

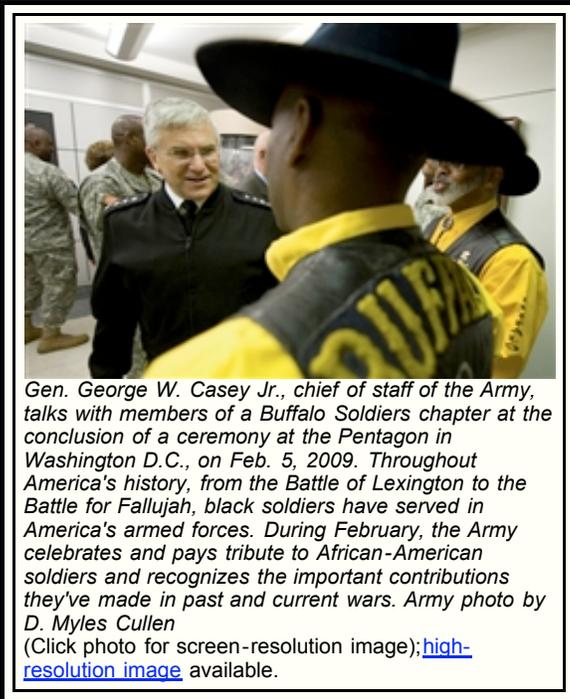


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Buffalo Soldier Statue Rededication Opens Black History Month Observance

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5, 2009 – The Army reservist grandson of a Buffalo Soldier joined Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. here today to rededicate a statue honoring the soldiers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments, all-black units made up of former slaves, freedmen and black Civil War soldiers.



Gen. George W. Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army, talks with members of a Buffalo Soldiers chapter at the conclusion of a ceremony at the Pentagon in Washington D.C., on Feb. 5, 2009. Throughout America's history, from the Battle of Lexington to the Battle for Fallujah, black soldiers have served in America's armed forces. During February, the Army celebrates and pays tribute to African-American soldiers and recognizes the important contributions they've made in past and current wars. Army photo by D. Myles Cullen
(Click photo for screen-resolution image); [high-resolution image](#) available.

The rededication of the Army's Eddie Dixon replica Buffalo Soldier statue at the Pentagon kicked off the Army's Black History Month commemoration.

"It is a time for all of us to celebrate the past, present and future contributions of all African-Americans to this nation," Casey said during the ceremony.

The Buffalo Soldiers were highly respected for their tenacity and bravery on the plains during the westward movement and in the Spanish-American War and World War I before being disbanded during World War II.

"They answered the call to service, and in doing so, left an inspiring legacy," Casey said.

Army Sgt. 1st Class Greg Browne, an operations noncommissioned officer at the U.S. Army Reserve Command at Fort McPherson, Ga., is among those younger generations who followed the Buffalo Soldiers' example. His grandfather, Pfc. Sylvanus S. Browne, served with the 9th Cavalry at the turn of the century, and became a commissioned officer in 1917.

The younger Browne, who has been mobilized for four years, said his grandfather's stories about his service filled him with pride and inspired him to join the Army. He enlisted in 1981, the same year his grandfather died, and he has worn the uniform through 28 years of combined active-duty and reserve service.

Today's ceremony felt great, he said, because it ensures the story of the Buffalo Soldiers -- his own family's story -- lives on.

"This is a story that must be told," he said. "I am going to carry it everywhere I go. I want my children to know. I think we have a responsibility to let the ones who

come after us to know the history."

At the center of that story, Browne said, is the Buffalo Soldiers' commitment to service when the country needed them.

"It's something very, very strong and very, very powerful, and our family cherishes it," he said. "Everyone needs to serve the country."

Browne and Casey both noted President Barack Obama's call during his inaugural address for all Americans to serve in some capacity. Casey called it striking that Obama had highlighted "the willingness of our armed forces to sacrifice to find meaning in something greater than ourselves" as an example to the country.

The Buffalo Soldiers statue, and the story of service behind it, "represents the very heart of our president's call," Casey said.

"It represents service to the nation during a tough time -- service by Americans determined to make a better future for those who follow them," he added.

Biographies:

[Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr.](#)



Sgt. 1st Class Craig Browne from the U.S. Army Reserve Command observes a memorial dedicated to Buffalo Soldiers prior to participating in a rededication ceremony for the memorial at the Pentagon in Washington D.C., Feb. 5, 2009. Browne's grandfather was a Buffalo Soldier with the 9th Cavalry Division. Army photo by D. Myles Cullen

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Gen. George W. Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army, left; and retired Gen. Gordon Sullivan, 32nd chief of staff of the Army, second from left; join members of Buffalo Soldier chapters in



a rededication ceremony of a Buffalo Soldier memorial at the Pentagon in Washington D.C., Feb. 5, 2009. Army photo by D. Myles Cullen

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Secretary of the Army Pete Geren talks with Sgt. 1st Class Craig Browne from the U.S. Army Reserve Command about a photo of Brown's grandfather at the conclusion of a rededication ceremony for a Buffalo Soldier memorial in the halls of the Pentagon in Washington D.C., on Feb. 5, 2009. Browne's grandfather was Buffalo Soldier with the 9th Cavalry Division. Army photo by D. Myles Cullen

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