

# The Old Ironside's Museum

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BAUMHOLDER - One place to gain knowledge of the 1st Armored Division is at the Old Ironsides Historical Museum located in Building #8104 at Smith Barracks in Baumholder.

The museum houses over 3,000 artifacts in a 17,000 square-foot building surrounded by more than 50 tanks and artillery pieces. When entering the museum, visitors have the opportunity to view an introductory video. The video gives visitors a detailed history to set the mood for what they are about to see in the museum and how the division is currently organized and what it has to offer. Walking down the first hallway, one can view the 1st Armored Division's changes to include a tank replica display case and photos of all the 1st Armored Division's past commanding generals.

Emersion exhibits are

found along the historic trail. These exhibits recreate a war-time setting using props such as sandbags, barbed wire, iron gates and deteriorating walls. "Many visitors are amazed by the fact that to get the vehicles inside, they were broken down and reassembled piece by piece in the museum," says Peterson.

Visitors then proceed through detailed chronological and historical displays of the 1st Armored Division viewing donated artifacts such as uniforms, weapons and personal gear from the different campaigns and missions that the division supported.

"One of the museum's most unique attractions is the M3 General Lee tank, weighing 60,000 pounds, which was the first medium tank that the division used in combat in Africa. They are very rare today," said Dan Peterson, museum director.

"I was extremely impressed by Mr. Peterson's knowledge and



The Honorable Charles A. Blanchard of the General Council, Department of the Army (third from left) tours the Old Ironsides Historical Museum in Baumholder, Germany, with the museum's director, Dan Peterson (second from left)

the comprehensive collection of the 1st AD's artifacts," said Maj. Robb Jefferson, who is assigned to the 1st Armored Division Office of the Staff Judge Advocate.

The museum staff, which consists of two civilians and assigned soldiers, is currently working on the most recent addition to the museum, the Anzio Beach exhibit.

"Over the last five years the museum has really come a long way. We are constantly receiving compliments on the progress of the ongoing renovations and how well the museum is laid out," said Sgt. Mark D. Smith, one of the soldiers assigned to the museum. In recent years, the museum added carpeting, new display cases, more realistic mannequins, and installed new computers that enabled them to create better graphic displays.

"Renovation of the museum is a continuous process because Iron Soldiers are making history everyday," said Peterson.

The museum staff is also in the process of putting together a Task Force Eagle exhibit, dated December 1995 to December 1996, that captures the Bosnia Peace keeping mission. Donations for this and all exhibits are always welcome and appreciated.

The museum staff offers tours, helps with research in the research library, and when time permits, they give battlefield tours. According to Peterson, soldiers can also use the museum to familiarize themselves with foreign weapons and vehicles so they know what they might be facing.

The museum is open to the public Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the first Saturday of each month from noon to 5 p.m. Admission is free. For more information on group tours, please call Dan Peterson at DSN 485-6349 or CIV 0678-366349 or on the museum's website at [www.baumholder.army.mil/museum/museum.htm](http://www.baumholder.army.mil/museum/museum.htm).



Three Iron Soldiers plan their unit's next operation in this World War I display. In recent years, more realistic mannequins have been added to the museum's exhibits.