

USS Washtenaw County Artifacts Now on Display at 200 N. Main Building

by [Kari Dorr](#) — last modified May 10, 2011 04:08 PM —

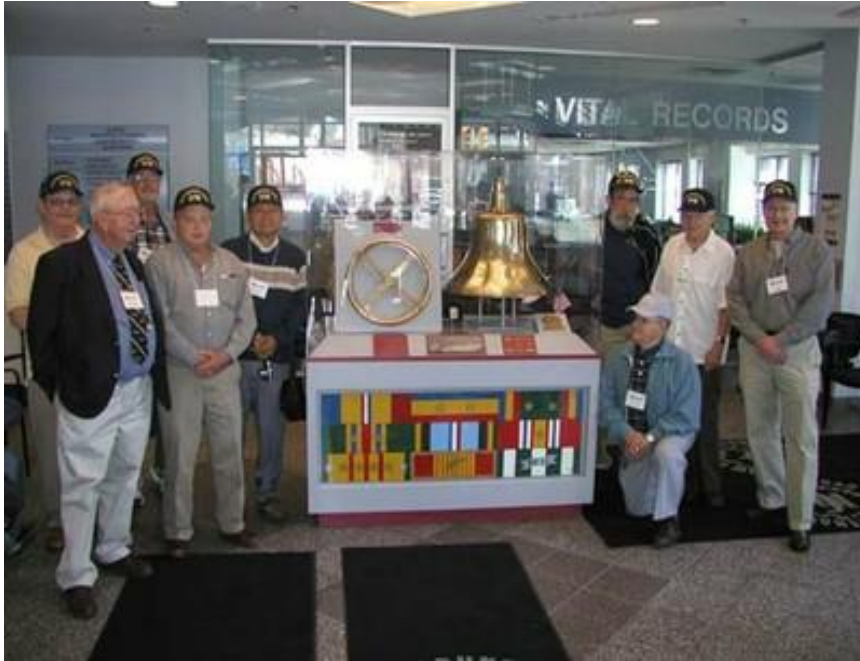
Check out the great new exhibit in the County's 200 N. Main Building Lobby in downtown Ann Arbor (located just outside the Clerk's office).



This historic exhibit was designed by local firm [Multiform Studios](#). “Thanks to years of diligent fundraising on the part of Washtenaw County Historic District Commissioner Elmer White, as well as support from the Board of Commissioners, the USS Washtenaw County Veterans’ Association, County Clerk Larry Kestenbaum, former Veterans Service Director Mark Lindke, and Facilities Director Dave Shirley, these important Vietnam-era artifacts are back on public display,” says Washtenaw County project manager [Melissa Milton-Pung](#). Due to private fundraising efforts, no County funds were contributed to the cost of this exhibit.

Visit the 1st floor main lobby at 200 N. Main sometime soon. You’ll find several artifacts from the [USS Washtenaw County](#), a Vietnam-era LST (Landing Ship Tank). The bell, wheel and colors of the ship, one of the most decorated ships in the Vietnam War, are now housed in a new museum quality case. The artifacts, on extended loan from the U.S. Department of the Navy, were formerly on display in the Washtenaw County Courthouse and later in County Administration. They had most recently been in storage for several years. Now returned to public display, these artifacts shine brilliantly and tell the story of this important Washtenaw County Local Historic District.

Members of the ship’s crew, former captain, Washtenaw County Historic District Commissioners and WC Board members recently gathered to formally unveil the new case. These retired veterans, who averaged only 19 years of age when they served in Vietnam, were honored for their service and valor at the rededication ceremony held on May 7th. For more information on this ceremony, see [recent news coverage in AnnArbor.com](#).



In photo:

Back Row L-R: Tom Osmond, Steve Shumsky

Front Row L-R: Captain Jim Burpo, Bob Popma, Gus Alegado, Paul Roberge, Arnie Helfrich (kneeling), Jim Bigelow and George Freeman