HARRY S TRUMAN CENTENNIAL

This month is a very special one for the National Guard and for the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS). On the evening of May 4, the leaders of the National Guard, the NGAUS leaders and major national figures will gather at the National Guard Memorial to celebrate two very significant birthdays: the 100th anniversary of Harry S Truman’s birth and the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the National Guard Memorial.

We celebrate the centenary of Harry S. Truman’s birth because he is the most recent president of the United States to have been a National Guardman; a Guardsman proud of his service during two periods in the first 20 years of this century, and who, to some extent, was a partner in the relationship, it was Truman who gave the dedication speech for the National Guard Memorial celebration on May 3, 1959, the second birthday we celebrate, this month.

Both Truman’s Guard membership and the dedication of the National Guard Memorial are significant in the evolution of the National Guard to the way we know the Guard. This issue of NATIONAL GUARD contains major articles on both events. Reading the first article, Colonel Khalil’s recollection of Harry Truman’s Guard career, reveals several facts pointing out the major differences between the National Guard Reserve and the National Guard National Guard.

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On the way to the Guard, I’ve been told that the tenth president of the United States, James Buchanan, was a Guard member. This is not particularly surprising, but it does point to a lack of professionalism and discipline in the Guard. It seems that the Guard has always been a place where men could go to avoid the draft or to escape from the real world. The Guard was a haven for those who didn’t want to be part of the military.

Harry S. Truman was 30 years old when he was commissioned in the Missouri National Guard in 1917. He served as a private in the Missouri National Guard during World War I. After the war, he returned to his law practice in Independence, Missouri. In 1934, he was elected to the United States Senate, where he served until 1949. Truman was a member of the Democratic Party and was the 33rd Vice President of the United States from 1949 to 1953. He was also the 34th President of the United States from 1949 to 1953.

Truman’s dedication speech for the National Guard Memorial was a powerful and moving tribute to the men and women who served in the National Guard. He spoke of the importance of the Guard in the defense of the United States and the world, and the need for continued support of the Guard.

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