



Gives New Info to Children of Another MIA

Niece Close to ID'ing Uncle's Remains

by Nancy Chimento Fraker



S/Sgt. Raymond "Carlyle" Blanton, right, and his siblings and nephew, left, the day they learned he was KIA.

Uncle Carlyle had a twinkle in his eye and a sweet, selfless spirit. He was the seventh and my mother, Shirley Apperson, the youngest of the eight Blanton children, and they were very close. His death was the most devastating event in her life and that of his entire family. He died at 19, seven years before I was born. Sixty-five years later his family keeps his memory alive and may yet find his remains.

Drafted in August 1943, Carlyle trained with the 232nd Inf. Regt., 42nd Inf. Div. - The Rainbow Division - at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma. He was promoted to Staff Sergeant and reassigned to Company C of the 60th Inf. Regt., 9th Inf. Div. - The Octofoil. He went MIA in the Huertgen Forest in Germany on October 14, 1944.

Mom told of a premonition weeks before the telegram arrived. Carlyle had come to say "Good Bye." As a four-year-old, my cousin Ira "Sonny" Smith remembers the actual day the telegram arrived. He can be seen in the photo at far left, sitting on the porch crying with his mother, Mil, and Junior, Carlyle's only brother, also a soldier.

Little explanation was provided about how or where he died. There were no remains, funeral, grave, nor place to mourn. His father died the next year. His mother wrote many letters to the Army, eventually receiving only his prayer book and a testament. With a Find-

...continued on page 10

Inside:

Features

Spirit of '45	3
Son's Surprise for Mom	4
Forgy Service Award	5
Rare Photo Found	8
Status of Service Records	13

Departments

AWON Board Messages	2
AWON Connections	6-7
New Members	9
List Tips & Topics	12

...and much, much more!



Board Messages

by Bob Meek

Editor's note: This is the fifth in a series of columns that rotates among the board of directors. In this issue Director and 2010 AWON National Conference Co-Chair Bob Meek introduces this fall's conference and why you should attend.

Calling all Salty Dogs. The AWON National Conference for 2010 will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland. Annapolis was picked for several reasons. First, it's the East Coast's turn to host the conference. Second, the history and connections of the U.S. Naval Academy for many of our members and, third, the ease of travel due to Annapolis' close proximity to Baltimore Washington International (BWI) airport.

Since actual Veteran's Day falls in the middle of the week our schedule for this conference will be a little different than previous years. Friday will be arrival day with optional events beginning that afternoon. Hopefully we will get to observe a parade by the Academy Midshipmen. There will be an ice breaker dance Friday evening. Saturday will begin with Sharing Circles and the afternoon will be spent touring the Naval Academy and nearby sites in Annapolis. Saturday evening will be our Memorial Service. Sunday morning will kick off with the AWON general membership meeting with the

AWON Board of Directors, then more Sharing Circles. Sunday afternoon we will have some guest speakers and maybe a little free time to explore more of Annapolis. Sunday evening will be our banquet with a few surprises and then the official closing of our conference. Monday will be departure day.

Right now most of our events involving the Naval Academy are in the process of being firmed up so our schedule is still tentative, but whatever the outcome we will have a full and interesting weekend. For those of you who have never been to Annapolis you are in for a real treat, especially if you like anything dealing with water. Also, if you have never seen a military school's dress parade you're in for a real treat if the Academy has one that Friday afternoon.

Now some of you may wonder why I should attend an AWON Conference. Well, first of all, they are a lot of fun. Even though we are dealing with a somewhat solemn subject, we have a good time, too. Also, it's kind of hard to explain how it feels for the first time in your life to be around a lot of people who know your thoughts, feelings and events of growing up without your ever opening your mouth. Branson (2002)

...continued on page 3



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Events Planned All Year

AWON Joins 'Spirit of '45' to Remember End of WWII

AWON is proud to be a Founding Partner in a nationwide campaign to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II, and is encouraging AWON members to participate in its local and national events this year.

Spirit of '45 is a year-long effort to thank WWII veterans and to inspire national service.

During 2010, the campaign plans to hold events around the country celebrating the 65th anniversary of the end of WWII (August 14, 2010). Its goals are to collect stories online of those who remember the day the war ended, to call on Congress to designate the second Sunday in August a National Day of Remembrance, and to

inspire a new commitment to national service.

The campaign officially started January 18 in San Diego, California, aboard the USS Midway Museum, with nearly 600 guests in attendance.

The main program included speeches by *Spirit of '45* National Supervisor Warren Hegg, and speakers from several local, state

and national organizations that are supporting *Spirit of '45*'s initiatives, including U-Haul, AARP, and AWON, represented by Roger Connor of San Diego.

