

# IOWA GOLD STAR MILITARY MUSEUM

Public Relations and Media Committee  
Camp Dodge Joint Maneuver Training Center  
7105 NW 70<sup>th</sup> Ave, Johnston IA 50131 ★ 515-252-4582

For Immediate Release

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## **GEN. (RET.) TOMMY FRANKS TOURS THE IOWA GOLD STAR MILITARY MUSEUM**

The Iowa Gold Star Military Museum, located at Camp Dodge, Johnston, Iowa, played host to Gen. (ret.) Tommy Franks, the former commander of the U.S. Central Command, on Friday, March 1. Franks, in town for a speaking engagement, was invited by the chairman of the museum's board of directors, Bob Holliday.

While at the museum, Franks also met with Iowa Army National Guard Soldiers from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 168th Infantry based in Council Bluffs, who were training at Camp Dodge at the time of Franks' visit.

"I think it's a treasure to the state of Iowa and I'm impressed with the volunteers who contribute to make it what it is today," said Franks.

While Franks enjoyed all of the exhibits, there were a couple of artifacts that brought back memories for the 67-year old general.

"I liked seeing the M101A1, 105mm howitzer back in the corner," Franks said. "I trained on that gun in 1966 at artillery school. And then there was the Vietnam display, where I took that gun and fought in 1967 and 1968. Those were two particular displays that struck a chord with me."

His service in Vietnam earned him six awards for valor and three Purple Hearts.

"I thought his visit was terrific," Holliday said. "Gen. Franks, in my view, is a piece of American history and an icon. I think the museum, the Iowa National Guard and the city of Johnston should be thrilled he was here.

"We are striving to make this a museum the entire state of Iowa and all of its citizens can be very proud of," Holliday said.

Franks was the U.S. general leading the attack on the Taliban in Afghanistan in response to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. He also led the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

Since his retirement from the military in 2003, Franks has traveled the world, speaking on leadership, character and the value of democracy.

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Established in 1985, the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum is the only federally-recognized repository for military artifacts in the state of Iowa. The mission of the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum is twofold: to preserve Iowa's military history and honor the military service of all Iowans.

The Iowa Gold Star Military Museum's permanent exhibits tell the stories of Iowans who have served in defense of their state and nation, beginning in the early settlement of the state in the 1840s, through the Global War on Terror. An extensive exhibit honors the 34th Infantry Division ("Red Bull" Division), which holds the distinction of serving the most continuous days in combat of any division in the European Theater of Operation during World War II. The museum also contains one of the finest military small arms collections in the Midwest. Additionally, an exhibit detailing the history of the Iowa State Patrol is also on display.

The Iowa Gold Star Military Museum is located on Camp Dodge, 7105 NW 70th Avenue, Johnston, Iowa. Admission is free to the public. Museum hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please use the NW 70<sup>th</sup> Ave. entrance, which is open 24 hours a day. Photo identification is required for adults to gain admittance to Camp Dodge (a driver's license is acceptable).

Group tours are welcome and available by appointment. For additional information or questions about the IGSM, contact the museum at (515) 252-4531 or visit the museum website at [www.iowanationalguard.com/Museum/Museum.htm](http://www.iowanationalguard.com/Museum/Museum.htm) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/#!/HonoringIowaVeterans](https://www.facebook.com/#!/HonoringIowaVeterans).

For questions concerning this release, please contact Col. Greg Hapgood, Chair - Public Relations and Media Committee by email at [gregory.o.hapgood.mil@mail.mil](mailto:gregory.o.hapgood.mil@mail.mil) or (515) 252-4582 (office) or (515) 971-6385 (cell), or Lt. Brandon Cochran at [brandon.w.cochran.mil@mail.mil](mailto:brandon.w.cochran.mil@mail.mil) or (515) 252-4518 (office), or Master Sgt. Duff McFadden at [duff.e.mcfadden.mil@mail.mil](mailto:duff.e.mcfadden.mil@mail.mil) or (515) 252-4666 (office).

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