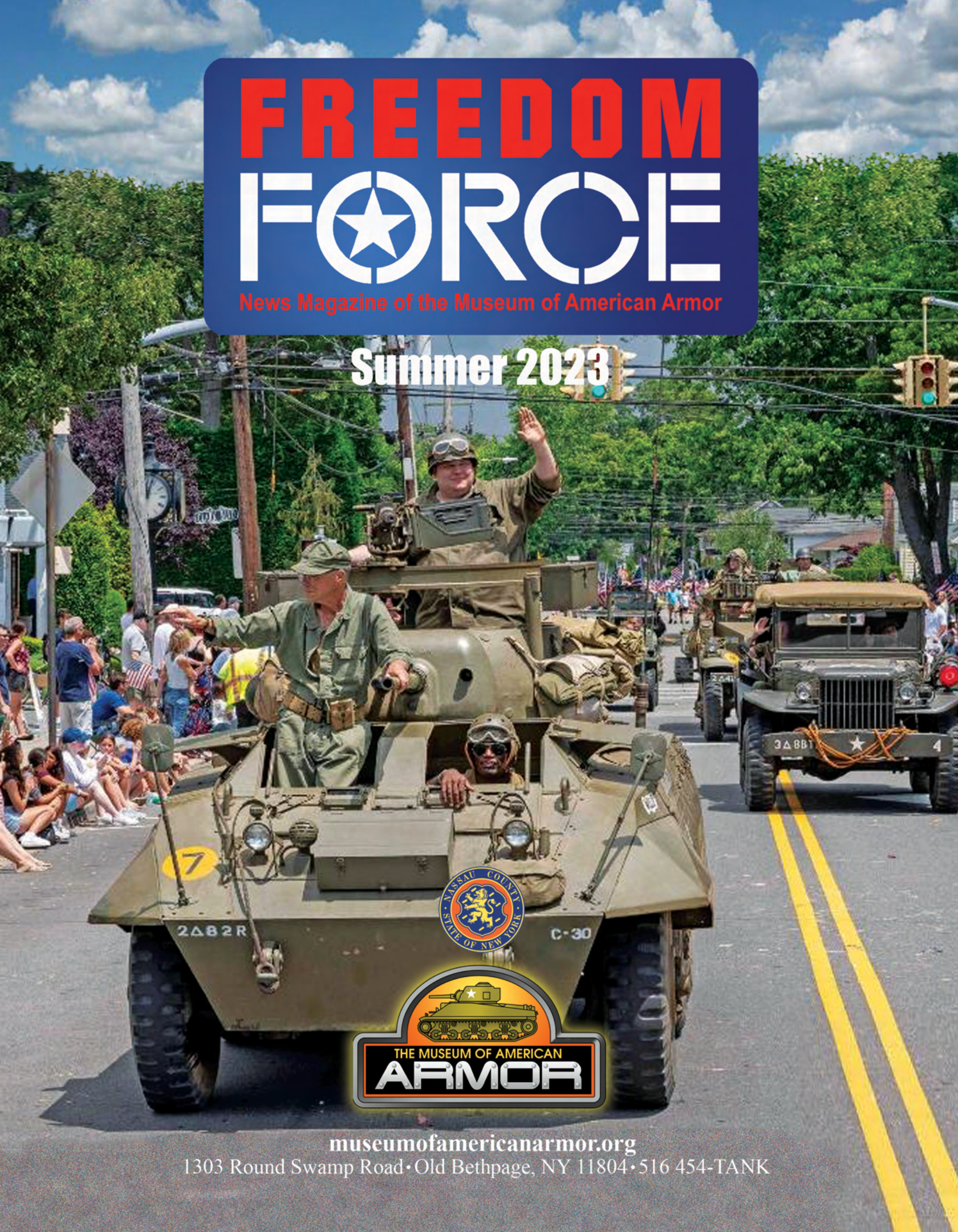


FREEDOM FORCE

News Magazine of the Museum of American Armor

Summer 2023



museumofamericanarmor.org

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Welcome to the latest edition of Freedom Force...



Lawrence Kadish
President and Founder of the
Museum of American Armor

Below:

The image of a Chinese toddler caught in a Japanese air raid horrified the American public.

Reflection: China's WWII Liberation from the Horrors of Imperial Japan is an American Legacy

As the Museum of American Armor closes in on our tenth year anniversary, it is important to consider the many lessons from World War II, and how we impart them to our visitors.

Earlier this year, a subscriber to the not-for-profit *Gatestone Institute* commentary website, Goh Heung Yong, noted, "No one should forget that it was America's strength for freedom, that freed just about all of Asia from Japanese occupation. Her power for peace liberated half of Europe and kept Stalin's predatory advance at bay. America still is that shining beacon for freedom and civilized existence."

