

Thrift Store no more

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A version of this article ran in the 7 May 2010 *Monmouth Message*

The Fort Monmouth Thrift Store closed its doors Thursday, 22 April after over 60 years of service to the community. Its last ten volunteers received Garrison Command Team Coins Awarded for Excellence from Fort Monmouth Garrison Manager George Fitzmaier in a ceremony held at the Store 27 April.

According to a 1957 *Monmouth Message* article, the Thrift Store, also called the Thrift Shop, opened its doors in 1947 as an Officers' Wives Club fundraiser for the post nursery. When the nursery proved self supporting, profits from Thrift Shop went instead to various "charitable and social causes." Over the years, this included funding for the Boy Scouts, a chapel at the post hospital, and the Fort Monmouth tradition committee, responsible for many of the war memorials on post.

The Shop has also made donations to the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Museum at Fort Monmouth when appropriate. For example, the Shop donated a complete set of six volumes of the "History of the United States" to the Museum in 2008.

The books were compiled by E. Benjamin Andrews, chancellor of the University of Nebraska, and printed in 1916. The series contains 650 illustrations and maps.



Back Row: CSM Chapman, Bill Haberman, Stu Atschinow, Ann Ginsburg, Barbara Lamb, Jean Bremseth, Manager Tammy Martinsen and George Fitzmaier.

Front Row: Assistant Manager Sheryl Boyd, Unni Lindefjeld, Anne Dunlap, Jo Cutler and Liz McGuire. (Not Pictured, Margarete Bissett)

The Store operated in at least four different buildings, occupying its last building, 686, in the mid 1990s.

Staffing levels and hours of operation have varied. For example, a 1957 *Monmouth Message* article reported 40 volunteers, and a 1996 *Monmouth Message* article reported 90.

Of the last ten, those who volunteered at the Shop the longest included Ann Ginsburg and Unni Lindefjeld with 31 years,

Anne Dunlap with 30 years, Barbara Lamb with 24 years, and Jean Bremseth with 23 years.

At times, the Store has been open up to five days a week. Most recently, it was open two days a week: Tuesday from 10:00 am - 2:00pm and Thursday from 10:00 am - 7:00 pm. All active duty military families, retired military, DoD civilian workers and Fort Monmouth contractors were eligible to shop and consign. All profits went to the Fort Monmouth Officers' Wives Club Welfare Fund, which provided scholarships and welfare grants for the military community.

According to Manager Tammy Martinsen, the Store gave approximately \$36,000 to the community in its last year.