

ASC History Newsletter



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From LSEs to AFSBs

On 16 October 2006 the 401st and 402d Army Field Support Brigades were activated as MTOE units. By the end of 2008 the 403rd, 404th, 405th, 406th, and 407th AFSBs were also active MTOE units. This conversion from TDA to MTOE was an important aspect of the evolution of ASC. One of the key missions of the new AFSBs was to provide C2 for all AMC units in the AFSB's area of operations. The concept of a single C2 for AMC units in a theater stretched back to the 1970s with the establishment of the AMC Forward in Europe and Korea. AMC Forward SWA (predecessor of the 401st) had been in existence since the late 1990s. With the creation of OSC in 2000 the AMC Forwards were designated the AMC "Single Face to the Field" for the field forces. At the same time the AMC Forwards were to gather "logistics intelli-

gence" to better enable AMC to monitor and impact readiness. It was the AMC Forwards and war reserves that made the OSC a global organization ready to interact with Soldiers on the ground at home and in contingency operations. The initial AFSB concept of a single AMC umbrella looked strikingly similar to the AMC Forward mission from the early 1980s.

However, to MG Jerome Johnson, CG of AFSC in 2004 and then ASC CG, the AMC Forwards (by then called LSEs in the deployed theaters) were not fully integrated into the planning and execution process in each theater, especially in SWA. He thought that the units were seen as managers of logistics and not as peers of the brigades. He noted that the LSE Commanders were not always invited to planning events (or even social events) and they were not seen as part of the leadership team. 'LSE Commander' or 'AMC Forward Commander' did not sound like a real commander to many tactical leaders. He fixed that by directing the name be changed to Army Field Support Brigade. He then directed the commanders to meet with senior leadership in each theater and make sure they were seen as brigade commanders. The change

worked well. The AFSB commanders were rapidly integrated into planning and meetings with the other brigade commanders. AFSB Europe was the first to convert in late 2004. AFSB SWA and AFSB Iraq rapidly followed in early 2005, then AFSB Far East and AFSB CONUS. While some saw this as just a name change, the shift allowed the command to become more proactive in planning.

Calling the units AFSB was a transitional step. At the same time planning was being completed at AFSC and DA to create MTOE units also called AFSBs. MTOE units are equipped to deploy and their readiness is tracked by DA. They are also considered more permanent units in the Army inventory. The AFSC CG believed that conversion to MTOE would better place the units to fully engage in the support of Army units as they deployed forward, would ensure a stream of centrally selected commanders, and would provide the equipment that was needed to rapidly deploy. As then COL Jack O'Connor noted during the activation ceremony of the 402d AFSB, "the brigade has the ability to reach back from the foxhole all the way to the American industrial base for solutions. For the Army the 402nd AFSB's tactical actions have strategic impacts." The creation of the MTOE AFSBs was just another step taken to create a more responsive and complete logistics solution.



Unfurling the provisional new colors (the final design was not complete) during the 402d AFSB activation ceremony, Balad, October 2006

This Month in Military History...

- **1775:** John Adams proposes a Continental Army
- **1864:** Battle of Cold Harbor begins
- **1900:** Future President Hoover caught in Boxer Rebellion (China)
- **1916:** Pres. Wilson signs National Defense Act
- **1918:** Allies launch counterattack against Germans in France
- **1944:** US begins "shuttle bombing" in Operation Frantic
- **1961:** Pres. Kennedy and Khrushchev agree on neutrality for Laos
- **2012:** US Forces rescue hostages held in Afghanistan

Rock Island Arsenal Museum Preserves All Things RIA

On 1 October 1903 Chief of Ordnance Major General William Crozier notified RIA that fifteen boxes of ordnance materiel would shortly be arriving "for the purpose of preserving it in a Military Museum to be established at the Rock Island Arsenal." In correspondence with RIA, General Crozier directed that a "suitable building be selected as a museum to display this ordnance materiel for research and for the interest of the general public." Since 1905 the RIA Museum has done exactly that. It is the second oldest U.S. Army museum in existence. The RIA Museum's focus is on "people, processes, and products" in order to preserve and interpret the history of this Arsenal and other tenant units.

When it opened the museum quickly became known for its small arms collection. This collection began when the M1903 rifle was produced on the island. As newer models were developed two types of each gun were kept and given to the museum. Other donations included parts of the government's display at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. The museum's small arms collection includes five weapons that have been positively proven to have been used by the Sioux or Cheyenne at the Battle of Little Bighorn and serial number GO1 of the General Officers M15

pistol. There are over twelve hundred U.S., foreign, civilian, and military small arms on permanent display.

The museum has undergone a few name changes over the years. Originally coined the Ordnance Museum, its name was changed to the Rock Island Arsenal Museum in 1919. In 1959, the name changed to the John M. Browning Memorial Museum "in recognition of Mr. Browning's contributions to ordnance technology." On 1 July 1986, it was changed back to the Rock Island Arsenal Museum to reflect its primary purpose. The small arms collection remains an important aspect of the museum collection, but since 1986 the RIA Museum was charged with preserving and explaining important themes in the Arsenal's history.

When you stop in to visit the museum, from 12pm until 4pm, Tuesday through Saturday, you can also expect to see items relating to Fort Armstrong, the Blackhawk War, the first bridge, and the Confederate Prison Camp 1863-65. For the kids, the museum has clothing from the Civil War and other periods in order to learn what it was like to dress as a Soldier or settler. The museum also has displays for ASC, JMC and 1st Army.

On 6 June the RIA Museum and the Putnam Museum opened a joint exhibit entitled "RIA: An Arsenal of Innovation." This joint exhibit is a rare opportunity to exhibit RIA Museum artifacts off the island. The exhibit will allow the local community to learn more about Arsenal history. With DA level approvals, over 130 items were loaned to the Putnam Museum and the RIA Museum staff committed significant resources to also provide photographs and narrative. The exhibit runs through Veterans Day, 2015.

Located on the North side of building 60 at the intersection of Gillespie and North Street, the museum can provide answers to your questions pertaining to the Rock Island Arsenal, or even to the history of the museum itself.



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