"I had prepared a four-minute talk, but he (Warren) later asked all of us to speak for just one minute. I used my minute to contrast the fading



Roger Connor speaking at *Spirit of '45* kick-off event in San Diego

memory of WWII in America with the zeal with which some Europeans celebrate our great

...continued on page 13

Messages, from page 2

was my first conference even though I had been a member of AWON for several years. It was like a family reunion with a family you really liked but haven't seen in some years. It was like I had finally come "home." For those of you who have never experienced it, it is hard to describe that feeling you have when the first time in your life you are completely surrounded by people who in-

stinctively know you and your life experience. You also get to meet your AWON Internet/newsletter friends.

AWON Conferences offer some unique experiences, such as our Memorial Service and Sharing Circles. You will get to hear from your fellow AWONers and other folks who give insights into your experience and your search for your dad. Finally, Annapolis is a great place to visit with great food and much to see,

so I encourage all who can to attend.

While Conference Co-Chair Millie McConnell Cavanaugh and I are still working on locking in our schedule, if you would like to volunteer to do something for or at the conference please let us know. As you all know this is an all-volunteer event, so the more the merrier. I am really excited about our conference and we look forward to seeing you all there.

Dedicated Career to Grandfather

Son Surprises Mother at Air Force Retirement

by Penny Dempsey Yazzie

Forty-five years ago on a cold November day in Iowa, God introduced me to my first born, a son we named Richard. I didn't know it at the time, but Richard was going to play a pivotal role in helping me learn all about my dad, S/Sgt. Harvey J. Dempsey Jr., and his role in World War II.

I talked a lot about my dad as Richard grew up, as I do now to my grandchildren. When Richard became a senior in high school and the recruiters began to call, well, I have to admit I either told them he wasn't home or hung up on them. I had given enough, or so I thought.

Richard began to further his education at the University of Nevada - Las Vegas, and I thought life was going to go on as I wanted it to do. But after his freshman year, he made the decision to go into the Air Force. I think his exact words were, "I'll be home in four years Mom, honest."

Twenty-four years later he still wasn't "home." However, one of his last positions in the Air Force enabled him to

travel around the world visiting Air Force bases recruiting recruiters. In this job, he twice traveled Dad's final tour to the Air Force bases on Guam where Dad was stationed, then on to Japan where dad died, and finally Oahu where Dad is at rest in the National Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl).

Over the years, he helped his computer-illiterate moth-

the night he was killed. Sherman Oxedine, still spry at 83, was not only able to help me understand that my dad probably did not suffer when the plane was hit but he also told me about their life on Guam. And finally, Richard directed me to AWON.

I didn't realize that when someone retired from the military there was a full ceremony in his honor. Richard requested that I bring my dad's burial flag to his retirement ceremony in March 2008. I naturally assumed that it would be used in the color guard ceremony at the beginning, even though it has only 48 stars. But when I got to the ceremony the flag sat folded on a table. I really thought it was just an honor that it was even there.

At the end of the retirement ceremony my son, M/Sgt. Richard David DeLacy, and his commanding officer began a second ceremony. Only when I saw my son holding my dad's flag to his chest with a look in his eyes that belied his strength did I realize just what was happening.

They began a full presentation ceremony to me of Dad's



M/Sgt. Richard DeLacy presents his grandfather's flag to his mother, Penny Yazzie.

er find more information about her dad. He sent me the proper paperwork so I could request my dad's records and helped me fill it out. He found the site for the 315th Bomb Group of which my dad was a member. This group in turn helped put me in contact with the tailgunner on the plane flying ahead of my dad's on

★ Announcing the Col. Jack O. Forgy ★ Distinguished Service Award ★



The first ever Col. Jack O. Forgy Distinguished Service Award will be given to an outstanding AWON member during the fall conference in Annapolis. This award is in memory and in honor of Jack, a fellow orphan, who also was an outstanding AWON researcher and advisor. Because of his dedication to other orphans and AWON, he provided a valuable link to our fathers which will be remembered and treasured always.

The Col. Jack O. Forgy Award Committee

**Bill Chiodo
Pam Klein
Walt Linne
Jean Rhinehart
Sam Tannenbaum**

flag. With my son kneeling before me, he placed the flag in my lap and stated, "On behalf of a grateful nation, we thank you for your sacrifice." It seem proper that this was the man to do what I thought was impossible, to do what I thought could never be done. As you can see in the photograph, I cried when he did it and I cry every time I tell this story. He hoped it would give me some closure, and it has.