His astute observation reveals a number of important insights regarding the historic role of the United States during World War II. While much of our attention is often drawn to the European Theater of Operations, America fought a two-front war. The Pacific theater was a literal "fight to the finish" as our Marines, Army, Navy, and Army Air Corps created a ring of steel around the Imperial Japanese Empire, intent on fighting for every square inch of land. America won in the Pacific at enormous cost, and only the use of two atomic weapons finally brought the war to an end.

Few Americans fully appreciate the path of destruction and the litany of war crimes committed by the Empire of Japan throughout their zone of occupation, which included huge swaths of China.

Historians have documented many of their crimes, including repeated massacres of civilians and prisoners of war, sexual slavery, human experimentation, starvation, and forced labor. While these crimes occurred wherever the Emperor's soldiers occupied Asia, China bore the brunt of Japan's assault on humanity. Historians estimate that from 1937 to 1945, nearly four million Chinese were killed...mostly civilians...as a direct result of Japanese forces.

Among the horrifying examples of Japanese atrocities was the *Nanjing Massacre*. Having captured the Chinese capital of that era, civilians endured six weeks of mass rape, looting, arson, and murder.

Had the United States not defeated Japan, a likely scenario would have seen China subjugated for generations to come, the victim of unspeakable crimes that Imperial Japan would have committed as a matter of government policy.

It is no small irony that a nation that now seeks to confront the United States through veiled military confrontation, industrial espionage, and the intimidation of those embracing democracy was rescued from the horrors of Imperial Japan nearly 80 years ago. Not surprisingly, many of our visitors to The Museum of American Armor are Asian Americans, for they know their history. That legacy was not lost on Goh Heung Yong, but neither should it be a lost footnote in Beijing.



The legacy of family members who served during World War II was brought to life during the most recent **World War II Encampment Weekend**, presented by the Museum of American Armor, the Long Island Living History Association, and the Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Museums.

In addition to exhibits that highlighted tactics, weapons, and strategies from that conflict, the two-day event included a parade of tanks, half-tracks, armored cars, and artillery, in field exercises that recalled an era when freedom faced a mortal threat.

Former Congressman Peter King, a Museum trustee, stated, "The Armor Museum offers a powerful presentation that evolves year to year, and keeps alive the legacy of our military, and the gift of freedom that they have given us."

World War II Weekend

Spotlights a Shared Legacy of Valor



For many, it is an opportunity to reflect on family members who have served our nation."

The event featured a visit from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, America's World War II President, by way of FDR interpreter Gary Stamm (see accompanying profile).

The Armor Museum's program included mock attacks where reenactors presented uniforms, tactics, and weapons of the era, against the backdrop of an armor parade that rivals the vintage newsreels of 80 years ago.

The History Channel's *Historian Emeritus*, Dr. Libby O'Connell, said "This event is a unique opportunity for families to appreciate an historic chapter in world history that still influences our lives. It is well worth a visit by every American family, regardless of their ethnicity and background...because it is the story of all of us."





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College Students are Being Offered a D-Day Essay Challenge:

An All-Expense- Paid Round Trip to Normandy During Next Year's 80th Anniversary Celebration of WWII's Historic Invasion ...

Lawrence Kadish, the founder and president of the Museum of American Armor, has announced a contest that will challenge Long Island college students to submit an essay on the legacy of that historic World War II invasion, the winner to be provided with an all-expense-paid trip overseas to Normandy, France, during 2024, that marks the 80th anniversary of history's largest amphibious assault.

Mr. Kadish observed that, "A survey by the *American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA)* has found that a quarter of Americans didn't know that D-Day occurred during World War II, and less than half knew that Franklin Roosevelt was president during that time. With such basic historic facts unknown to many college students, there is little surprise that few appreciate how our geo-political world is defined by the courage, valor, and sacrifice of those Americans who answered the call of freedom over seventy-five years ago."

The Armor Museum's contest is a partial response to a recent campaign by Long Island social studies teachers to prevent what they see as an erosion of the amount of class time assigned to history under our evolving state educational guidelines.

"Without being anchored to our history, we are a nation adrift," continued Mr. Kadish. In 2010, the New York Regents eliminated social studies tests in the fifth and eighth grades. Gloria Sesso, co-president of the *Long Island Council for the*

Social Studies, and an advisor to the Armor Museum, says those tests were never restored. "This essay contest has the potential to incentivize a generation of college students to study this era, making up for the considerable educational deficit they have so far experienced, due to the loss of state mandates," explained Sesso.

Essay essentials

Essays will be accepted by the Museum of American Armor **until March 30, 2024**. They may be mailed, emailed, or delivered by hand.

