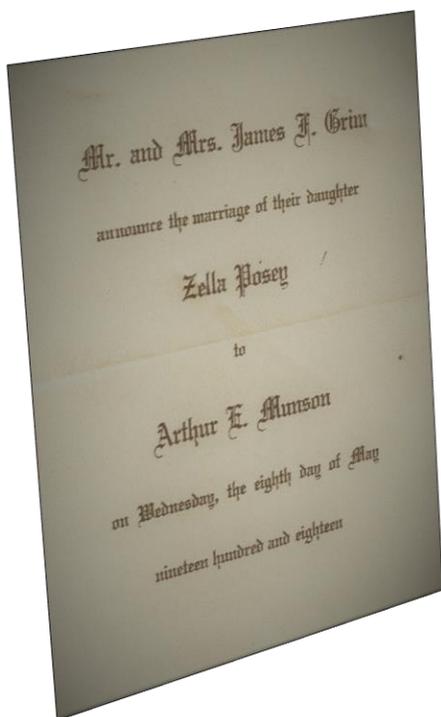


Most of the time when we do our research we start by going through the donor file. Sometimes we get lucky and find a connection or history we need but most of the time we have to go further, such as looking for obituaries in order to find family members, or just calling the donor. Well, lo and behold, this time the donor just happened to be Zella and Arthur's daughter, Polly. In our profession this is like finding gold! Rarely do we get to talk to people who are only once removed from the generation we're asking about. Polly supplied us with pictures of her parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents, some family obituaries, and also with copies of her father's service records from World War I. Our donor file got significantly fatter, but the good thing is that we have a story that ties several items in our collection together.

As I look at Zella Grim's 1911 High School graduation photograph and then look at her actual dress, I can't help but be in awe. This young woman looking back at me lived to be 100. Zella Grim married Arthur Munson in 1918. Twenty days later he left for war. There is a picture of Arthur in his military uniform which his daughter, Polly, sent to us. He stands next to his Father-in-Law, Jim Grim. Most likely it was taken right before he left to go overseas, but what I see is the worn uniform that is hanging in our Military Hall of Honor, and it gives me goose bumps. Arthur and Zella lived a long life together. There is much more to the story--after they wore these items of clothing--but for me time stands still. I wouldn't be the least surprised to see the two of them walking down our hallway in the graduation dress and military uniform. People often ask me if the Dawson County Museum is haunted, and yes, we have our ghosts but they're not what most people expect. Our ghosts tell stories, they whisper to us through photographs and clothing, quilts and furniture, even hand painted china and battered farm equipment, that a life was lived and not forgotten. That is the reason we do the research, why we try so hard to connect the dots. Each time we find that "connection" we discover another ghost to tell its story. And there is always, always a story.



Zella Grim Munson 1911



Arthur E. Munson and James Grim 1918



Dawson County Museum proudly presents

Select Paintings from

The Legacy of Nebraska

by Todd A. Williams

November 1 – January 6
Art Gallery

ARTIST RECEPTION & LIVE DEMONSTRATION
Saturday, December 9th

Demo Courtesy of Lexington Community Foundation and NE150 Foundation

Platte River Drought

Remember **COFFEE with CAROL** is every first wednesday of the month.
see you december 6th at 10am!

Looking Past Skin: Our Common Threads

An exhibit that's been in the process for over a year is finally coming to completion in the main gallery at the Dawson County Historical Museum. The Minorities Health Disparities Initiative team with Project Manager/Curator Kim Matthews with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has been in the Lexington area conducting research into our very diverse population (97% minority) trying to find out what works and what doesn't especially in the areas of health care, housing, and agriculture.

Looking Past Skin: Our Common Threads is an evidence based art exhibition that is part of a larger effort to wed art to research. The exhibition is composed of two elements that together aim at reaching a broader audience across the state and allowing viewers to question their perceptions on immigration, agriculture, and community well-being.

Currently this exhibit is at the Dawson County Museum but will only be here for a few weeks until it travels to the Nebraska State Museum in Lincoln where it will be for several months.

A lot of research, time, and energy has been put into this project by members of our community.

Come see what they've been up to.