



# National Personnel Records Center

9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5100

## National Personnel Records Center Opens more than Six Million New Military Personnel Files

In November 2007, The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) will open for the first time more than six million individual Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) of former military personnel who served in the United States Army (including the Army Air Corps and Army Air Forces), Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. These files pertain to individuals who left the service prior to 1946. This records opening is part of the ongoing expansion of the NPRC's Archival Program that outlines transfer of all military OMPFs from the military services to the legal custody of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) 62 years after the subject of the record was discharged or retired, or died in service.

Records to be opened include:

- U.S. Navy Enlisted OMPFs with discharge dates beginning in 1885 through 1945;
- U.S. Navy Officer OMPFs with discharge dates beginning in 1902 through 1945;
- U.S. Marine Corps Enlisted OMPFs with discharge dates beginning in 1906 through 1945;
- U.S. Marine Corps Officer OMPFs with discharge dates beginning in 1905 through 1945;
- U.S. Army OMPFs with discharge dates beginning in 1912 through 1945; and
- U.S. Coast Guard OMPFs with discharge dates beginning in 1898 through 1945.

In 2004, the Department of Defense and the Archivist of the United States signed an agreement making the OMPF a permanent record of the United States. Records pertaining to 1.2 million veterans who served in the United States Navy and Marine Corps between 1885 and 1939 were officially opened in June 2005, accompanied by approximately 200 OMPFs of "persons of exceptional prominence"—former Presidents, famous military leaders, decorated heroes, celebrities, entertainers and cultural figures who served in the military.

### What's new?

The opening of these records allows genealogists, historians, researchers and other members of the public full access to these records. Prior to the legal transfer, access was limited to the specific veteran, the primary next-of-kin and federal agencies. Individuals may access these records by:

- Visiting the NPRC Archival Research Room in St. Louis, MO,
- Requesting copies of the records (for a copy fee) via the mail, fax or through [www.vetrecs.archives.gov](http://www.vetrecs.archives.gov). (NPRC encourages interested individuals to submit requests via [www.vetrec.archives.gov](http://www.vetrec.archives.gov) or on a Standard Form 180, available at: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html>).
- Employing an independent researcher to examine the records on their behalf.

OMPFs are subject to the NARA's fee schedule that authorizes the Agency to collect fees from the public for copies of archived records (44 USC 2116c and 44 USC 2307). **Copy fees for archived OMPFs are waived for veterans or primary next-of-kin (surviving spouse or children of the veteran) if the records are needed to validate a benefit or entitlement.**

The fee schedule for OMPFs is as follows:

1. OMPF of five pages or fewer: \$15
2. OMPF of greater than five pages: \$50 (most OMPFs fall in this category)
3. Persons of Exceptional Prominence OMPF: \$.75 per page.
4. Copies of individual OMPF documents made in the Archival Research Room: \$.75 per page.

**If the NPRC receives inquiries from Congressional offices that relate to archival records, the Center will contact the requester directly and identify the fee to be charged. A copy of this contact document will be forwarded to the initiating Congressional office. This is necessary to protect the integrity of all financial transactions that may occur between NPRC and requesters.**

**For OMPFs still in the custody of the military services, NPRC will continue to provide record information to Congressional offices acting on the behalf of a requestor.**

If records were destroyed or severely damaged by the fire that occurred at NPRC in 1973 (Army, Army Air Corps & Army Air Forces records with discharge dates from 1912-1959), and are needed by a veteran or their dependents to obtain Federal benefits or entitlements, NPRC will attempt to reconstruct the essential elements of the military record. Otherwise, reconstruction will not take place. However, NPRC *will attempt* to identify for researchers other sources that may enable further research.

These records are subject to a limited exemption under the Freedom of Information Act. All social security numbers will be redacted before releasing the record to the public.

### **What's the same?**

Records that are needed by a veteran or the primary next-of-kin to obtain benefits or entitlements arising from military service will continue to be provided free of charge. If records were destroyed or severely damaged by the fire of 1973, and *are* needed by a veteran or their dependents to obtain benefits, NPRC will continue to try to reconstruct the military record.

Written requests for records and Requests Pertaining to Military Records (Standard Form 180, available at: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html>) will be processed the same as requests for other military records from NPRC, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100. Veterans and next of kin may still use NARA's online military personnel records request system (eVetRecs) at [www.vetrec.archives.gov](http://www.vetrec.archives.gov).

There are currently no plans to systematically digitize all of these records. One exception to this is the ongoing digitization of official military records pertaining to Persons of Exceptional Prominence, which include, among others, former Presidents, famous military leaders, celebrities, entertainers, and professional athletes.

### **What's next?**

NPRC's goal is to respond to requests for records in 10 working days or less. Longer response times should be expected for records which were damaged in the 1973 fire and may require conservation treatments prior to allowing access to the records.

Additional military personnel records will be made available to the public each year, for individuals who served in the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard who have been discharged, deceased, or retired for at least 62 years. For example, records for veterans who were discharged, deceased, or retired in 1946 will be opened in 2008; records for veterans who were discharged, deceased, or retired in 1947 will be opened in 2009; etc. In all, more than 57,000,000 records will be opened by 2067.

# # #

For more information, contact Bryan McGraw, Director of Archival Programs at NPRC, at 314-801-9132. For PRESS information, contact the National Archives Public Affairs Staff at 202-357-5326.



# National Personnel Records Center

9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5100

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 18, 2007

## **National Personnel Records Center Opens more than Six Million New Military Personnel Files**

St. Louis, MO...The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) will open for the first time all of the individual Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) of Army, Army Air Corps, Army Air Forces, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard military personnel who served and were discharged, retired or died while in the service, prior to 1946. Collectively, these files comprise more than six million records. This is the second step in the progressive opening of the entire paper and microfiche OMPF collection of over 57 million individual files. Additional military personnel records will be made available to the public each year through 2067 until the entire collection is opened.

These archived files are treasured by family members, historians, researchers, and genealogists. Contained in a typical OMPF are documents outlining all elements of military service, including assignments, evaluations, awards and decorations, education and training, demographic information, some medical information and documented disciplinary actions. Some records also contain photographs of the individual and official correspondence concerning military service.

To view an original record, individuals may visit the NPRC Archival Research Room in St. Louis, MO. Telephone is 314-801-0850. Research room hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Central Time Tuesday through Friday. Visitors are strongly encouraged to call ahead to make reservations.

- To obtain copies of records, customers may write to NPRC at 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132, fax a request to 314-801-9195, or submit a request through <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>, or on a Standard Form 180. Information about records available at NPRC is also posted on the National Personnel Records Center Homepage at <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/index.html>.

Archived, public records are subject to the National Archives and Records Administration's published fee schedule. **Copy fees for archived OMPFs are waived for veterans or primary next-of-kin (surviving spouse or children of the veteran) if the records are needed to validate a benefit or entitlement.** The fee schedule for OMPFs is as follows:

1. OMPFs 5 pages or less: \$15
2. OMPFs 6 pages or more: \$50 (most OMPFs fall in this category)
- \*3. OMPFs of Persons of Exceptional Prominence (PEP): \$.75 per page

*\*(PEP records include the OMPFs of famous individuals such as former Presidents, famous military leaders, decorated military heroes, celebrities, entertainers, and professional athletes who left military service and have been deceased for at least 10 years).*

Archived records are subject to a limited privacy exemption under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. As such, all records are reviewed prior to release and social security numbers are redacted.

# # #

For more information, contact Bryan McGraw, Director of Archival Programs at NPRC, at 314-801-9132.  
For PRESS information, contact the National Archives Public Affairs Staff at 202-357-5300.

08-14