There was a PowerPoint presentation after the ceremonies and the first picture that came up was my dad in uniform. Under the picture my son had

written that he had dedicated his entire time in the service of this country to the honor of his grandfather, a man neither of us ever knew and only learned about through his efforts. He definitely honored him in a significant way, as you can see from his medals.

And so, now, I understand all these years later just why this man had been born to me and had to go into the Air Force against all of my objections. I thought I had sacrificed everything, but so much more was returned to me. It would not have happened without him.

Maj. Gen. Takes Command JPAC

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Stephen Tom has taken command of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) as of the end of January.

Tom takes over JPAC from U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Donna L. Crisp, who has retired after a 35-year career.

Tom, the former Chief of Staff for the U.S. Pacific Command, graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He was commissioned through the Army Reserve Officer's Training Corps Program in 1971. He continued his civilian education by entering Boston University School of Law and graduated with a Juris Doctor degree in 1974.

In his civilian capacity, Maj. Gen. Tom was a private practice attorney and a partner in a law firm; he was recalled to active duty in January 2006. He is the fourth commander in JPAC's history.

Under Crisp's leadership JPAC carried out more than 135 recovery and investigation missions, ultimately identifying approximately 170 missing Americans; an improvement of 35 percent over the previous five-year averages.

During her time as commander the Central Identification Laboratory became the third federal laboratory to pass the International American Society of Crime Laboratory Assessment.

AWON Connections

Pictures and Stories of Members
Gathering Around the Country



This issue's *AWON Connections* column features three gatherings that took place in Nevada. Above left is a picture of the first-ever meeting of Nevada members, held last November. Left to right are Anecia Evans Nelson, Penny Dempsey Yazzie, and Ann and John Tobitt Elder. Penny reports: "We enjoyed a great lunch and each others' company. We talked about our fathers, naturally, and also about services available to orphans. John and his wife traveled to France last year and were amazed at the warmth and gratitude they received from the French people they met. Anecia's dad is still Missing in Action and she is looking for information on getting a marker placed for him at Arlington National Cemetery. Perhaps a reader out there can help her. I talked about my visit to my dad's grave at the American Cemetery of the Pacific, aka Punchbowl. One thing we all agreed on was that we hope when other Nevada AWON members see us in *The Star* that they will join us for the next luncheon some time after the first of the year."



Then in December Penny hosted not one but two out-of-town AWONers who were visiting Las Vegas. At left is Chickie Shields Berry of Idaho, Penny, and John Elder, pictured outside the *California Pizza Kitchen* where they had lunch. "It was a great meal and great conversation," Penny says.

A few weeks later Walt Linne of Indiana came to town. This time the AWONers got together for breakfast at the *Palace Station Hotel and Casino*. "We asked for a booth in the back and had the corner of the cafe all to ourselves," Penny states. "Our waitress asked us about our relationship and we told her that we were long lost brothers and sisters. She asked us how long we had been estranged and you should have seen the look on her face when we told her 64 years!" Pictured top right, from left, are Bob and Chickie Shields Berry, Penny Dempsey Yazzie, John and Ann Elder, and Walt Linne.

Penny hopes there are more Nevada gatherings in store for 2010.

"It has been so wonderful to finally meet my brothers and sisters in AWON. Not only the ones I have met in person but also the ones that have contacted me via email. We are a very small group in Nevada and I am going to actively work to change that now that the holidays are over. We are very interested in meeting anyone who comes to Vegas for a visit to contact us. We enjoy meeting new faces and becoming old relatives, and we love to eat out!



Nothing is holding down Doni Morrison Troiglio, except maybe Jody Aldrich for this picture. Jody, pictured above with Doni, right, visited the former editor of *The Star* (and too many other AWON posts to mention) in California in December. Doni has Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's Disease) but, as Jody explains, she's on top of it.

"She has a fancy new wheel chair which she, quite skillfully, drives with her chin," Jody says. "She also has a new-fangled mattress that has air pockets which move around somewhat similar to a water bed, to keep her moving at night when she sleeps."

Doni also has glasses with a laser light on the nosepiece which allow her to use her computer hands-free.

"Leave it to her to figure out how to operate all these clever technological gadgets that help her lead an active life," adds Jody.

Jody says Doni enjoys receiving mail and email although it is difficult for her to answer. Doni's email is DoniTro@aol.com.

Want More?

**More AWON News, Stories,
Photos and Father Tributes at**

www.awon.org

PA AWONers to Meet for Lunch in April

There will be an AWON Gathering in York, Pennsylvania, on Saturday, April 17. It will be from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Hoss's Family Steak and Sea House on White Street.

Organizer Lynne Lecrone says there have been four gatherings at Hoss's in the last few years.

"We greet friends and meet new folks," she says. "And, of course, we talk about and honor our fathers."

