

In Memory of

Lt. Colonel (Retired) Michael J. Musel

Lt. Colonel (Retired) Michael J. Musel passed away on Sunday, April 12, 2020. Mike was the museum historian and administrative assistant to the director.

Mike truly loved his job at the museum. Mike started at the museum as a volunteer before he became a temporary employee in 2004 and then hired permanently in 2014.

When I became the museum director in June 2010, Mike greeted me with warmth. When we met to go over his job duties Mike asked if he could continue to do the bookkeeping, schedule and organize tours and work with the volunteers. I agreed and Mike did an outstanding job.

Mike knew I would need an administrative assistant to navigate the military side of things and he was there to guide me through. Making sure I left early to arrive at meetings on time, reminders to submit documents by the deadline, getting approvals complete for new volunteers so we could get them into the schedule quickly so we would not lose them and greeting new volunteers (with the correct name). Even when Mike was on vacation he called me every day just to check in and see how things were going and did I make a meeting or remember about something that was coming up. What a passion for the museum!

Mike's interest outside of the museum included being a member of the Ray Society. Mike always made sure they had at least one class and one tour at the museum each semester. Mike was also a civil war history buff. He had lots of books and papers on the subject and always willing to learn more. Mike was a very proud member of the 34th Infantry Division Association. Keeping their financial records and membership rooster with high standards. Mike was very proud of his military service. Here is a brief summary of his military service to our State and country.

Military Service –

Mike Musel joined the Army through ROTC Program at Iowa State University, Engineering Program. Mike entered in to U.S. Army on March 31, 1966 and was honorably discharged October 18, 1973. Mike was a civilian from October 19, 1973 to October 17, 1982.

On October 18, 1982 Mike joined the Iowa Army National Guard assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 194th Field Artillery, Fort Dodge, Iowa, as a Captain.

Mike received the rank of Major on November 6, 1988 and was assigned to the 185th Regiment as an Administrative Officer.

Mike received his final rank as Lieutenant Colonel on October 31, 1997 as a Military Personnel Officer with the Iowa National Guard Headquarters State Area Command (STARC) where he

served until he was honorably discharged on March 31, 2004 after serving 27 years of military service.

Mike held a variety of principal duties with the Iowa Army National Guard:

- Motor Officer, October 18, 1982 – January 9, 1984
- Battery Commander, January 10, 1984 – December 14, 1987
- Fire Support Officer, December 15, 1987 – September 14, 1988
- Fire Support Officer (Brigade) – September 15, 1988 – December 31, 1989
- Training Operations Officer – January 1, 1990 – February 29, 1992
- TRF to 34th RAOC (TAGO ORD 040-092 DTD2/Operations Officer – March 1, 1990 - November 30, 1992
- Plans Officer December 1, 1992 – July 19, 1995
- ATTCH 113th TRP CO/DET 2 HQ STARC TAGO 1 – July 19, 1995 – May 31, 1996
- TRF to IOWA ARNG Regional Training Institute/Administrative Officer - June 1, 1996 – December 30, 1996
- TRSF to HQ 185th Regiment/Administrative Officer, Johnston, IA January 1, 1997 – October 5, 1997
- Military Personnel Officer - October 6, 1997 until his retirement March 31, 2004

When I arrived at the museum Mike had already been recruiting former Iowa National Guard retirees and other veterans to assist at the museum. Because of Mike's recruitment of volunteers, we now have over 70+volunteers and 95% of them are military retirees from all branches of service.

Mike loved the museum dearly and it showed in his dedication. Mike was hired to work 20 hours a week and volunteered another 20+ hours a week assisting when needed and filling in whenever he could.

Mike was instrumental in assisting with the planning of major museum events including Memorial Day. We now have a team but before the team Mike and I were the team. That's how we really got to know each other by working together to make sure the museum shined.

On Memorial Day, I always arrive at 0330 to make sure that I had coffee started and finishing last minute details for the big event. About 0400 here came Mike because he did not want me to be by myself. How do you replace someone like Michael J. Musel?

These last few days have been difficult with the reality that Mike will not be driving up in his white Cadillac, drinking his coffee out of the well-used cup and eating a several day old donut. I will not be ordering his BLT from Jimmy Johns for lunch or calling to check on him if he was not at the museum by 1000.

Mike Vogt and I are going to be lost without Mike Musel. We will have to adjust and that will take time. I will have to resist calling his extension hoping he will answer to help me fill in the

blanks on a form, or wanting his assistance to file documents or coordinate a tour. There's a whole in our hearts and it's you – Michael J. Musel. The museum will never be the same without you but we will carry on in your honor.

Goodbye for now my (OUR) friend.