

Volume 1
Winter 2021

Beginning in mid-2021, a newsletter called “**BOOTS**” was created for the Delaware Military Museum.

This **Winter 2021** issue is the last of the first four quarterly newsletters.

When I started to write them, I wasn’t sure how much material I would find for special articles. Ken Wiggins helped with the first issue writing a great article on tanks that were built at the old Chrysler plant in Newark.

However, while doing research on a topic, another one would appear and it was put on hold for a future newsletter. It usually occurred when finding an interesting footnote to the original article.

I hope you have enjoyed the museum news and articles written for these newsletters.

This last issue for 2021 features all of the US Navy ships that have been called the USS DELAWARE, spanning sail to nuclear power.

Their story starts with the American Revolution and continues today.

May the present USS DELAWARE and all that follow her always have fair winds and following seas!

Teddi Silver
“BOOTS” Editor

“Honor and Preserve Delaware’s Military Heritage”

www.delawaremilitarymuseum.org





WHAT'S NEW AT THE MUSEUM

By Ken Wiggins

Major General William H. Duncan Memorial Lectures

We concluded our **MG William H. Duncan lectures** for 2021 with a talk by David Price on Colonel John Haslet, based upon his biography of Haslet. Due to Covid19 this was a Zoom-only talk.

We'd like to thank Carl Witte for graciously assuming the leadership of the Duncan lectures for next year. We are still working on a schedule. Our very own Mary Torbey will be speaking on January 8th about military music during the Revolutionary War.

World War II Room

The World War II room is nearly complete. All the major displays have been installed. John Pastor is still building-out some display cases, we'd like to add a uniform or two, and we've saved a spot for the Dorsman quilt which will require some specialized mounting. We have a lighting issue at the far end of the room that may require additional lights.

Presidential Hall

We'd like to thank John Taylor for working on this new project. As you may know we inherited the Washington Collection from the former Wesley College library.

John has organized it edited it and broadened the theme to include all our Commander's in Chief. He is close to finishing this project.

Digitization

We've embarked on a lengthy journey to digitize our collections so that they are searchable and available 24/7 worldwide. We're a little past the prototype stage now and starting to build a spreadsheet of metadata.

Scanning images is the easy part of this process. Matching them to the metadata is the time consuming and often difficult part – but we've made a solid start.

