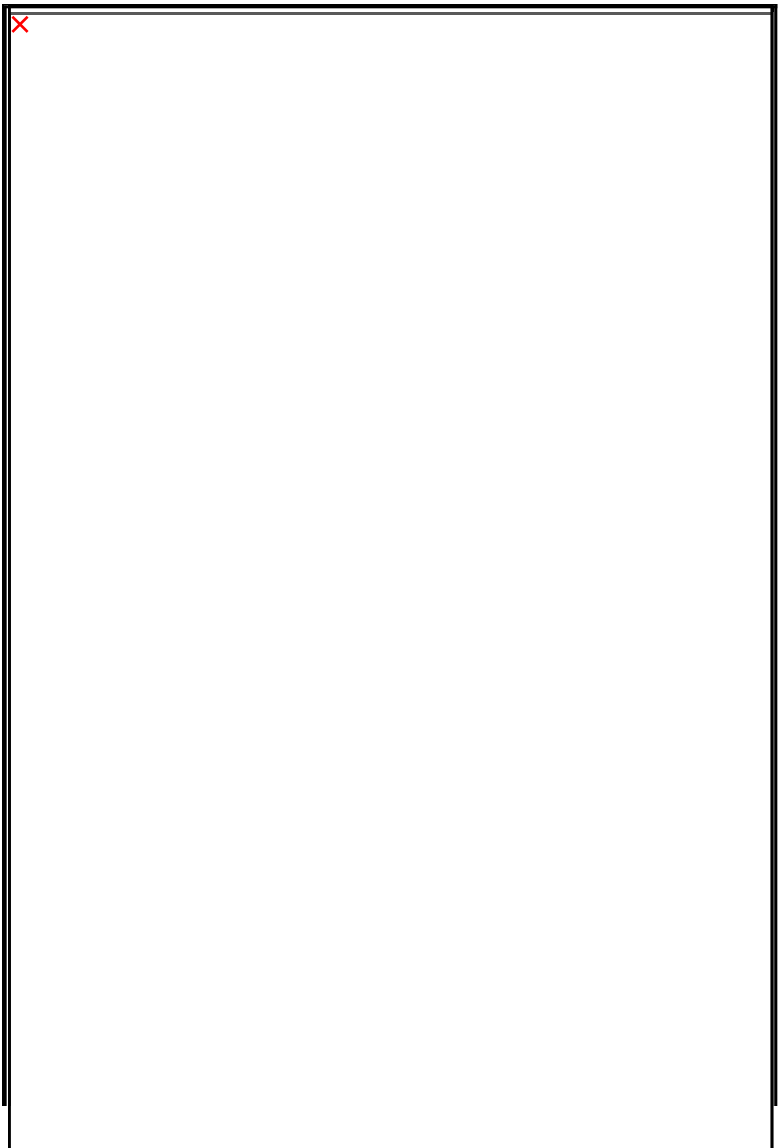


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Feb. 17, 2017 -- Retired Army Col. Donald P. Shaw has been appointed posthumously as a U.S. Army War College Distinguished Fellow—the most prestigious award given to former faculty members. Col. Shaw will be long remembered for his contributions to the U.S. Army War College, the Army, and the Nation.

Shaw, who died in 2002, was singled out for recognition by the USAWC Academic Board and the Commandant, Maj. Gen. Bill Rapp. A host of professional achievements supported the decision to name him a distinguished fellow. He first served in Carlisle in 1971-73 as the deputy director of the USAWC Operations Group, and then completed the resident education program in the class of 1974. He served as faculty member for three years in the Department of National and International Security Studies, during which he leveraged his extensive education and experience: a BS from the U.S. Military Academy, two Harvard master's degrees, instructor experience in the USMA Social Sciences Department,



and two decades as a Cavalry officer.

To qualify as a distinguished fellow, a retired faculty member must have a record of extraordinary and enduring contributions whose influence extends beyond the Army War College. According to USAWC Provost Dr. Lance Betros, “Don Shaw easily met that criterion during his 12-year association with this institution. The Army and the nation owe him a debt of gratitude, and I am therefore very happy that we could recognize him with the institution’s highest award.”

Shaw’s service in the 1960s and ‘70s included two combat tours in Vietnam and command of a cavalry squadron in Europe. In the latter assignment, he overcame shortages of “virtually every necessity,” according to his contemporary, retired Col. Lewis Sorley, also a USAWC Distinguished Fellow. “Challenges across the Army in Europe made his squadron’s achievement all the more noteworthy,” noted Sorley about the achievements of Shaw’s unit in tank gunnery.

While serving a war college instructor, Sorley selected Shaw from the student body to join the USAWC Current Affairs Panel. The small team traveled to more than a dozen college campuses to engage articulate, probing students and faculty members about the U.S. military and, always, about the U.S. role in Vietnam. “It was often a challenging task, as the atmosphere of the late Vietnam era was at many venues decidedly anti-military,” wrote Sorley in his letter nominating Shaw for recognition as a USAWC Distinguished Fellow. Today, the Eisenhower Series College Program continues the example of Shaw and his peers when USAWC resident students share the insights of experience and education with college and civic audiences across the United States.

A desire to link education and professional practice motivated Shaw during his tenure at USAWC. His experience in Europe inspired him to collaborate with U.S. and NATO staffs to reinvigorate a key block of instruction on national security. He created an innovative multimedia-supported course in U.S. domestic issues. Additionally, he designed the first integrated core curriculum, which the Deputy Secretary of Defense endorsed as a model for all senior-level colleges.

Shaw devoted his final years at USAWC—as the MHI director—to expand the use of history in professional military education. He noted that the Army at the time was “a-historical” due to the absence of military history in the curricula of Army educational institutions. “Not everything we do is being done for the first time,” he argued, “and an involved and responsive staff historian could make a vital contribution to our approach to current problems and issue.” Today, MHI supports military education with the largest collection of U.S. Army records and related materials in existence.

“Don led MHI from 1977 to 1984, as the Army was rebuilding itself in the aftermath of the war in Vietnam,” said Betros. “Through his vision and leadership, MHI influenced the Army to renew its commitment to the study of military history. The Army’s service schools – especially the Army War

College – embraced historical study and leveraged MHI’s growing archives.”

Former MHI researcher and USAWC Distinguished Fellow Dr. Richard Sommers is renowned among a generation of USAWC students for mentorship in historical research. He singled out two key Shaw efforts to preserve historical insights for Army education.

"In the late 1970s, combat experience was passing from the ken of the officer corps," noted Sommers. "To capture that experience and convey it to our Armed Forces in the future and to history, Col. Shaw launched a major oral history project to interview every Army War College student and faculty member, 1983-1985, who had commanded a company or battalion in the Vietnam War.

"Col. Shaw quadrupled MHI's World War I Survey to create the best collection anywhere of personal papers and photos of the American Doughboy in the Great War—resources that are proving invaluable to AHEC's upcoming exhibit this April commemorating the 100th anniversary of United States entry into that conflict," added Sommers.

Colonel Donald P. Shaw will be recognized at USAWC’s annual faculty awards ceremony in May, 2017.

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