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**THARPERROBBINS RESTORES ORIGINAL MEDAL FOR WWI SOLDIER**

*After more than 90 years, World War I medal is found and restored*

**STATESVILLE, N.C., November 11, 2009** – After more than 90 years sitting in a desk drawer collecting dust, a medal for a World War I soldier from North Carolina will finally be where it belongs, thanks in part to the people at TharpeRobbins. The medal will be presented to the daughter of veteran Robert Haywood Butler at **11 a.m. on Veteran’s Day, November 11, during a ceremony in the town square in Lillington, N.C.**

“I’ve been returning war medals to their rightful owners for about 10 years now and this is the first time I’ve come across this type of medal. In 1917, the state of North Carolina created a limited amount of medals to honor its World War I veterans. When I found the unique medal, I was excited to see it, but it was in pretty bad shape,” says John Elskamp, a volunteer with North Carolina Congressman Bob Etheridge, who spends much of his free time reuniting veterans with their medals. “The medal said ‘Manufactured by The Robbins Company’ on the back. I did some digging and was glad to discover the company is still in business.”

Elskamp contacted TharpeRobbins and the company readily agreed to refurbish the medal free of charge. TharpeRobbins is a global leader in the managed employee recognition and rewards industry. The company’s Attleboro, Mass. operations have included jewelry manufacturing since 1892.

During the Veterans Day ceremony, the North Carolina World War I medal, and several others, including a Purple Heart, will be presented to 86-year-old Mary Evelyn Stephenson, the daughter of veteran Robert Haywood Butler, who served in the North Carolina 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 119<sup>th</sup> Regiment during World War I.

“We consider it a privilege to be able to play a small part in honoring this veteran for his sacrifice for our country,” says Brett Tharpe, TharpeRobbins’ president and chief executive officer. “When you look at the medal today, you’d never guess it was more than 90 years old. We were able to restore it to almost mint condition.”

**— MORE —**

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The North Carolina Adjutant General is slated to officially present the medals to Stephenson during the Veterans Day ceremony.

The family of a World War II veteran who participated in the Battle of the Bulge will also receive additional medals found by Elskamp during the ceremony.

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For more than 100 years, TharpeRobbins' rich history as an innovator has covered the breadth of managed reward and recognition programs. The company fosters superior performance by creating new standards for employee recognition and rewards through imaginative solutions, cutting edge programs, flawless execution, professional service and world-class technology. TharpeRobbins built its reputation on developing customized programs to help clients reach their employee attraction and retention goals. The company is passionate about recognition because they know that an engaged workforce produces satisfied customers, which in turn produces more business. With TharpeRobbins, Recognition Changes Everything.

The privately-held TharpeRobbins was created through the February 2007 merger of The Robbins Company, founded in 1892, and The Tharpe Company Inc., founded in 1981. The company headquarters are located on a 25-acre campus in Statesville, N.C. and include an extensive showroom and state-of-the-art distribution facility. The ISO-certified Attleboro, Mass., operations include creative services, software development and jewelry manufacturing. Find out more at [www.tharperobbins.com](http://www.tharperobbins.com).

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