

Dayton To Become Home to National VA History Center

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The Dayton VA will become the home of the **National VA History Center**, the federal agency announced Thursday.

Outgoing national VA Secretary Robert McDonald officially designated the **Dayton VA** as a national archive in one of his final acts prior to leaving office Friday, the VA said. A Trump administration nominee, David Shulkin, the current VA undersecretary of health, is expected to take over the top post.

In April, McDonald declared the VA campus in Dayton the site for the future archive estimated to cost \$20 million through a mixture of public dollars and yet to be raised private funds. McDonald said then Dayton was a “fitting home” for the agency’s historical archives.

A memorandum of agreement on the project was signed Thursday between federal VA leaders and local government, nonprofit agency and economic development officials.

“Really, we wanted to make sure we had something in writing, some kind of a stake in the ground that would say we’re definitely doing this,” Dayton VA Director Glenn Costie said in an interview Thursday.

The VA has committed roughly \$5 million to \$6 million so far, Costie said, and future fund raising will need to pay the rest in what could take five to 10 years to complete. The new agreement set up a governing board and a committee to raise money.

Two buildings will be part of the project. The agency’s massive archives will be housed in the old national headquarters and a clubhouse.

As part of the first phase, Costie said renovation work replacing the roof and windows has started on the headquarters building to stop further deterioration. Completion is expected this summer. Then, similar renovation work will begin at the clubhouse. Both buildings have stood vacant for years.



Headquarters Building Built 1871 (Bldg. 116) with Memorial Hall pictured behind



Headquarters/Administration Building Today

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Building 129 was constructed in 1881 as the Veteran's Clubhouse

“But given the funding and time it will take many, many years to get to the end of that rainbow,” Costie said. “We’re hoping that with the help from the community we can raise the money quicker and then move faster on the restoration of the two buildings.”

The former headquarters building (Bldg. 116), built in 1871, will house museum exhibition space, a lecture hall, staff offices, and a gift shop, the VA said.

An oral history studio will allow veterans to record their military service histories as part of a Library of Congress’ Veteran’s history project, the VA said.

The clubhouse building, (Bldg. 129), built in 1881, will house historical archives for the entire VA system, including art, artifacts, records, photographs and other documents, the VA said in a statement.

A Dayton Development Coalition study has indicated around 440 jobs could be created in retail, tourism and education-related work within five years of its opening.

The Dayton VA, which began in 1867 as one of the first three National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers in the United States, marks its 150th anniversary this year.



Building 129 today

The Dayton VA is celebrating its 150th Anniversary this year with events paying tribute to the Soldiers Home, the Veterans and their families who served and sacrificed for the past 150 years!

Activities began in January and continue through December. Visit <http://www.daytonva150.com/> for details. These events are open to the public.

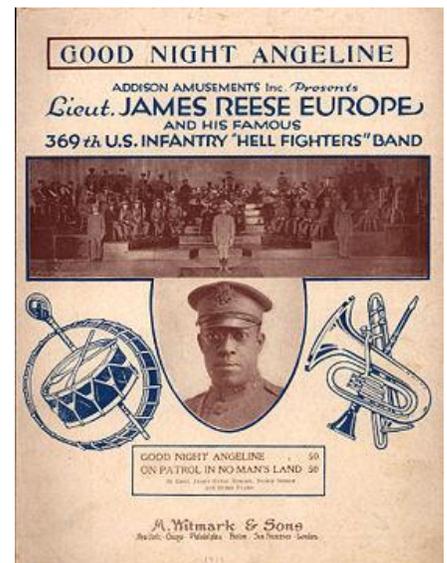
February begins with the [150 Walking Challenge](#). The web site details the various Walks or Walk n’ Rolls. This challenge begins January 1, 2017 and concludes on Veterans Day, November 11, 2017 at the Veterans Day Ceremony at Dayton VA Medical Center.

The [Four Chaplains Ceremony](#) takes place on **February 3 at 12 noon** in the Historic Protestant Chapel. The ceremony honors the sacrifice of four Chaplains who lost their lives attempting to save their fellow soldiers.

[Celebration of Black History Month](#) is **February 16 from 11AM-1PM** in Building 305. Entertainment includes John Dixon, Poet; Robert Sanae, Musician; Lasonya Brown, Vocalist.

[James Reese Europe Concert](#) - The Dayton VA Medical Center is partnering with Central State University to host a Black History Month concert in honor of James Reese Europe. The concert will be at the Dayton VA Medical Center, Building 305 Theater.

[Black History Month Luncheon](#) will be held February 23 at 11 AM in Bldg. 305.



13th Annual Patriot Freedom Festival

May 27-28, 2017 – The Patriot Freedom Festival in 2017 celebrates the 150th Anniversary of the Dayton VA Medical Center, which was then known as the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.



The 2017 event, our 13th Annual Festival, will focus on 150 years of healing for our veterans. Please come and enjoy learning about our history, visit with our Civil War reenactors as well as reenactors representing later conflicts. Our vendors will provide food and merchandize for your purchase and we will have live entertainment all weekend. Don't miss our **OPENING CEREMONY** at which we plan to have **ABRAHAM LINCOLN**, Chaplain Earnshaw, and others representing figures from the past. We will of course provide guided campus tours via the air-

conditioned Tour Bus with tour guide Margaret Kruckemeyer, and a visit to the Grotto Gardens. Please visit www.americanveteransheritage.org and click on "Contact Us," or call 937-267-7628 if you have questions.

Be sure to visit the Dayton VA 150 website: www.daytonva150.com for information on other events celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the "National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers!"

LISTING OF AVHC EVENTS FOR 2017:

- 20 May 2017 – Armed Forces Day 5K Run/Walk/Roll
- 27-28 May 2017 - Patriot Freedom Festival
- 9 September 2017 – 1860's Garden Party and Old-Time Traveling Show (invitation only, please call (937) 267-7628 if interested in attending)
- 12 November 2017 – Veterans Day 5K Run/Walk/Roll

SALES and WEB SITE:

We are in the process of updating our web site to include a "Sale" page. Items for sale include the Lighted Ceramic Protestant Chapel, which is a replica of the historic Home Chapel built in 1868. The Mother Home Book in 3D is also available, as well as Campus Greeting Cards and Post Cards. We also have Memorial Bricks for sale to raise funds to further support the mission and preservation efforts of the AVHC.

More details will be available on-line, or visit us Monday through Friday 9-3 weekdays at the AVHC Headquarters & Miami Valley Military History Museum, Bldg. 120, Ohio Avenue on the Dayton VA Campus. Call (937) 267-7628 for information.



YOUR DONATIONS are gratefully accepted – Help us preserve the best of our past! The American Veterans Heritage Center works to preserve the best of our past... by improving the present...to create a better future. Together, with your donation and support, we will realize this vision to honor our nation’s veterans. Please send donations to the **American Veterans Heritage Center**, P.O. Box 1366, Fairborn, OH 45324-1366 or go to our website: www.AmericanVeteransHeritage.org to make your

donation through **PayPal**

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