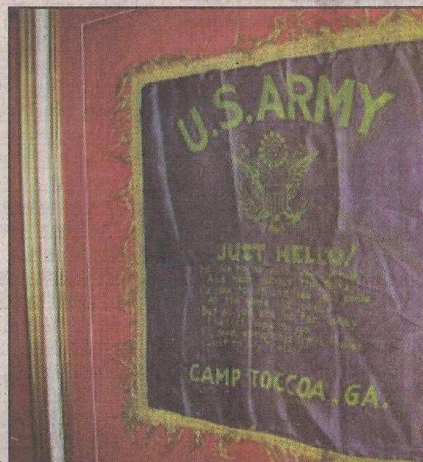


Forsyth Life

Forsyth County News — Sunday, September 14, 2008

B



Model heroes



Photos/Ben Holcombe

Top left photo, a replica of an Army airman's uniform hangs inside stables used as barracks in the Currahee Military Museum in Toccoa. The stables were built in 1922 and used in England to house Allied soldiers. After World War II they were preserved and the owner donated several of them to the museum after the release of the series "Band of Brothers." Top center photo, a replica of a C-47 plane is on display. Top right photo, historic banners from Camp Toccoa are among the thousands of items at the museum. Above, from left, Kristi Apostel holding 8-week-old Siri Apostel, Hina Apostel, 2, and Steve Apostel visit the museum, Thursday.

Local builders contribute to Toccoa museum

By Ben Holcombe

Associate Editor

TOCCOA — The small warplane and even smaller airmen look ready to whip the world.

Cased in glass, the lifelike miniatures built by members of the Forsyth County-based Georgia Mountain Modelers club stand among the rifles and uniforms, artifacts and Army gear in the Currahee Military Museum.

In the first of several planned gifts over the past two years, model club members contributed the C-47 in D-Day markings, a replica of what paratroopers jumped out of over France.

Chris Mobley was one of the project's three builders, which also included club president Keith Pruitt and Dan Duna, a Virginia man who completed the figures.

"Being able to work on projects for the museum is a privilege for us as a group," Mobley said. "This kicked off the first project. It turned out to be an interesting one."