The United States Navy *and the ships called the*

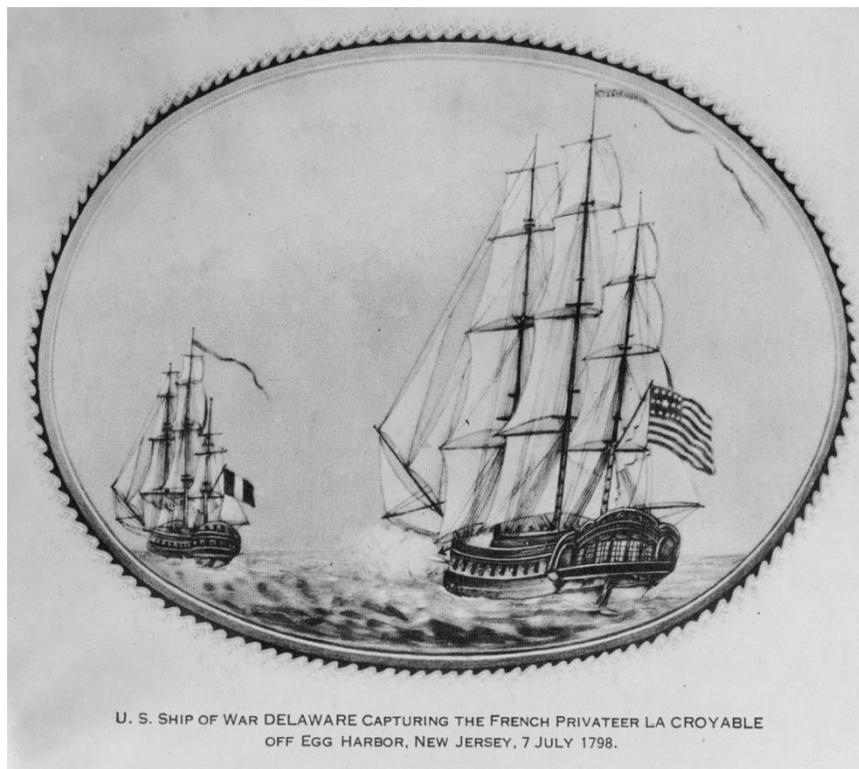
USS DELAWARE

1775 - 1777

This 24 gun, sailing frigate was the first with the name **USS Delaware** and sailed during the American Revolution. The Continental Congress authorized her to be built at the shipyard of Warwick Coates in Philadelphia and become part of the fledgling Continental Navy. After her launching in 1776, she sailed the Delaware River along with the Pennsylvania State Navy, protecting Philadelphia and delaying supplies to the British Army. After the British captured Philadelphia on September 26, 1777, the **USS Delaware** fired upon the enemy fortifications, along with other ships, while anchored some 500 yards from shore. Unfortunately, she went aground during an ebb tide, on September 27, 1777. Capt Alexander had to strike his colors and she was captured by the British who called her an “armed ship”.

In 1783 she was sold to Mary Haley, a British businesswoman, who named her the “**United States**”. Some years were spent as being a whaler but she was eventually sold to a French company and renamed the “**Dauphin**”. In March 1795, she was converted to a French privateer in Charleston, South Carolina (this was during the French Revolution). From that point on, her fate is unclear.

1798 - 1801



The second ship, called the **USS Delaware** was also built in Philadelphia in 1794, in what was now the Philadelphia Naval Yard. She was originally designed as a merchant ship but was bought by the US Navy in May of 1798 to be used in the Quasi-War with France. Her task was to protect American merchant ships, which were sailing in convoys from Philadelphia and New York to Caribbean ports, from French privateers. According to Lloyds of London, she was classified as a Sloop-of-War.

She captured the French privateer, “**La Croyable**”, off Egg Harbor, NJ on July 7, 1798. From there she sailed to the West Indies, along with the Frigate “**United States**” and from July to September, 1798, captured two more French privateers. From Dec 1798 to May 1799, she cruised the West Indies capturing another ship.

She joined the Revenue Cutter “**Eagle**” in the West Indies, from Jul 1799 to Jul 1800, taking a privateer sloop. During this time, she captured a brig on October 29th, after a 7-hour chase, and rescued 30 Americans being held prisoner. Her last cruise was off of Cuba in the fall and winter of 1800-1801 after which she returned to Baltimore and was sold.

1820-1861



<https://photos.usni.org/content/26213-uss-delaware>

This **USS Delaware** was a 74 gun, ship of the line that was built at the Norfolk Navy Yard. In 1828 she became the flagship of the US Navy in the Mediterranean, under the command of Commodore W. M. Crane. Her service was for American commerce and diplomacy during her tour in that area.

She was decommissioned in Feb 1833, and was placed “in ordinary”. Note: “In ordinary” is an English phrase applied to naval ships and means that they are basically out of service for repair or maintenance. Today we call it being placed in the reserve fleet of “mothballed”.

She was, however, recommissioned on Jul 15, 1833 to welcome President Andrew Jackson who came aboard on Jul 29, 1833 with a 24-gun salute.

The **USS Delaware** then sailed to the Mediterranean again, to become the flagship of Commodore D. T. Patterson, where she again served in diplomacy and protected American shipping. She returned to Hampton Roads in Feb 16, 1836 where she was placed "In ordinary" again.

In May 1841, she was recommissioned again, as the flagship of Commodore Charles Morris, for a tour of duty off of South America (Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina) where there was political unrest and she was protecting American interests.

In Feb 1843, she sailed again for the Mediterranean and returned to Hampton Roads in Mar 1844, where she was decommissioned on Mar 22. She stayed "In ordinary" until 1861 when she was burned on April 20, with many other ships to prevent their falling into Confederate hands.

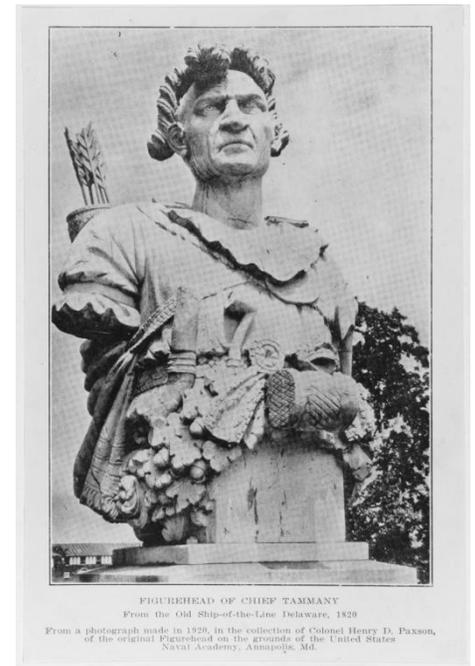
She lives on, because a bronze replica of her figurehead resides on the U.S. Naval Academy campus in Annapolis, MD. When the original was on the ship, it was called "Tamanend" who was the Delaware Indian chief who greeted William Penn in Oct 1682.

