

## ***The United States Army Engineer Regiment presents the de Fleury Medal***

AS THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS implemented the U.S. Army Regimental system, the senior Engineer leadership sought a method for the Corps of Engineers to honor and recognize those individuals who have provided significant contributions to Army Engineering. The Army Regimental System was developed to emphasize the history, customs, and traditions of the branches. MG Daniel R. Schroeder, then Commanding General of Fort Leonard Wood and Engineer School Commandant, searched for an award that would tie the Army Corps of Engineers with the beginnings of the nation. In 1777, a French Engineer volunteered to serve with the American Army in its fight for independence from Britain.

Francois Louis Tesseidre de Fleury was born in St. Hippolyte, France, in 1749, was trained as an engineer and served in the French Army during the Corsican campaign. The Continental Congress appointed de Fleury captain of engineers, and he quickly proved himself. Wounded at the battles of Fort Mifflin and Brandywine (where his horse was shot out from under him), he soon became LTC de Fleury. But it was in the desperate battle at Stony Point, NY, in 1779 that de Fleury's courage under fire won him the accolades of the U.S. Congress. In June 1779, two small American forts were being established on the Hudson River — at Stoney Point and Verplanck's Point, about 30 miles north from Manhattan Island. A large British force easily captured both sites. The enemy began building a strong defensive perimeter around Stony Point. Stony Point was a peninsula, jutting nearly half a mile into the Hudson, tipped with rocky crags that shot up 150 feet above the river. On the landward side was a swamp that flooded at high tide, sinking a causeway running to the shore under two feet of water and making the Pointan island. The formidable defense included several batteries partially connected by trenches, log and earth redoubts around the main fort, and a double abatis. It was called "Little Gibraltar."

GEN George Washington was disturbed by the capture of the two forts. British occupation gave them control of a vital segment of the river and rerouted American communications, supplies, and troops moving between New England and the other colonies. Worse, GEN Washington was convinced the enemy was preparing to strike West Point, less than 15 miles upriver. American reinforcements were quickly moved into position north of Stony Point, but Washington thought there was no hope of recapture. A recently formed light infantry Corps led by the daring BG "Mad" Anthony Wayne, consisted of hand-picked combat veterans. The Corps was made up of four regiments of about 340 men each. COL Christian "Old Denmark" Febiger headed the 1st Regiment with de Fleury as second in command.

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On July 15, the Corps, except for a small diversionary force, unloaded weapons and turned in their ammunition. Secrecy was so tight the troops did not know they were going to attempt to recapture Stony Point. For such a risky assault, surprise was vital; and the attack was to take place in total darkness. Fixed bayonets and hand-to-hand combat were the orders of the day. Wayne's column had no sooner sloshed into the waist-deep water before a British picket sent up an alarm. During the fierce fighting, Wayne and Febiger both suffered stunning head wounds. The Continentals scrambled up the rocky slope with de Fleury in the lead. First over the wall, deFleury was followed by a wave of American bayonets. Rushing to the flagpole, de Fleury cut the British colors from their staff. In addition to the recapture of Stony Point, the defeat of the British fired the Americans' determination and lifted their morale. And it showed the enemy that the colonies had an able fighting force.

So it was that on October 1, 1779, de Fleury stood before the Continental Congress to be praised for his valor at Stony Point by the men who had penned the Declaration of Independence and who would later sign the Constitution. For his intrepid behavior, the Continental Congress ordered that a medal be struck in his honor. The Engineer Regiment adopted the de Fleury Medal as an award because of the values demonstrated by the man for whom it was struck — values of special meaning to Engineer soldiers. It is understood that the de Fleury Medal was the first Congressional Medal struck, if not the first medal authorized. On the obverse of the medal is the Latin inscription, translated as: "A MEMORIAL AND REWARD FOR COURAGE AND BOLDNESS." In the center appears the image of a helmeted soldier standing amidst the ruins of a fort, holding in his right hand an unsheathed sword, and in his left the staff of the enemy's flag, which he tramples underfoot. On the reverse, again in Latin: "FORTIFICATIONS, MARSHES, ENEMIES OVERCOME." In the center, the fortress at Stony Point is depicted with both turrets and a flag flying. At the base of the hill are two shore batteries, one that is firing at one of six vessels on the Hudson River. Beneath the fort is the legend: "STONY POINT CARRIED BY STORM, JULY 15, 1779."

