Hofstra University Special Collections marks the 65th anniversary of the Nassau County American Legion Posts’ generous, ongoing support for the James N. MacLean American Legion Memorial Collection at Hofstra University. The James N. MacLean Collection was established at Hofstra University in 1951 to pay tribute to deceased members of the Nassau County American Legion. The Legionnaires continue to support the Collection through donations that fund the purchase of special books and archival materials, which are dedicated in honor or in memory of their fallen comrades.

The MacLean Collection contains materials documenting the history of New York State with a primary focus on Long Island. It includes not only social and genealogical history, but also the cultural, economic, and natural history of New York and Long Island. The Collection has a particular emphasis on historic materials of Nassau and Suffolk Counties up until 1975. In addition to special books, the Collection includes newspapers on microfilm, maps and atlases, family papers, manuscripts, print journals, and ephemera, such as postcards and photographs, relating to organizations, families, and individuals from the region. Donations of unique materials, such as diaries, family letters or photographs fitting into these collecting themes are always welcome.

In honor of this anniversary, Hofstra University Special Collections exhibits here some of the very special items that have been acquired through the Nassau County American Legion’s generous funding. Hofstra University Special Collections thanks the Nassau County American Legionnaires for their service to the country and their support of the MacLean Collection.

Geri Solomon  Bronwyn Hannon
Assistant Dean,  Curator of Acquisitions,
Hofstra University Special Collections  Hofstra University Special Collections
Battle of Long Island. Proclamation of British General William Erskine to the Long Island rebels to lay down their arms, August 29, 1776. (From the Wars Collection at Hofstra University Special Collections.)

Civil War Discharge Certificate of Private Samuel J. Jones, Company E, 165th Regiment, N.Y. Volunteers, September 1st, 1865. Samuel J. Jones was a Hempstead farmer. (From the Wars Collection at Hofstra University Special Collections.)
1st Lt. Sydney Erskine Brewster (1st from right) of Glen Cove, N.Y. with his first Day Bombardment Group, 11th Aero Squadron, American Expeditionary Forces, France, 1918. Note “Mr. Jiggs” squadron insignia. (From the Sydney Erskine Brewster Collection, 1917-1918 at Hofstra University Special Collections.)

Michael Caracost of Valley Stream, N.Y., with fellow servicemen in jeep, ca. 1945. (From the Caracost Family Collection of Wartime Letters, 1941-1946, at Hofstra University Special Collections.)
Post card of Guy Lombardo’s East Point dinner dance restaurant, Freeport, N.Y., ca. 1960.

Levittown, N.Y. development magazine *Thousand Lanes*, Spring 1959. (From the Levittown Collection at Hofstra University Special Collections.)
Dance band billboard poster at the “Rainbow Room,” Copiague, N.Y., April 15, 1955. (From the Special Collections at Hofstra University.)

Karl’s Mariners Inn, Northport, N.Y., 1961. (From the L.I. Menu Collection at Hofstra University Special Collections.)
Automobile map of the Western Part of Long Island, 1909. (From the Map Collection at Hofstra University Special Collections.)

Frank Buck with elephant in front of the “Monkey Mountain” at Frank Buck’s Jungle Camp in Massapequa, N.Y., ca. 1939. (From the Frank Buck Collection, 1935-ca.1939, at Hofstra University Special Collections.)