This picture on the right was photographed in 1920 of the **USS Delaware** figurehead of "Tamanend", Chief of the Delaware Indians.

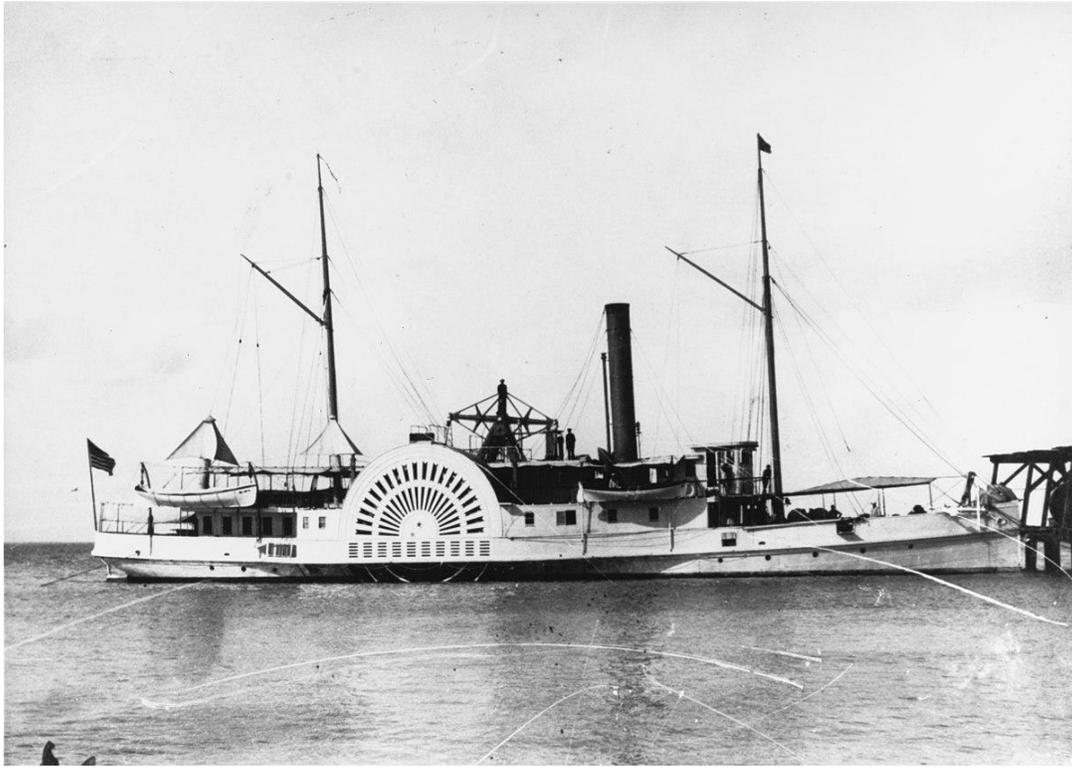
It was saved from the ship before it was burned and brought to the Naval Academy sometime between 1874 –1876.

It now resides in the US Naval Academy Museum.

A bronze replica was created and it now stands on the campus of the US Naval Academy. The Midshipmen renamed it "Tecumseh" who was a Shawnee leader.



1861-1865



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Delaware_\(1861\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Delaware_(1861))

The 4th ship to become the **USS Delaware**, in a roundabout way, was a different powered boat, a steamer. She was originally built by the Harlan & Hollingsworth Iron Shipbuilding in Wilmington, DE for some businessmen to operate in Albemarle Sound, NC. These businessmen were worried about what was happening between the North and the South and was concerned that it would be detained (it was now called the “**Virginia Dare**”). It was purchased by the US Navy on Oct 13, 1861, renamed the **USS Delaware**, and was assigned to the North Atlantic blockade.

Her duty during the Civil War was to sink or capture Confederate ships and to bombard Confederate forts as well as other military Confederate targets. She sailed from Philadelphia on Dec 12, 1861 and went on patrol in the James River until the end of 1861.