If you are interested in attending or would like to have more information about the event, please contact Lynne at: Lynne Lecrone, Regional Coordinator PA, 403 Chambers Ridge, York, PA 17402-8819. She also can be reached by phone at 717-757-9424 or 717-487-8677 (cell), or email her at: lynnelec@aol.com.

In Memoriam

Gary Rex Bowers

December 20, 1941 - September 6, 2009

My brother Gary of Blackfoot, Idaho, was born in Burley, Idaho, to Myrtle Smith Bowers and Rex Merrill Bowers. He was a quiet, humble man except on the golf course, where he was a fun-loving but fierce competitor. Two weeks before his death, he scored a hole-in-one at the Blackfoot Municipal Golf Course, using a nine iron on the par three seventh hole. He is buried beside his father and grandfather in the Gem Cemetery in Burley.

He learned about AWON from a TV segment in Phoenix, Arizona that led us to Annie Mix. He attended three AWON conferences, including the dedication of the World War II Memorial.

He will be missed.

Marilyn Bowers Jensen



Rare Photo Finally Found

by Mary Thier Klimow

After the war, when families were given the choice of bringing their loved one home or leaving him with his war buddies on foreign soil, my mother made the decision to bring my father's remains back from the Philippines.

I went to my father's funeral in 1948 and I remember holding my mother's hand as she received the flag from his coffin. I didn't think about that day very often until I was inspired by the late Jack Forgy at the AWON San Diego Conference in 2000.

Jack's topic was the battlefield burial process and the Individual Deceased Personnel File. The tradition and procedures he related in detail, oddly, gave me comfort and made me curious as well. I knew where my father was buried and what it looked like, but where had he been before that? I wondered about the temporary cemetery where he was placed after his death on Jan-



A rare photo of the Santa Barbara #1 Temporary Cemetery in the Philippines

uary 17, 1945. After many years gathering information about the area on the large Philippine island of Luzon, where my father spent the last week of his life, I knew nothing about where he was buried except that it was called "Santa Barbara."

Unable to fulfill my life-long wish to visit Luzon with the AWON tour in 2007, I contacted AWON First Inquiry Coordinator and Manila Cemetery liaison, Patty Temte, who was going on the trip. I had a few questions for Patty but she referred me to Bert Caloud, Assistant Superintendent of

the Manila American Cemetery.

Coincidentally, Bert had a question for me. He asked if I had a photo of the temporary cemetery where my father had been buried - USAF (Armed Forces) Cemetery, Santa Barbara #1, Luzon, Philippines. The photograph was sent to the families of the roughly 5,000 souls interred in Santa Barbara, mostly KIA in northern Luzon.

Although I had a copy of the letter dated September 20, 1946 which accompanied the photo, I didn't have the photo, nor did I remember ever seeing it. Grateful to

Bert for so much new information about the 6th Infantry Division in the north central part of Luzon, I offered to assist him in finding the photo. My collaboration with Bert began. I offered to contact organizations, and he would be able to identify the right photo. He wanted this photo for a visitor's center exhibit at the cemetery, and I wanted a copy for myself. Bert sent me the photos he had of Santa Barbara but none were the photo.

I placed a small announcement of the photo search in the December 2007 issue of *The Star*. Those who were at the Tucson Conference also may remember my asking the head of the American Battle Monuments Commission where the photo might be found.

Frustrated by a lack of response I began looking to expand my search. Then it came to me: eBay - the world's largest online yard/estate sale, with exposure to millions of people every day - might be the answer.

Welcome New Members

Doris Dunn, IN, dau of LTC Alfred C. Thomsen, Army
Vincent Frazzini Howell, MI, son of PVT Vincent I. Frazzini, Army
Sandra Larkin Johnson, GA, dau of 2LT Marx M. Larkin, Army
Douglas Lefever, MD, son of PFC Nelson D. Lefever, Army
Patricia Marcussen Mostue, MA, dau of LT Marcus J. Marcussen Jr., Navy
Z. David Patterson, NC, son of MAJ Robert F. Patterson, Army
Sharon Campbell Rachner, MN, dau of PVT Emory D. Campbell, Army
Neal Thomsen, IN, son of LTC Alfred C. Thomsen, Army

(new members since the December issue of *The Star*)

I have been an eBay shopper since 2003, and knew my way around the site. Through eBay I purchased the 1st Infantry insignia pins and lapel collar pins my father would have worn, the 6th Infantry sleeve patch, and the history of the 6th Infantry Division. All kinds of World War II-related photos and objects are placed on eBay for auction.

