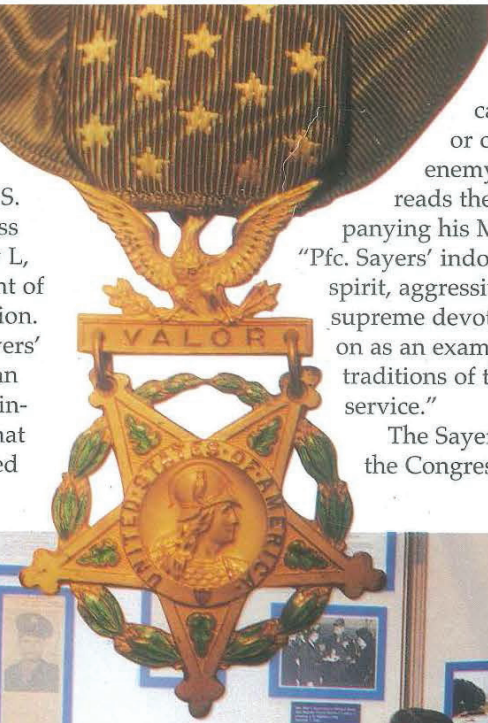


U.S. ARMY

# Foster Joseph Sayers



Tucked in its own area of the museum is a tribute to Foster J. Sayers, a U.S. Army Private First Class serving with Company L, 357th Infantry Regiment of the 90th Infantry Division. In November 1944, Sayers' unit was carrying out an attack on a strong contingent of hostile forces that were heavily entrenched



casualties, killing or capturing every enemy soldier on it," reads the citation accompanying his Medal of Honor. "Pfc. Sayers' indomitable fighting spirit, aggressiveness, and supreme devotion to duty live on as an example of the highest traditions of the military service."

The Sayers family donated the Congressional Medal of



On a battlefield in France during World War II, Private First Class Foster J. Sayers gave his life to protect comrades from enemy fire. Sayers' family (above, with Governor Tom Ridge) presented his Medal of Honor and other military decorations to the museum in 1995.

on a hill near Thionville, France. Sayers was able to get within twenty yards of the enemy with his machine gun when he realized his comrades would be crossing an open area of fire in order to flank the enemy position. Sayers picked up his machine gun and charged through machine gun and rifle fire to the edge of the enemy stronghold where he killed twelve German soldiers with devastating close-range fire. Private Sayers then took up a position behind a log and further engaged the enemy in order to distract them while his unit advanced to the crest of the hill.

"He was killed in the very heavy concentration of return fire; but his assault enabled his company to sweep the hill with a minimum number of

Honor to the PHMC for placement at the Pennsylvania Military Museum in a ceremony during which Governor Tom Ridge, a veteran himself, accepted it on behalf of the Commonwealth. Foster J. Sayers' Medal of Honor has become the centerpiece of one of the museum's most moving installations honoring Pennsylvanians killed in action. In addition to the Congressional Medal of Honor, the exhibit includes Sayers' citation from President Harry S. Truman, Purple Heart, Bronze Star, dog tags, and unit badges including a crest, bearing the motto *Siempre Alerta*, or "Always on Alert."

In an area near the Sayers' Congressional Medal of Honor exhibit, the museum tells the story of one of the

great battleships of this century, the USS *Pennsylvania*. She was commissioned in June 1916, serving the United States in both World Wars and in both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. At the conclusion of World War I, she escorted President Woodrow Wilson across the Atlantic Ocean to France to negotiate the Treaty of Versailles, which ended the war and to plan the League of Nations. Twenty-two years later, she was called into action for World War II. She was in dry dock at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, during the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941, and was one of the first ships to provide return fire against the attacking Japanese torpedo planes and bombers. The *Pennsylvania* escaped significant damage and returned to sea in the Pacific Theater, fighting in the Marianas and the Leyte Gulf operations. She received eight battle stars for her service in World War II. After the war, the USS *Pennsylvania* was used as part of the United States' testing of nuclear capabilities near Bikini Atoll. Because of nuclear contamination, the USS *Pennsylvania* was decommissioned in February 1948 and deliberately sunk.

Four U.S. Naval vessels have borne the Commonwealth's name. In addition to the battleship *Pennsylvania* (BB38), they have included the first USS *Pennsylvania*, a ship of the line constructed at the Philadelphia Naval Yard, and commissioned in 1837. In 1901, Armored Cruiser Number 4 took the name *Pennsylvania*, only to be changed to Pittsburgh to make way for the Battleship *Pennsylvania*. Today's namesake, the USS *Pennsylvania* (SSBN735), is a ballistic missile submarine home ported at the Naval Submarine Base, Kings Bay, Georgia.

In addition to military exploits, Pennsylvanians' industrial ingenuity is highlighted by the museum's tribute to the venerable Jeep. The Bantam Car Company of Butler, thirty miles north of Pittsburgh, designed and manufactured the original Jeep (known in military parlance as "GP" for "general purpose") Scout car for the United States armed forces. The small company manufactured more than twenty-six hundred Jeeps before the military—requiring much larger production capacity—awarded contracts to the Ford Motor Company and the Willys Overland Company. The basic Jeep design developed in Pennsylvania was main-

tained through a production run of more than six hundred thousand vehicles.

Young or old, veteran or not, visitors to the Pennsylvania Military Museum will discover much about Pennsylvania's citizen-soldiers and the conflicts in which they participated. They will learn about the generations of men and women whose selflessness and courage helped return peace to the land, at home and abroad. They will appreciate the sacrifices and the hardships endured by so many over the course of more than two centuries. And they will better understand the real meaning of the words patriot and hero and valor, words seldom heard today.

The Pennsylvania Military Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.; and Sunday, noon to 5 P.M., but hours change seasonally. There is an admission fee. Persons with disabilities who need special assistance or accommodation should telephone or write the museum in advance of their visit to discuss their needs. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired who wish to contact a hearing person via Text Telephone may use the PA Relay Center at (800) 654-5984. For more information, write: Pennsylvania Military Museum, Post Office Box 160A, Boalsburg, PA 16827; or telephone (814) 466-6263. Individuals may visit the



Hitched to two horses, the 1909 U.S. Studebaker Wagon (below) served as a military ambulance. The Bantam jeep (above) became famous as a durable reconnaissance military vehicle.

Pennsylvania Military Museum Web site at <http://www.psu.edu/dept/aero-space/museum>.

Boalsburg—and surrounding Centre County—is a perfect destination for a one-day or weekend getaway. Boalsburg is a charming village that proclaims itself as the "Birthplace of Memorial

Day," and visitors will want to discover for themselves its quaint streets and unusual shops. The Boal Mansion Museum and Columbus Chapel, once the residence of Colonel Theodore Davis Boal, contains extensive collections of the aristocratic Boal family's keepsakes and heirlooms, many of which possess



Foster Junior and his mother



Foster Junior Unveils Dam Plaque



Dam Dedication Ceremony