From the James River, she sailed to Cape Hatteras Inlet, NC to be part of the Burnside expedition against the Confederate Army in North Carolina waters. She was involved in the capture of Roanoke Island and was part of the attack on Elizabeth City, NC where she destroyed five Confederate gunboats and two schooners.

From there she and seven Union gunboats went up the Chowan River in NC to destroy two railroad bridges above Wilton, NC. She was almost ambushed by Confederate soldiers on the banks but the helmsman was warned by Union commander Rush Hawkins, who was on the yardarm, to veer off.

The Confederates did damage to the **USS Delaware**'s superstructure but the ship was still able to return fire causing the Confederate militia to disperse. The next day, the **USS Delaware** and the gunboats returned to the area, and burned the town of Wilton.

In mid-March 1862, the **USS Delaware** and other ships captured New Bern, NC along with four Confederate vessels.

In June 1862, the **USS Delaware** became part of the US Navy fleet that patrolled Virginia waters off of Hampton Roads. From Oct 1862 – Feb 1863, she was operating in the waters off of the North Carolina coast. She then cruised the York and James Rivers, including the Chesapeake Bay, returning to the waters off of North Carolina until Nov 27th when she returned to Baltimore for repairs.

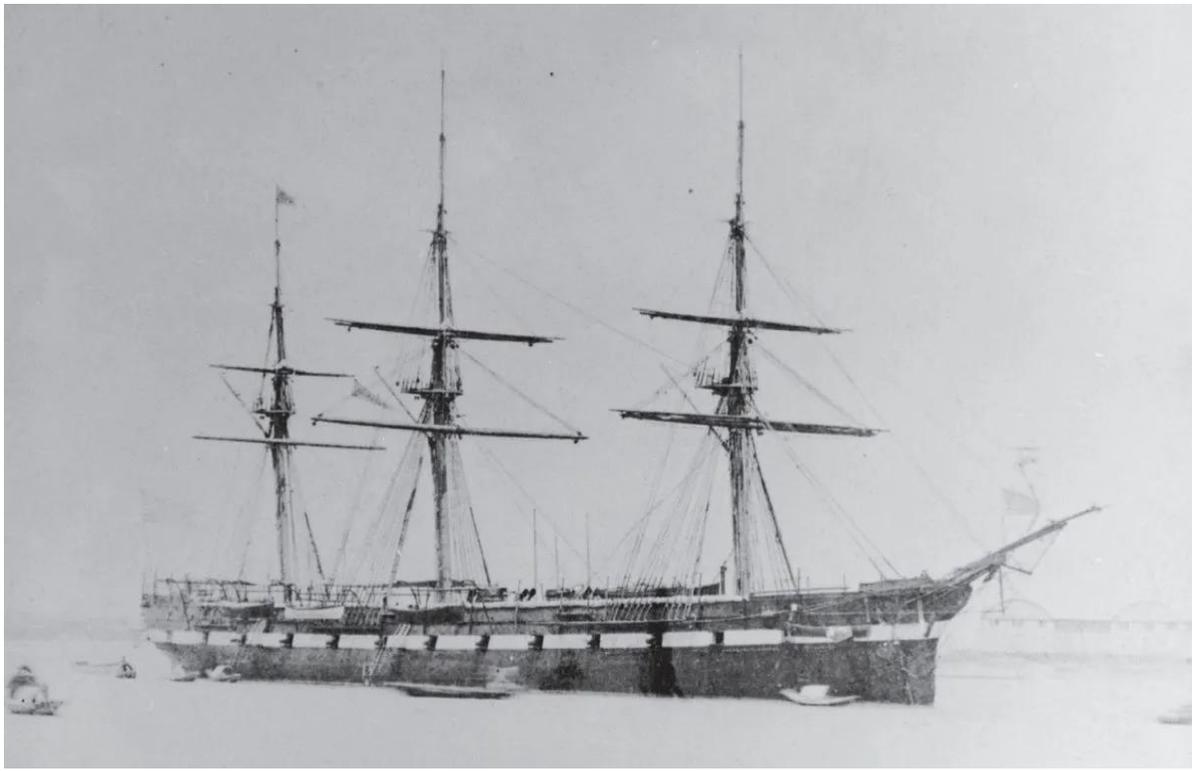
The end of March 1864, she returned to the waters off of Virginia, transporting men and ordnance, doing picket duty and clearing the waters of mines.

She was decommissioned on August 5, 1865, and sold to the United States Revenue Cutter Service on Sep 12, 1865 and renamed the **USRC Delaware**.