Searches can be tailored to suit individual needs. Mine started with the "collectibles" category, then refined to "militaria", "WWII (1935-1945)", "United States", "photographs", and finally, "cemeteries". Each time a photo fitting that search criteria was listed on eBay, I received a notice.

In early 2009, near-
The Star • March 2010

ly two years later, a photo appeared and immediately I knew it was the one -- slightly different from all the others Bert sent me. The photo depicts a peaceful, well-tended place, palm trees swaying in a tropical setting with a small white chapel. Luckily, I was the only bidder. The photo is on thin government-issue tan paper. It easily could have got-

ten lost or damaged over the years. Mine is in pristine condition and, interestingly, there has been no additional eBay appearance of the Santa Barbara photo I now own.

After my success I thought there might be others who wanted photos of their father's temporary interment, so I continued an active search on eBay and in

October 2009 I posted the first notice on the AWON listserv. I sent a link of the photo to Bert first for verification. He said it was Peleliu, and he recognized the name of an AWON father on one of the markers. Pat Letellier, the son, contacted me and we discovered a special bond: our fathers, Sgt. Major Lawrence J. Letellier, a Marine from Massachusetts who died on Peleliu, and 1st Lieutenant Joseph J. Thier, an Infantryman from New York who died in the Philippines, and who never met, rest a few rows apart in the Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale, New York. Their children are linked together in friendship through a photograph of a cemetery.

How She Did It

Even though it took Mary Thier Klimow two years to find the photo she was looking for, she didn't spend all that time sitting in front of her computer. EBay allows users to create and save searches, and to have email alerts sent to them when a matching item comes up.

For step-by-step instructions on how to set up a search, see Mary's section in the *List Tips* column on page 12.

...Niece, from front page

ing of Death the Army doesn't issue an official discharge, so several of the medals he'd earned remained unissued. The family lore passed down was "the platoon stepped on a mine leaving no remains."

Carlyle's widowed mother lived among her children for the remainder of her life, hanging his Army picture over her bed and wearing her Gold Star Mother pin. We all grew up looking at that Army photo. Family reunions included the Virginia War Memorial or the wall in Richmond Memorial Hospital, both of which had his name inscribed. They were the closest thing we had to a grave.

We cousins were brought along to bear witness to his sacrifice. My father converted my grandmother's Gold Star Mother pin to a ring which she died wearing. She lived with us for seven years and Carlyle smiled at us daily from her wall. Carlyle was always 'around.' But for 60 years his family was left with a gaping hole, and sparse information about the end of his short 19-year life, until very recently.

During Christmas 2004, I was visiting Mom who had just inherited Carlyle's Army photo after not seeing it for 26 years. It was a powerful visit, and his energy seemed to fill the room. I can't explain it, but I had a strong awareness of being charged with telling his story, and if possible, bringing his remains home.

Carlyle and his Company are memorialized on The Wall of the Missing at Margraten. A first-person interview on Scorpio's Huertgen Forest website described the unit's logistics when he became MIA. Lt. Col. Lee Chatfield, Sgt. Robert Driscoll, Capt. John McIndoe and S/Sgt. L.F. Cuifo noted Company C captured and held a pillbox before being forced out. Carlyle likely was killed by artillery fire around 5:30 p.m. on October 14, 1944. This news opened the potential for remains recovery.

On a business flight in October 2005, I happened to sit next to someone from the Army Human Resources Command. That serendipitous meeting yielded Carlyle's Individ-

ual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF), and my mother's and my blood being collected for the DNA Database maintained by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC). The IDPF contained medical and dental records, height, weight, hair and eye color - even shoe size. Heart-wrenching letters written in my grandmother's hand, pleading for information, were followed by form letter replies. Evacuation and excavation numbers for remains were broken down by area, but we lacked a description of the area in which Carlyle was last seen. After a few more steps I managed to get the Army to reopen Carlyle's case and to assign a Casualty Officer.

That November I read a newspaper article in the *Richmond Times Dispatch* by Alexa Edlund entitled *Finding Uncle Bill*. It mirrored my efforts, and with her guidance, I wrote for Carlyle's After Action Reports and Morning Reports, yielding a list and a way to search for the 18 MIA's listed within. After much research we narrowed it to four: Privates Clarence Brotherton, Leslie E. Shankles, Walter H. Reuter, and Carlyle. All of them were from Company C and were sought by the Army simultaneously. One IDPF mentioned finding five sets of remains on top of the ground in 1948. Each excavation number had its own IDPF. I requested the IDPF of the only set of remains which wasn't later identified: X-5391.

