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The 2/28BCT Monument

(Pennsylvania Military Museum, T. Gum, Site Admin.)



The Pennsylvania Military Museum is home to the 28th Division National Shrine. The Museum has been open for more than 50 years, and the heritage of the site dates back to before World War One. Shortly after the Great War (WWI) the 28th Division (DIV) began hosting reunions and laying tribute to their fallen in the form of stone-memorials... now including two distinct walls, and over two dozen unique monuments.

One in particular is quite evocative due to its design, inclusion of multiple military branch KIAs, and for the unit's battle involvement/achievement.

In 2006 the Battle of Ramadi took place from March to November with allied troops engaging in intense urban combat in hopes of taking back the city from heavily armed insurgents, that were dug-in. This battle saw first use of chemical warfare (chlorine ordinance) during the Iraq War. Allied troops included US Army, Marines, SEALs, and Iraqi Security Forces.

The objective was to take control of the city with key points being targeted that would lead to the the control of the capital of the Anbar Province. By the end of the Battle there were approximately 300 US casualties and more than 1,000 insurgent KIAs. This battle would also result in U.S. Navy Seal Michael A. Monsoor being posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on September 29, 2006; Monsoor saved members of his team by jumping onto and absorbing the blast of a hand grenade thrown by insurgents.



The 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 28th DIV (2/28BCT) was attached to the 1st Marine Expedition Force in June of 2006 during the Battle of Ramadi. For many citizens, the thought of the National Guard being engaged in direct combat operations with the enemy seems foreign, but for the 28th DIV it part of their storied lineage. Commander of Task Force Bruiser, SEAL Team 3, even gave praise to the men of the Iron Division for their courage and service during this engagement. Further, the 2/28BCT would be awarded a Navy Unit Accommodation.

The monument dedicated to the 2/28BCT on the grounds of the Pennsylvania Military Museum has the names of the fallen etched into its granite, and the dog tags of the fallen hang inside of the obelisk stretching upward to the sky. A gentle breeze is enough to hear the dog tags clank and rattle, reminding of the cost of freedom, and the spirits of the fallen still are still with us.



When you visit the Museum, keep in mind we are far more than a walking path, more than a picnic spot... we are most proud to be a place of reflection, and a place to learn about the military history of the Commonwealth.