The Engineer Regiment makes four award levels of the de Fleury Medal. The STEEL Medal is awarded to junior soldiers and civilians within the Engineer Regiment. The BRONZE Medal may be presented to an individual who has rendered significant service or support to an element of the Engineer Regiment. The SILVER Medal may only be awarded to an individual who has rendered outstanding and significant support or service to the Engineer Regiment. The United States Army Chief of Engineers awards the GOLD Medal each year to an individual (or individuals) whose contributions to the Army Engineer Regiment exemplify boldness, courage, and commitment to a strong national defense. Starting in 2011, two awards are made annually: one to an individual "outside the Regiment" and of national prominence and one to an individual "inside the Regiment."

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Presentation of the de Fleury Medal to those individuals meeting established criteria was started by the Engineer Regiment as the move of the Engineer School from Fort Belvoir, VA, to Fort Leonard Wood, MO, was completed in 1989. The GOLD Medal presentation is the highlight of the annual Engineer Regimental Dinner held at Fort Leonard Wood each spring.

***GOLD DE FLEURY RECIPIENTS***

1989 THE HONORABLE JOHN O. MARSH, JR.  
Secretary of the Army

1990 THE HONORABLE ROBERT W. PAGE  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works

1991 — GEN MAXWELL R. THURMAN  
USA Retired

1992 GEN ANDREW J. GOODPASTER  
USA Retired

1993 LTG EMERSON C. ITSCHNER  
USA Retired

1994 MR. JOHN B. MAHAFFEY  
Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army

1995 LTG FREDERICK J. CLARKE  
USA Retired

1996 SMA LEON L. VAN AUTREVE  
USA Retired

1997 LTG JOHN W. MORRIS  
USA Retired

1998 MR. ALLEN M. CARTON

1999 THE HONORABLE IKE SKELTON  
Congressman, State of Missouri

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2000 LTG JULIUS W. BECTON, JR.  
USA Retired

CSM ROBERT W. ELKEY  
Posthumous

2001 LTG MAX W. NOAH  
USA Retired  
COL CLAUDE L. ROBERTS, JR.,  
Posthumous

2002 MG RICHARD S. KEM  
USA Retired

2003 THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. INOUE  
Senator, State of Hawaii

2004 COL EDWARD C. GIBSON  
USA Retired

2005 LTG DANIEL R. SCHROEDER  
USA Retired

2006 MG JOHN G. WAGGENER  
USA Retired

SFC PAUL RAY SMITH,  
Posthumous

2007 LTG ELVIN R. "VALD" HEIBERG III  
USA Retired

2008 LTG ROBERT B. FLOWERS  
USA Retired

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2009 LTG HENRY J. HATCH  
USA Retired

MR. KISUK (CHARLIE) CHEUNG,  
Posthumous

2010 DR. LEWIS E. LINK, Ph.D.

2011 COL CARL F. BASWELL  
USA Retired  
GEN ERIC SHENSEKI  
USA Retired

2012 GEN DAVID H. PETRAEUS  
USA Retired  
COL JOHN M. MORGAN  
USA Retired

2013 THE HONORABLE ROBERT M. GATES  
Secretary of Defense  
CSM JULIUS NUTTER  
USA Retired

2014 Mr. FRANK M. WEINBERG  
MG MERDITH W. B. "BO" TEMPLE  
USA Retired

2015 LTG ROBERT L. VAN ANTWERP, JR.  
USA Retired  
BG GERALD E. GALLOWAY, JR.  
USA Retired  
MG Harold (Harry) J. Greene  
Posthumous

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2016 ROBERT W. BURKHARDT  
SES Retired  
THE HONORABLE ROBERT K. DAWSON  
COL JACK O'NEILL  
USA Retired

2017 CSM (Ret) ROBERT WINZENRIED  
9TH CSM of Corps of Engineers  
THE HONORABLE RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN  
Representative State of New Jersey

2018 MG (Ret) Clair Gill  
Fort Leonard Wood CDR  
THE HONORABLE TRENT KELLY  
Representative State of Mississippi

2019 COL (Ret) James Rowan  
Deputy CMDT USAES  
GEN (Ret) Frank Grass  
27th Chief of National Guard Bureau

2020 MG (Ret) Randal (Randy) Castro  
USA Retired  
The Honorable Grace Napolitano  
Representative State of California

2021-  
LTG (RET) Todd E. Semonite  
USA Retired  
MG(RET) Bryan K. Watson  
USA Retired  
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur  
Representative State of Ohio

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