She was home ported in Galveston, Texas until 1868, when she had extensive repairs done at Baltimore, MD. She was then reassigned to Mobile, AL, and then home ported in Pensacola, FL and renamed the **USRC Louis McClane** in 1873. She finished out her service in Key West, FL until Oct 1903.

She was a very active ship during the Civil War and afterwards as a revenue cutter. She was eventually sold to the private sector in 1909 and disappeared from ship's registry in 1919.

1866-1870



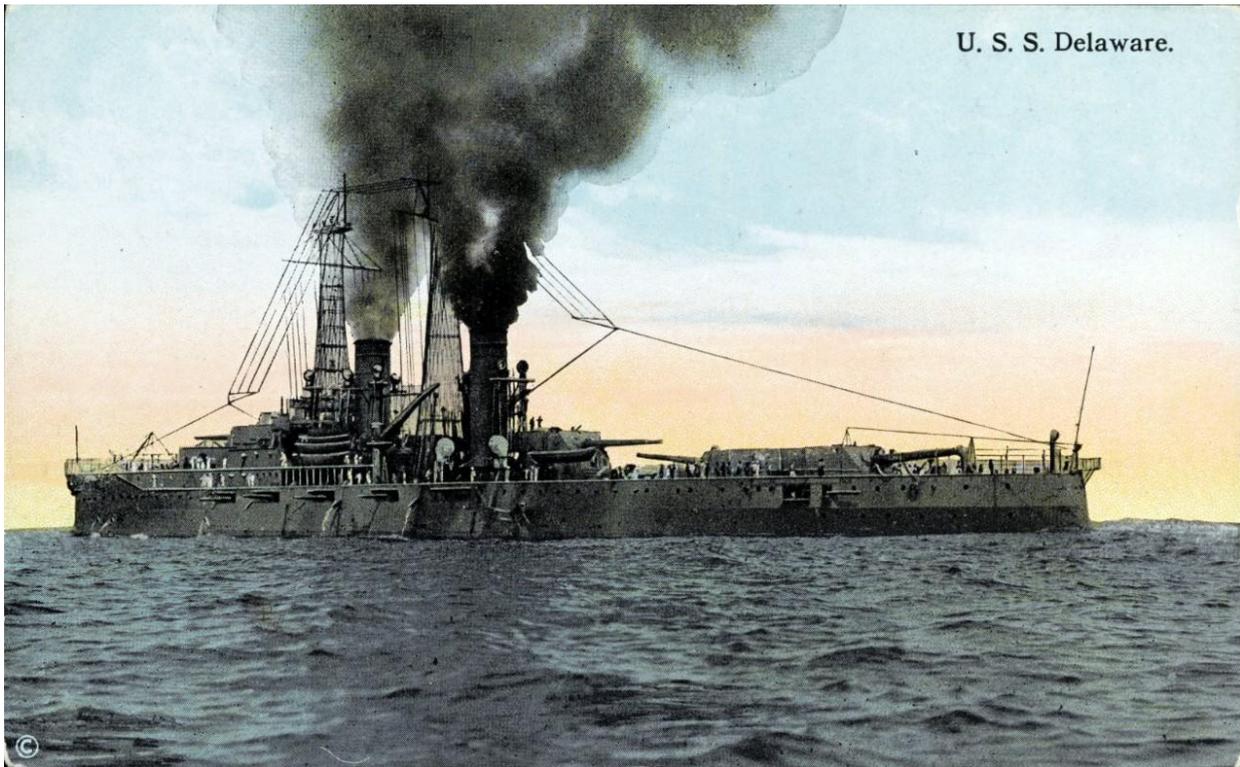
<https://www.defensemедianetwork.com/stories/namesakes-six-uss-delawares-naval-history/>

The next **USS Delaware** started her life as the “**USS Pisataqua**”, a screw steamer that was launched on Jun 11, 1866 at the Portsmouth Navy Yard.

On Dec 16, 1867 she left for the East Indies, via the Cape of Good Hope, arriving in Singapore on Apr 18, 1868. She was the flagship of the fleet that visited ports in China, Japan and the Philippines. A civil war occurred in Japan from 1868 until 1869 and she was tasked with protecting US citizens and American interests.

In May 1869, she was renamed the **USS Delaware** and on Aug 23, 1870 left Singapore for the United States, arriving in New York on Nov 19th. She was decommissioned on Dec 5, 1870 and remained at the New York Navy Yard, also known as the Brooklyn Navy Yard, until sinking in 1876. After that she was sold for scrap.

