

National Museum of American Jewish Military History

January 11, 2024



Twelve of our members took a field trip to the National Museum of American Jewish Military History. This is the only museum dedicated to documenting and preserving the stories of Jewish service in the American military.

Upon entering the museum, we were greeted by a wall of pictures of the Israeli hostages being held in Gaza. This was very moving. Soon



our tour guide, Michael Rugel, Director of Programs and Content welcomed us to the museum.

The core exhibition uses stories, images, artifacts, and multimedia to explore the place of Jews in the military heritage of the United States, from Colonial era to today.



Using the ideas of spirit, conviction, and purpose, the exhibition asks these questions: “Why do people serve in the armed forces;” “When and in what contexts did they serve;” and “How did they serve?”



The exhibit starts with the story of Francis Salvador, the first Jew known to die for American independence. It then presents artifacts and individual stories from the Revolutionary War to the present. All in all, we learned about the contributions of Jewish men and women to the American military. Furthermore, we heard about the “Jewish War Veterans” role as the patriotic voice of American Jewry working to support veterans and combat bigotry.



We also visited “The hall of Heroes.” This exhibit features photographs, citation, and memorabilia from Jewish heroes who received the Medal of Honor or the Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, or the Air Force

Cross.

After the museum tour, we had a delicious lunch at Sette Osteria, a nearby restaurant.