Then at a business conference in mid-May 2006, I met Maj. Lisa Pearce, Chief Deputy Medical Examiner of the Office of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner, who oversees the forensics lab where remains are identified. She introduced me to Dr. Tom Holland, Scientific Director of JPAC, requesting that he open a case for Carlyle. Tom introduced me to Dr. Chris McDermott who provides remains recovery field work and coincidentally was departing for excavation of sites in the Huertgen Forest. Chris provided reports of his work and also advised me to register with the Defense Prisoner of War / Missing Personnel Office's Regional Family Update Events.

On July 30, 2006, the IDPF for X-5391 arrived, coincidentally rubber stamped with

my birthday! The description of these remains bore some physical characteristics to Carlyle's, and also eliminated two of the four others. I sent a copy to Chris to investigate further.

In January 2007, through the Hurtgen1944 Homestead.com website, I met AWONer Gail Eisenhower whose father, Lt. John C. Eisenhower, 60th Inf. Regt., 9th Inf. Div., Co. K, died close to the same time and place as Carlyle. Gail provided invaluable help through her networks, introduced me to AWON, and said that she was going to that area in the Huertgen Forest on Memorial Day. The December 2006 issue of *World War II* magazine yielded important additional logistics. I downloaded Google Earth and studied the area closely.

In April 2008, my luck got even better. I was sent to Berlin for a month on a business trip and I knew I had to retrace Carlyle's last steps. JPAC provided their GPS Google Earth map overlay tagged with pillboxes and logistics of the exact area where Carlyle's company was last seen. I had no idea of how to locate this spot deep in the woods, six hours away, in a foreign country, without knowing the language.

But then I remembered Gail had just been here, so she introduced me to Manfred Klinkenberg of the Huertgen Forest Museum and two other researchers from The Netherlands: Hans vanToer and Henk Didericks. I sent the map overlay to Manfred. Using his GPS, we hiked about a mile into the battlefield which is largely unchanged since the war. Still heavily wooded it was filled with foxholes, metal shards and chunks of cement. We saw the remains of pillbox #22 described in Chatfield's interview as the one Carlyle likely died defending.

When we arrived at the spot, we discovered a makeshift three-foot tall circular stone monument. At the time, we had no idea what it represented. Weeks later, Manfred report-

ed that it was built by Hans Peter Kotzan, who while metal detecting, found Pvt. Walter Reuter's dog tags on this spot in 2004. Pvt. Reuter, whose remains are still unrecovered, was also MIA on the same Morning Report as Carlyle. Hans Peter built the monument from the remnants of an exploded pillbox out of respect for Pvt. Reuter. I wondered what Pvt. Reuter's family knew.

There aren't words to describe these synchronistic events. It still feels surreal. We called Mom from the spot to share what we had found. She thanked these wonderful gentlemen profusely, and all were deeply overcome with emotion. Though we didn't find his remains, we believe that this is the exact area where Carlyle died, and I was walking in his last steps.

At the Ardennes Cemetery I offered a prayer and placed flowers on the grave of Gail's father, and 'unidentifiable' X-5391, likely one of the four from Company C - and dare I say it - perhaps Carlyle. Though JPAC states that we lack sufficient evidence for exhumation, I won't give up, and our case remains open.

Last April, cousin Raymond Carlyle Burrows' family welcomed Carlyle's third generation namesake, amazingly, born on his birthday! Carlyle must still be smiling. I keep a small shrine with a chunk of pillbox and his photo nearby. We still hope that his remains are recovered and he's granted the full military funeral and burial in Arlington National Cemetery that he earned. His spirit lives on!

And there's more! On a whim, this Christmas I located Pvt. Reuter's son. I mailed him his father's IDPF, JPAC reports, and photos of the dog tags and the monument built to him in the Huertgen Forest. He and his two siblings knew little about their father's death, were unaware of these events, and were astounded. I'm now helping to facilitate the return of his father's dog tags via JPAC.



The memorial to Pvt. Walter Reuter

List Tips & Topics

News, stories and information found on
the AWON ListServ by Rosalie Miles Francisco



A Train Near Magdeburg

Janice Ott Buterbaugh found this online story about American soldiers who helped stranded concentration camp refugees: <http://www.hfcsd.org/ww2/Interviews/GEORGE%20GROSS/george%20gross.htm>

★★★★★

Book Recommendations

Dianne Wiegand Baczynski recommends *The Souvenir: A Daughter Discovers Her Father's War*, about the Philippines. Carol Downs Brooks suggests *Decision at Strasbourg*, about Gen. Eisenhower's decision to halt the Sixth Army at the Rhine in 1944.

★★★★★

WWII songs on YouTube

Terry Boettcher notified the list about Vera Lynn's *When I Grow Too Old to Dream*, including Air Corps footage at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNB8VbFmIOY>. Bill Chiodo informed the list about this rendition of *I'll Be Seeing You*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2AgdxJYP74&feature=related>.