Email: Info@MuseumOfAmericanArmor.com

The U.S. mail address is: The Museum of American Armor, 1303 Round Swamp Road, Old Bethpage, New York 11804.

The essays will be judged by members of the Armor Museum board and recognized educators. Essays will be evaluated on historical accuracy, originality, and the use of primary sources. **The winner must be over 18 years of age and will be responsible for having a valid passport.** The Armor Museum will provide air and ground transportation and appropriate accommodations in cooperation with the leading travel agency that specializes in such historic European tourism, ***Beaches of Normandy***. The decision of the judges will be final, and all submitted essays will become the property of the museum for the purpose of creating a permanent online archive of the submissions. The winning essayist will be selected during April 2024.



D-Day 2023 Observed by the Armor Museum



Armor Museum senior trustee Michael D. Sapraicone introduces the program, joined by members of the Long Island Living History Association, and Gloria Sesso, (at right) the Armor Museum's education advisor.

The Armor Museum's memorial bell rings out as the names of the D-Day beaches are remembered.



Media from throughout the region cover the anniversary event.

With prayers, and the tolling of a memorial bell, The Museum of American Armor observed yet another anniversary of D-Day...the Allies' amphibious assault on Nazi-occupied Europe.

Services were conducted beside a landing craft similar to those that brought GIs to the beaches of Normandy, France, as living historians from the Long Island Military Preservation Association "presented arms"...and a moment of silence was observed.

The Allies deployed 5,333 ships and landing craft on D-Day, offloading nearly 175,000 men. The British and Canadians put 75,215 troops ashore, and the Americans 57,500, for a total of 132,715. In addition, some 20,000 Allied airborne troopers were assigned to hold key roads and bridges beyond the invasion beaches. It remains one of the most audacious military assaults in history.

David Burman of B2K joins the Armor Museum board...

David Burman, a principal of B2K Development, has been nominated to the board of The Museum of American Armor, whose extensive collection of historic military vehicles pays tribute to those Americans who have served to protect our freedoms.

"If our nation's military heritage is to remain an indelible part of our shared history, a new generation needs to ensure that we are capable of sustaining that legacy of valor, courage, and

sacrifice. David Burman embraces that responsibility and is a much welcomed addition to the Armor Museum's board of trustees," stated Lawrence Kadish, president and founder of the Armor Museum.

David Burman said, "It is an honor to become part of a museum that, since its opening on the 70th anniversary of D-Day, June 6, 2014, has become a compelling destination for the New York region. From international tourists to Long Island veterans, from local school groups to those seeking to connect with the heroes in their own families, the Armor Museum has become a vital connection to our past."

Mr. Burman is responsible for analysis and acquisitions, along with project planning and development at B2K Development, a Jericho-based development company. David's strong work ethic has served him well in meeting the demands and challenges of strategic real estate

development on and off Long Island. He is deeply involved in projects in various stages of development, including thousands of residential and senior living units, as well as varied mixed-use and commercial properties.

David was recognized as one of Commercial Property Executive's Stars to Watch in 2019, and he was honored as one of Long Island Business News' 40 Under 40. David earned his BA in Business Administration from the University of Miami. He and his family live in Old Brookville. Michael D. Sapracione, the Armor Museum's Senior Trustee, stated, "David's nomination to the Armor Museum's board reflects a basic truth: leaders of a new generation of Americans are recognizing the sacrifice of those who came before them in the defense of our freedoms.

In a world where those freedoms are once again under assault, David's presence becomes ever more important."



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Is the British Sexton Self-Propelled Gun Your Cuppa Tea?

While its name is "The Museum of American Armor," within its collection are Allied vehicles as well as replica enemy armor to provide context for the World War II conflict that still defines our world today.

Included in the museum's inventory is the British **Sexton**, whose origins are presented by Kevin Carroll, Armor's Director of Community Affairs.

As inevitable conflict approached Europe in the 1930s, it was clear that warfare was going to be far different from the First World War. Rather than static combat, emphasis was now going to be placed on speed and mobility, including an army's artillery pieces.

Great Britain recognized that need, and first answered it by mounting its newly developed 25-Pounder Field Gun on the chassis of obsolete *Valentine* tanks, naming the variant the *Bishop*. Unfortunately, these older vehicles did not stand up to the rigors of the North African campaign, and the British soon adopted the proven American M7 *Priest*, a 105MM howitzer mounted on a modified M3 tank chassis. While very successful, the British did not normally use the U.S. 105MM gun, requiring them to acquire and stock ammunition not otherwise used in their inventory.

The search began for a similar vehicle, but one mounting the British standard 24-Pounder field howitzer.

