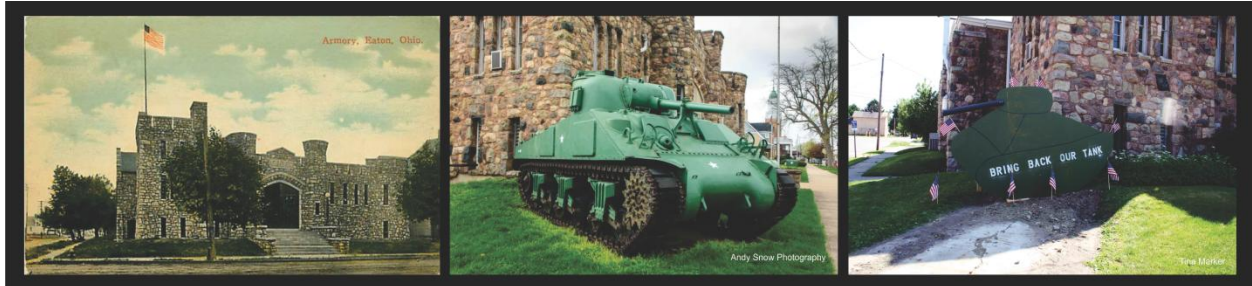


## Media Alert with VIDEO Release Announcement

# BRING BACK OUR TANK

## Return of Missing War Memorial Gaining Hollywood & Worldwide Support



**September 27, 2012 – Preble County/Eaton, Ohio** – The group that has been strategizing following a Memorial Day rally has gained a new visual way to tell its story to drive the successful return of Preble County’s missing war monument. The Hollywood produced video, [Preble County Heritage](#), was released on [Facebook](#) through “[We Love Eaton’s Armory – Save It and the Tank](#)” and through [YouTube](#).

In two short weeks the production has gained nearly 2,500 views and garnered a lot of positive feedback from new supporters across the United States, plus internationally in Afghanistan, Brazil, Germany, and Singapore. Toledo native and M\*A\*S\*H fame actor, Jamie Farr, co-stars in the 4.5 minute production with Hollywood producer and native Eatonian, Jonathan Flora.

As a result of the heightened awareness, additional Hollywood actors have jumped on board in support of the cause. Joe Mantegna, Emmy nominated actor and star of the hit TV show "Criminal Minds", posted on his Facebook page “give em their tank back.” Mantegna is a longtime military supporter and co-host of PBS’s National Memorial Day Broadcast each year. Karri Turner, star from the hit show "JAG" has also become an advocate. Turner is a tireless supporter of our military with 13 trips to Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Korea, and Gitmo.

So what’s all the fuss about? [On April 18—without advance notice or opportunity for fanfare—an M4 Sherman tank was hauled away from Eaton’s shuttered Armory at the corner of Vine and Main](#) Streets. Sources advise it was taken to Columbus, Ohio, for demilitarizing.

The huge green beast stood as a military landmark in Preble County’s municipal seat for more than 50 years. Local residents and military veterans of the small southwest Ohio town recall the tank being presented to its residents during a ceremony to honor World War II veterans and those in the Korean War in the 1950s. USAR Ret. Lt. Colonel John “JJ” Wikle, who died shortly after the tank’s removal, frequently reminisced about the day he drove the Sherman Tank to the front of the Eaton Armory.

A grassroots army of concerned citizens and military veterans—more than 3,000 strong and growing—is speaking up for the return of Eaton’s symbolic piece of heritage. The message is simple: “bring back our tank!”

The fate of the shuttered Armory building is the second focus of the Preble County Heritage group. It stood as the tank’s backdrop. Constructed in 1911 it is thought to be Ohio’s oldest armory. Appraisal notification is pending under House Bill 512 ordering the building’s sale. The group is working to find a sustainable use for the structure, which once housed the area’s first mounted calvary and stood as the Ohio National Guard’s command center during the deployment of thousands of military troops.

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#### **ABOUT JONATHAN FLORA**

Jonathan Flora, a native Eatonian and now Hollywood producer/director, produced the cause promotional video featured in this media alert. He co-stars with native Ohioan, Jamie Farr (M\*A\*S\*H fame).