1907-1924



<https://www.history.navy.mil/our-collections/photography/us-navy-ships/alphabetical-listing/d/uss-delaware--bb-28-0.html>

The age of the United States Navy battleships saw the **USS Delaware** as the lead ship of her class. She was completed in 1910 and was now the sixth ship named for Delaware. Her armament consisted of ten 12-inch (305 mm) guns and she was the most powerful battleship in the world. She could also steam at full speed for 24 continuous hours.

BB-28 served in the Atlantic Fleet for her entire career and during WW I, she reinforced the British Grand Fleet in the 6th Battle Squadron. No wartime action occurred because the British and Germans wanted no direct confrontation.

At the end of the war, she returned to peacetime duties and under the terms of the Washington Naval Treaty, she was still serving until the **USS Colorado** was completed in 1925. She was then turned into scrap in accordance with the treaty.

Note: The Washington Naval Treaty, also known as the Five-Power Treaty, was a treaty signed during 1922 among the major Allies of World War I, which agreed to prevent an arms race by limiting naval construction.



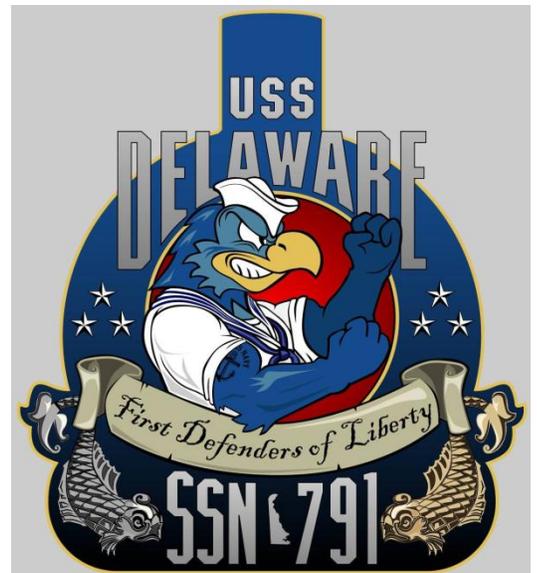
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Delaware_\(SSN-791\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Delaware_(SSN-791))

And finally, the **USS Delaware**, the first submarine in the United States Navy, named for that state.

The **USS Delaware** (SSN-791) is a Virginia-class attack submarine built in Newport News, VA. She is the eighth of her class that features a revised bow and includes some technology from the Ohio-class guided missile submarines.

She was launched and christened in 2018 and was to be commissioned in Wilmington, DE in 2020, but due to the Covid epidemic, the in-person commissioning never took place.

However, this “boat” has a distinction worthy of her name and the first state. **SHE IS THE FIRST UNITED STATES NAVY SHIP THAT WAS COMMISSIONED WHILE UNDERWATER.**



And from the hymn 'Eternal Father, Strong to Save', let these lines from the stanza apply to her.....

*”From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
Protect them wheresoe’er they go”*

SOURCES OF INFORMATION USS DELAWARE SHIPS

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<https://www.ussdelawarecommissioning.org/about-the-boat/boats-namesake/>



Delaware Military Heritage and Education Foundation Presents

The Major General William H. Duncan Memorial Lectures 2022

*At the Delaware Military Museum Library***

2022

JAN 8	MARY TORBEY	MILITARY MUSIC IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
FEB 12	DANTE BRIZILL	BLACK WOMEN IN WW2, GREATNESS UNDER FIRE
MAR 12	KIM BURDICK	JAR-L EXPEDITION
APR 9	NANCY STEELE & RICK LOVEKIN	DELAWARE'S WORLD WAR II FALLEN
MAY 14	MICHAEL NAZREWYCZ	HISTORIC MOVIE THEATERS OF DELAWARE
JUN 11	KAY KEENAN	FORT DELAWARE
JUL 9		TBA
AUG 13		TBA
SEP 10		TBA
OCT 8		TBA
NOV 12		TBA
DEC 10		TBA

Second Saturday, Programs begin at 1:00 PM

****Programs held live and via zoom**



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MUSEUM HOURS

Closed until further notice due to Covid

Mon 10:00 AM – Noon

2nd Saturday of the month

12:00 – 3:00

Program – 1:00 PM

THE VISUAL CONNECTION

www.delawaremilitarymuseum.org/

www.facebook.com/delawaremilitaryheritage

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