The answer lay in Canada. To supplement earlier American tank production, The Montreal Locomotive Works had begun to produce tanks based on the U.S. M3 *Lee* and M4 *Sherman* designs. As American tank production rapidly increased, the British proposed that the Canadian built vehicles now be used as the mount for the 25-Pounder howitzer. Combining the reliable M3 and M4 chassis with the highly efficient and accurate 25-Pounder gun, yielded the self-propelled gun known as *Sexton*.

The initial *Sexton* Mark I used the Canadian-built M3 hull, but production then quickly transitioned to the *Sexton* Mark II, using the Canadian M4 drivetrain.

Just over 2,100 *Sextons* were built between 1943 and 1945, with the *Sexton* II being the predominant model. The vehicles weighed 25 tons and were powered by a 400 horsepower radial engine built by Continental. The main gun could fire a high explosive 25 pound shell out to a range of approximately seven miles, and could maintain a sustained rate of fire of three to four rounds per minute.

The *Sexton* first saw combat with British forces in Italy, and then later with the Commonwealth Forces from the Normandy beaches to the German heartland. Many *Sextons* were supplied to Allied nations after World War II including India, Poland, South Africa, and Portugal. The Museum of American Armor's *Sexton* is a Mark II, and last saw service in Portugal.



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British Officials

Dedicate WWII Armor in Tribute to the Late [Queen Elizabeth](#), Marking the Anniversary of Her WWII Enlistment and a Reminder of an Historic Anglo-American Alliance that Continues to Defend Freedom.

On the anniversary of then 19-year-old Princess Elizabeth joining the British Auxiliary Territorial Services (ATS) during the height of World War II, officials from the British Consulate gathered this Spring at the Museum of American Armor, where they dedicated a British armored car of that period named in her honor.

The ceremony served to underscore the continuing Anglo-American alliance, committed to defending freedom at a time when Ukraine is fighting for its survival with the help of military equipment from the United States and the United Kingdom.

Nicknamed *The Staghound*, the WWII armored car being unveiled was designed to probe for German forces in North Africa, Italy, and Europe during World War II. Built by Chevrolet, they were transferred to British and other Allied forces under the "Lend-Lease" policy and saw action throughout the war.

The Staghound is now a permanent part of the Armor Museum's operational collection, emblazoned with the name of Princess Elizabeth in tribute to the historic role of the Anglo-American alliance.

In addition to British officials, the ceremony included welcoming remarks by Nassau County elected officials, a presentation of the colors by the Nassau County Police Department Color Guard, a performance by the Nassau County Police Department Pipe and Drum Band, reflections by members of the British War Veterans of America, and an appearance by British military living historians.



Staghound's artist and living historian, Stacy Wasson, salutes a member of the British War Veterans at the ceremony.



Armor Museum founder and President, Lawrence Kadish, reminds the audience of the price of freedom.



Princess Elizabeth's likeness is unveiled with the help of British Consul officials.

FDR

Has Been Visiting Long Island



R, to be more specific, the living historian **Gary Stamm** is FDR, as he portrays Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his appearances with The Museum of American Armor during their special events.

Stamm enjoys a stunning likeness to the wartime president, and has even managed to mimic the patrician politician's voice patterns. He has channeled the president's persona for presentations at FDR's Hyde Park home in New York's Hudson Valley, as well as other locations throughout the country. However, it is Long Island where this Midwesterner has made repeated presentations at the Armor Museum, offering visitors a personal presidential connection.

Gene Spiegelman, an Armor Museum board member, says Stamm's role in bringing history to a new generation cannot be overstated. "Recent educational surveys reveal that today's students are losing their connection to our nation's history. Interacting with a presidential interpreter gives young people a real and direct connection to our shared heritage, sparking interest that can lead to an expanded awareness of history that goes beyond the limited curriculum now being taught."

Armor Museum trustee, Michael Polimeni agreed. "We feature Gary Stamm as a returning interpreter because, in an era when social media has the means to obscure the world around us, connecting with "FDR" can be a defining moment for students. It is our means of expanding the classroom far beyond the brick and mortar of a school building," he observed.



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THE SPEED DEMON of WW2

The M18 *Hellcat* on operational display at the Museum of American Armor was a tank destroyer deployed by the U.S. during World War II and the Korean War.

In its era, it was among the fastest armored vehicles on the battlefield, reaching speeds upwards of 50 mph.

That speed came at a cost. Its armor was no more than one inch thick, and offered no protective roof for its five-man crew. It was also unique in that it used a 400 horsepower, 9-cylinder radial gasoline engine originally designed for military aircraft.

Armed with a 76mm cannon in its turret, the Hellcat gave American and Allied forces a respectable mobile anti-tank capability against the heavily armored German tanks of WWII.





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