History Center to Display Jimmy Stewart’s Flight Jacket

-In conjunction with its We Can Do It! WWII exhibition, the History Center will host a special genealogy workshop on Nov. 7 and a Flag Folding Ceremony on Veterans Day-

PITTSBURGH, Nov. 2, 2015 – Beginning this Saturday, Nov. 7, visitors to the Senator John Heinz History Center can see the World War II flight jacket of legendary Hollywood actor, decorated U.S. Army Air Corps veteran, and Indiana, Pa., native Jimmy Stewart as part of the museum’s popular We Can Do It! WWII exhibition.

On loan from the U.S. Air Force Museum, the A-2 flight jacket represents the culmination of a childhood dream for James Maitland Stewart, who loved flying so much that he bought his own plane and began taking lessons in 1935 with the money he earned from acting.

After joining the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1941, Stewart flew on 20 bombing runs into Germany as a B-24 combat leader and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, and the French Croix de Guerre for his service during the war.

As an actor, Stewart won an Academy Award for his leading role in “The Philadelphia Story” and starred in the Frank Capra classic 1946 film, “It's a Wonderful Life,” during a career that spanned more than 92 films, television programs, and shorts.

The History Center’s We Can Do It! WWII exhibition, which explores Western Pennsylvania’s incredible impact on the home, industrial, and battle fronts during World War II, also features Stewart’s U.S. Army Air Corps uniform jacket and hat.

In addition to these items, visitors to the We Can Do It! exhibit will learn about the development of the jeep, a uniquely American invention produced by the American Bantam Car Company in Butler, Pa., and hear the stories behind “Rosie the Riveter” and the local Tuskegee Airmen whose contributions helped to turn the tide of the war.

Discover Your Family History at WWII Genealogy Workshop on Nov. 7

Looking to track down information related to your family’s World War II experiences?

On Saturday, Nov. 7, at 1 p.m., the History Center’s Detre Library & Archives will offer a World War II Genealogy Workshop featuring certified genealogist Craig R. Scott.

Scott will instruct visitors on how to discover their family’s place in WWII history and will provide valuable research tips for WWII genealogical research in Pennsylvania.

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As part of the workshop, visitors will learn how to identify and locate information on family members living during WWII using the genealogical resources in the Detre Library & Archives’ collection.

The World War II Genealogy Workshop is $10 for History Center members, $20 for non-members, and includes museum admission for the day. To pre-register, visit www.heinzhistorycenter.org/events or contact Sierra Green at 412-454-6361 or sgreen@heinzhistorycenter.org.

**Honor Local Veterans During Flag Folding Ceremony on Nov. 11**

On Veterans Day (Wednesday, Nov. 11), at noon, the History Center will host a special Flag Folding Ceremony, where visitors can join U.S. veterans to help ceremoniously unfurl and fold a giant 36-foot American flag in the museum’s first floor Great Hall, followed by a stirring rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

In honor of Veterans Day, U.S. military veterans and active military will receive FREE admission to the Heinz History Center and Fort Pitt Museum on Wednesday, Nov. 11, courtesy of MSA Safety.

For regular visitors, the Flag Folding Ceremony is included with History Center admission: $16 for adults, $14 for seniors (age 62+), $6.50 for students and children (age 6-17), and free for children (age 5 and under) and History Center members.

**The Senator John Heinz History Center**, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum is a museum within a museum, comprehensively presenting the region’s remarkable sports story through hundreds of artifacts and interactive experiences for visitors of all ages. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city’s Strip District, and are open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The History Center’s museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.
Beginning this Saturday, Nov. 7, visitors to the History Center can see this World War II flight jacket worn by legendary Hollywood actor, decorated U.S. Army Air Corps veteran, and Indiana, Pa., native Jimmy Stewart. Museum registrar Nicole Hayduk installs Stewart’s jacket in the museum’s *We Can Do It! WWII* exhibition.

On Veterans Day, the History Center will host a special Flag Folding Ceremony, where visitors can join U.S. veterans to help ceremoniously unfurl and fold a giant 36-foot American flag in the museum’s first floor Great Hall, followed by a stirring rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

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