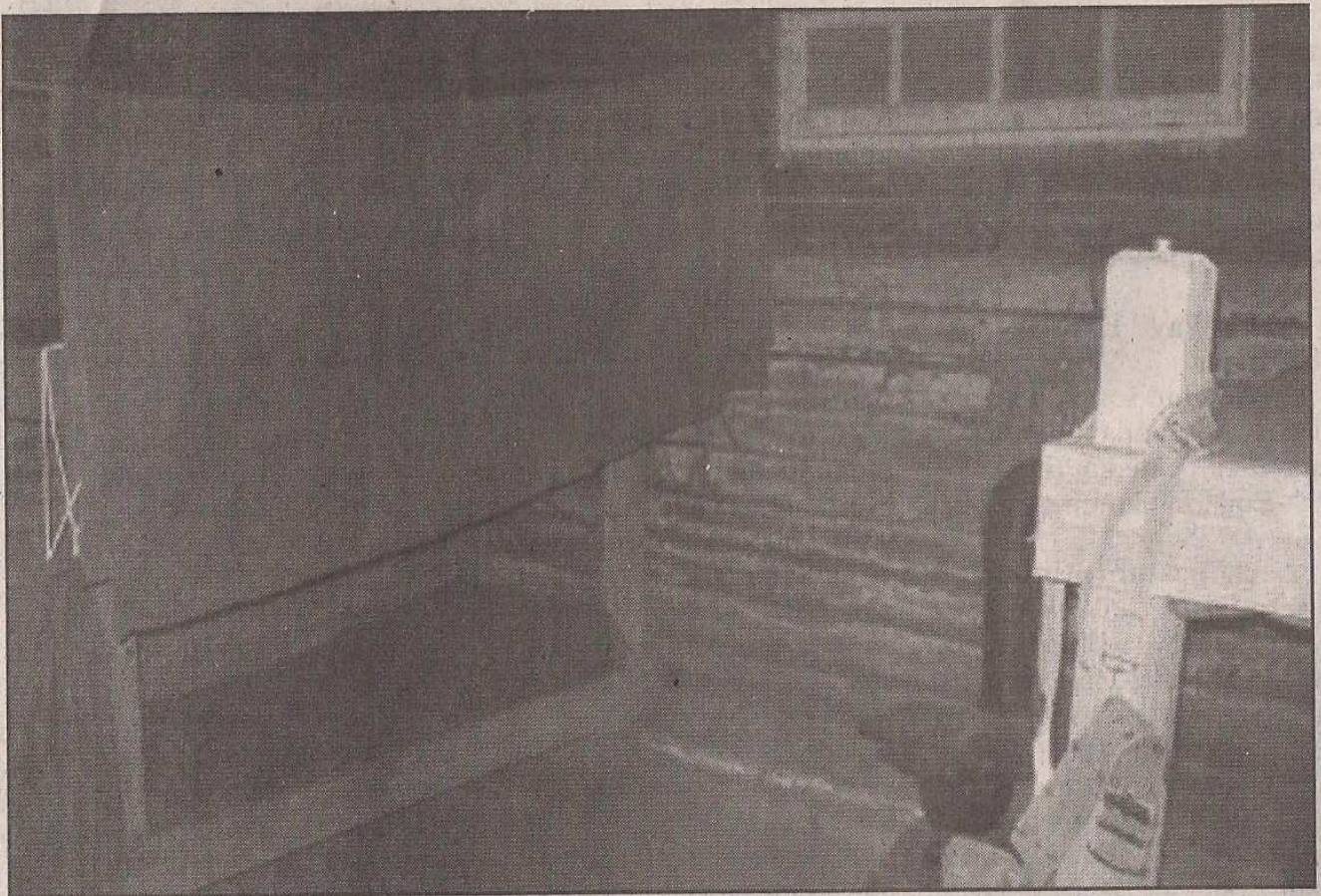
See **MUSEUM**, Page 6B

Display cases at the Currahee Military Museum are filled with Camp Toccoa memorabilia.



PAGE 6B — FORSYTH COUNTY NEWS — Sunday, September 14, 2008

MUSEUM from 1B



Photos/Ben Holcombe

Preserved stable barracks at the museum show how Army paratroopers lived during training.

The projects will continue during the annual Currahee Military Weekend, Oct. 3-5, when the modelers plan to present replicas of the "Grim Reaper" fighter aircraft flown by Toccoa resident Col. Lowell Brueland.

The World War II museum located inside the historic Toccoa train depot sees about 14,000 visitors a year and has been visited by people from 34 countries.

"It can take you 30 minutes or it can take you three hours," to take the tour, said executive director Brenda Carlan.

"The thing that's different about this museum is you don't find a military museum stuck out in the middle of anywhere, but we've got so many stories that go along with the museum."

Oddly enough, until 2006, the museum occupied a local house, before moving into the restored Toccoa train depot.



Brenda Carlan, executive director of the Currahee Military Museum in Toccoa, gives a tour Thursday.

Caplan said several years ago, she visited the Cumming Country Fair & Festival for ideas on improving the museum.

About 17,000 World War II

For more information about the Georgia Mountain Modelers club go online at www.mountainmodelers.org.

soldiers trained at Camp Toccoa, inspiring the stories of "Band of Brothers," "Saving Private Ryan" and "The Dirty Dozen."

The museum houses memorabilia from several generations of American armed services men and women.

Mobley said he and fellow club members just enjoy employing their hobby to help.

"This is a way for us to show our respect for the veterans of days past," he said, "while giving visitors to the museum a look at subjects too large for the museum but which are an important part of the story the museum presents."

E-mail Ben Holcombe at benholcombe@forsythnews.com.

At a glance

A weekend filled with activities includes opportunities for visiting Camp Toccoa and Currahee Mountain, a World War II re-enactment, Currahee Challenge Road Race (3 miles up and 3 miles down), World War II military vehicle and memorabilia displays, Army Ranger demonstrations and book signings.

This year's featured speaker is Col. Ed Shames, a member of the 506th regiment who trained in Toccoa in 1942 and was later assigned to the famed Easy Company. Author Jake McNiece ("Filthy Thirteen") is also expected to attend.

If you go

Currahee Military Museum

- Located inside the historic train depot, 160 N. Alexander St., Toccoa
- Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Saturday and 1-4 p.m. Sunday
- Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students.
- Currahee Military Weekend, Oct. 3-5

Getting there:

From Forsyth County, take either Hwy. 369 or Hwy. 53 to Gainesville, then Hwy. 365 north to Hwy. 17. Follow the signs to Toccoa, and the Currahee Military Museum. Drive time is about 1 hour and 15 minutes.

For more information about the museum or military weekend call (706) 282-5055 or go online at www.toccoahistory.com.