★★★★★

Merci Trains

Patricia "Pat" Fabri told us about the Merci (Thanks) Trains: "In 1948 Americans sent boxcars full of food, fuel, and gifts to France. In appreciation, France sent 49 boxcars to the United States filled with gifts. Each state was given a boxcar. On February 17, 1949, Arizona received a boxcar packed with 1,700 treasures: war medals from departed soldiers, a blue Peugeot bicycle, a wedding dress from Lyon, children's dolls and handcrafted paper stars. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Arizona boxcar's arrival and the 20th of its restoration. It is at the McCormick-Stillman

Railroad Park in Scottsdale." Rosalie Francisco adds that 39 of the original 49 boxcars sent are still in existence and honored in different ways in those states.

★★★★★

Native American Veterans

Penny Dempsey Yazzie attended the annual Native American Veterans Pow Wow in Las Vegas. "It was the biggest turn-out I had seen for the event in the years we have been attending. I heard *The Star Spangled Banner* sung in Navajo (and) I have heard them sing *Taps* in the most plaintive and painful way ever. They are soldiers and they are warriors and they are proud and have every right to be so."

★★★★★

Searching eBay

Here are Mary Thier Klimow's steps for creating an automatic search for WWII items on eBay: Start on the homepage: www.ebay.com. You must be registered to create a search. Go to "Help" and then "Learning Center" for directions. After registering go back to the homepage, click "Buy" and then "Browse Categories". Scroll to "Collectibles", then "Militaria", then "WWII (1939-45)". At this point you will get everything available under WWII. On the left select either "Original Period Pieces" or "Reproductions". Click on the categories presented to you until there are no suggestions left that match your need. If you want to be more specific you can enter the description in the "Find" box above the categories. Then click "Sort" on the right side of the screen to select how you want items presented. Then click "Save this Search" next to the orange number of results found. This will take you back to the sign-in page. After signing in, you can select how long you want to be notified.

victory over tyranny. And I gave a big plug for AWON," Roger explained.

You can read the entire text Roger prepared at: <http://www.spiritof45.org/news/files/AWON-Handout.pdf>

Other AWONers in attendance were Roger's wife and fellow orphan, Sharon Crowley Connor; Linda Porter and husband, Bob; and Barbara Swenson and husband, Dick.

Featured speaker and national campaign spokesman was actor Hugh O'Brian, who starred in the 1950s television series *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*. O'Brian enlisted in the Marine Corps in WWII and became the youngest Marine drill instructor at age 17.

Also speaking was Edith Shain, the nurse being kissed by a sailor in Times Square in the famous *Life* photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt.

O'Brian and Shain then took part in an entertaining group interview with Sports Broadcasting Hall of Famer Jerry Coleman, who was a highly-decorated Marine fighter pilot during WWII.

"(Shain's) as perky as can be and she gave as good as she got in bantering with O'Brian," Roger noted.

The year-long celebration will have other events like this around the country, including a celebration planned in Washington, D.C., on Memorial Day, building up to the major multi-city event on August 14. AWON members are encouraged to attend

Preservation, Security of Military Records

From time to time members have asked about the longevity and security of their father's service records. This question came up recently on the AWON ListServ, so we have printed here some basic facts about the preservation of and access to certain WWII military records.

The Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF) can be requested by anyone under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The Privacy Act does not apply to a deceased person. Third-party information in such a request (such as the address of the Next of Kin) may be redacted. These files are maintained by the Army.

The Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) was determined to be a permanent

record in 2002 and will not be destroyed. The record becomes archival 62 years after the discharge, retirement, or date of death in service. The archival designation allows more people to obtain copies of the record, and there is a fee if the request is not for benefits purposes.

Medical records, if kept separately from the personnel file, could be destroyed 75 years after the last date of treatment in the record. So far no medical records have been destroyed under this provision and it is possible that medical records will eventually become permanent records.

Generally, only the veteran/retiree can get copies of his

...continued on page 14

these events as VIPs to share their stories.

In conjunction with *Spirit of '45* activities, National Partner *In the Mood*, a nationally-renowned musical revue, has scheduled performances in many cities around the country.

AWON Founder Ann Bennett Mix and fellow orphan Chickie Shields Berry, attended one of their shows in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, in January as VIPs.

"I think this is a wonderful thing for us to be involved in," reported Chickie.

Ann also attended events

in Moses Lake, Washington, and San Jose, California, in February, telling her personal orphan story as well as how she founded AWON.