Flora formed Lamplight Entertainment after working in the entertainment industry for 18 years, including producer with Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, Touchstone, Miramax, and Hollywood Pictures while winning numerous Key Art and Promax Awards. In addition, he is an award winning writer/director of commercials and music videos.

He is the director/producer of Lamplight’s award-winning feature-length documentary, Lt. Dan Band: For The Common Good, about Academy Award® nominated actor Gary Sinise. The production has special appearances by numerous celebrities including Academy Award® winners Jon Voight and Robert Duvall, and many others. Flora was awarded the inaugural Santini Patriot Spirit Award for this film, which is given annually to a filmmaker whose work honors American veterans or their families. In addition, this movie has been hailed by numerous respected Hollywood professionals such as Tom Hanks, Ron Howard, Jerry Bruckheimer, and was listed by a film critic as the “Number 1 Documentary of 2011”.

Flora recently wrote, produced and directed a series of PSAs addressing military suicide prevention featuring Hollywood celebrities such as Gary Sinise, Tom Selleck, Patricia Heaton, Angie Harmon, Armie, Hammer, Katharine McPhee, and many others.

Flora received his BSA in Television Performance and Production from The Ohio University. Following three years as a radio sports broadcaster, he returned to OU to earn his MSA in Marketing. Flora went on to serve as the Director of Marketing and Corporate Sponsorships with the World Wrestling Federation for six years. During his tenure at the WWF, Flora produced and directed various television segments and promotional commercials for ESPN, USA Network, and the WWF Syndicated Network.

Flora is a veteran of the US Army's 82d Airborne Division and served 12 years in the military. He currently serves on the Advisory Board for the GI Film Festival in Washington, DC, formed to honor films that celebrate the successes and sacrifices of the American military.

## **ABOUT JAMIE FARR**

Jamie Farr (born Jameel Joseph Farah, July 1, 1934) is an American television, film, and theater actor. He is best known for having played the role of cross-dressing Corporal (later Sergeant) Maxwell Q. Klinger in the television sitcom M\*A\*S\*H.

Farr was born in Toledo, Ohio, to Lebanese-American parents Jamelia M. (née Abodeely), a seamstress, and Samuel N. Farah, a grocer. Farr's first acting success occurred at age 11, when he won two dollars in a local acting contest.

After Woodward High School, where he was one of the standouts among his class, Farr attended the Pasadena Playhouse. An MGM talent scout discovered him and offered him a screen-test for *Blackboard Jungle*. He won the role of the mentally challenged student, Santini. With the encouragement of his mentor, Danny Thomas (who had a lot in common with him), he decided to become an actor.

After *Blackboard Jungle*, in 1955 Farr entered the U.S. Army serving overseas in Japan and Korea.

Farr returned to acting and is most known for his role on M\*A\*S\*H as Corporal Klinger. His character wore dresses to try to convince the Army that he was crazy and he deserved a Section 8 discharge.

Interestingly enough, Farr was hired for one day's work on episode, "Chief Surgeon Who?" He was asked back for a dozen episodes in the second season and he became a regular in the third.

Since 1984, he has hosted an annual women's professional golf tournament on the LPGA tour, the Jamie Farr Toledo Classic. The tournament has raised over \$6.5 million for local children's charities.

Farr remains a strong and dedicated supporter of our military.

## **Resources**

<http://registerherald.com/main.asp?SectionID=4&SubSectionID=4&ArticleID=130934>

<http://www.wdtn.com/dpp/news/local/preble/armory-tank-moved-after-50-years#.T7uTj0VYs4o>

<http://www.wdtn.com/dpp/news/local/preble/social-media-campaign-to-save-tank#.T7uRrkVYs4o>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EatonArmoryandTank/>

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybD\\_M7w1xJU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybD_M7w1xJU)

<http://www.preblecountyheritage.com/>

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**Media contact**

Tina Marker, President, Windward Design Group LLC

Founder and co-chair of Preble County Heritage and We Love Eaton's Armory (Facebook group)

tina@windward-design.com

937.456.2301 (o) / 937.545.9654 (m)