

20150614

JWV Meeting – Presentation by Thomas Webb, coordinator Holt Oral History Project, Pritzker Military Museum and Library (PPML)

Presentation was from about 1010 to 1100 hours.

Mike Sawyer's opening remarks:

Our speaker today is Thomas Webb, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library's Holt Oral History Coordinator since 2011. Thomas holds a B.A. in English from Eastern Illinois University, a M.A. in Composition and Rhetoric from the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS), and a MLIS from Dominican University. He is in charge of gathering the biographical data of participants of the oral history program, as well as connecting these individuals with members of the volunteer staff for scheduled interviews. Of course, getting these interviews edited and on You Tube is just part of his job.

Before coming to the Pritzker Military Museum & Library in 2008, Thomas spent three years working as a Library Assistant at Brookens Library, located on the University of Illinois Springfield campus.

Thomas' family moved from Nebraska to Charleston, IL when he was a child. He attended college there where he met his wife Kate Brodie, who is a 5th grade teacher in Palos Hills. They live in Homewood, IL, with their two children, Mitilda, age four, and 1-year old Quincy.

Thomas Webb:

He opened with a short clip that discussed PMML mission.

He then began his discussion using a PowerPoint presentation:

- They have over 72,000 items, of which some 45,000 are books on military history (US)
- There have been a number of donations of different items relating to America's military history.
- The focus of PMML is on the US military. They do have other items from ancient times to modern foreign nation material to provide a contrast.

PMML also sponsors a Medal of Honor series

Programs they prepare are streamed live on line and are also available in their digital archive for retrieval on the website.

A service they offer to younger veterans is: Veterans Information Center.

He has visited and coordinated with his counterpart at the Abraham Lincoln Library in Springfield, IL

He discussed one of the primary documents used to capture oral histories. That is a short biographical survey that can be downloaded from the site and completed on a personal computer. Currently, most of the histories are from veterans prior to the Iraqi and Afghanistan wars, e.g., Vietnam, Bosnia, Korea, WWII.

The interview length varies depending on the veteran's preference. Some are as short as 20 minutes. The longest today was 10 hours. Participants are allowed to tell their stories.

After the interview, a volunteer transcription team types out the entire interview verbatim. It is reviewed by the interviewee for correctness. This approved transcript is then cross referenced and cataloged for researchers. The interviewee gets a copy of this transcript.

The interviewee also gets to review the audio/video of the interview. Once the interviewee signs a release, this too is made available to the public on their website. A question was asked if it was permissible for an interviewee to copy. The answer was a qualified yes in that the DVD can be copied for personal use. Mr. Webb believes that the PMML would provide multiple DVD's (quantity limited but not specified) for personal use and family records. These were not to be used or given to other organizations for use...that would require those other groups to go through the MPPL.

Mr. Webb reiterated that PMML is focused on the US Military. He believes some foreign experience interviews would be considered. He pointed out that the museum's founder's daughter served in the IDF.

Mr. Webb ended the presentation with a 4-minute video clip that had appeared on ABC during Memorial or Veterans Day.

Left were membership applications, his card, and other material for distribution.

His business card had the following information:

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MJS