All AWONers are encouraged to find out more about *Spirit of '45* and to attend *In the Mood* performances in their area. To get involved email AWON's *Spirit of '45* contact, Barry Barr-Finch, at barrfinch@clearwire.net. Details are at: <http://www.spiritof45.org>, and <http://www.inthemoodlive.com/>.

You also can check the AWON website at: <http://www.awon.org> for updates.

own record if it is non-archival. If the veteran/retiree is deceased, then the Next of Kin can obtain a copy of the record. If proof of death is not in the record or a government database then NPRC requires proof of death from the Next of Kin.

When the record becomes archival the redacted record is available for a fee to most people. Even more relaxed rules apply 100 years after the date of birth of the subject of the record.

Sometimes there is a legitimate need to request the military records of a non-direct relative veteran, such as an uncle for genealogical purposes, or the comrade of a father for research into an MIA case, for example. In these cases some records are open to the public, or could be accessible through a FOIA request.

For more information about access to military records, go to the National Personnel Records Center website: <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/general-public.html>

Son Writes Book to Heal Pain of Not Having Father

Bruce Brodowski is the latest AWONer to publish a book about the search for his father.

In *The Dad I Never Knew: A War Orphan's Search for Inner Healing*, Bruce looks at the war not only through his father's military experiences but also through his parents' marriage and the experiences of other WWII orphans and fathers, whose stories he has weaved throughout the book.

Second Lt. Ed Brodowski of Utica, New York, was a tank commander in the 8th Armored Division. He was killed in action on 31 March 1945 near the German town of Rocklinghausen when his tank was struck by the enemy. His son was born three months later.

"A war orphan searches for inner healing from the pain

of growing up without a father," Bruce writes. "The pain of not having a dad around to hug him and tell him, 'You are my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.'"

Bruce also explores the relationship between his father and mother. In the many letters Ed wrote home, his increasing and undying love for his wife was evident but the war was tearing them apart.

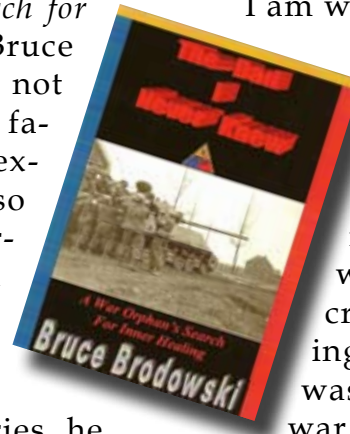
"This is a love story that will touch your heart," Bruce says.

The book also includes stories about other soldiers from the 8th AD, including their voyage to England, the battle at Roermond-Linne-Heide Woods, the crossing of the Rhine, and the battles that they fought in March 1945. Through it all Lt. Brodowski didn't consider himself a hero.

"As for heroism, well I don't think much of that. As all I do is my job," he wrote in one of his many letters.

Bruce was born in June 1945 in Utica. In 1955 his mother died from cancer, after which he went to live with an aunt and uncle.

Bruce wrote *The Dad I Never Knew* as a reply to the "Wall of Silence" and the pain of growing up without a father.



Thank You

**AWON wishes to thank
Joel and Dora Kleinman
for their donation in honor of
her father
Sgt. Rans Venson Queen**



AWON BOOKSTORE

Price List and Order Form



BOOKS

(Authors in **bold** are orphan or family members)

____ <i>A Soldier's Daughter</i> by Lois Brown Klein	\$17.00	____ <i>Normandy</i> by Walter Ford Carter	\$24.95
____ <i>The Ordinary Infantrymen: Heroes Then, Heroes Again</i> by Imogene Woods and Twelve WWII Infantrymen	\$15.00	____ <i>Soldier's Son</i> by Ben McClelland	\$28.00
____ <i>Full Fathom Five: A Daughter's Search</i> by Mary Lee Coe Fowler	\$29.95	____ <i>D-Day + 60 Years: A Small Piece of Airborne History</i> by Jerome J. McLaughlin	\$25.00
____ <i>Now I Know - A War Orphan's Journey of Discovery</i> by Thomas G. Ratliff	\$17.95	____ <i>They Also Served: Women's Stories from the World War II Era</i> by Jeanie Sutton Lambright	hardcover \$35.00 softcover \$24.00
____ <i>When Your Number's Up: Meritocracy Goes to War</i> by Raymond S. Ross, PhD.	hardcover \$20.00 softcover \$10.00	____ <i>Finding Billy</i> by Diana Thompson Dale , niece	\$16.95
____ <i>Sporty Course</i> (bomber pilots) by Col. Jack Swayze	\$10.00	____ <i>Father Found: Life and Death as a Prisoner of the Japanese in World War II</i> by Duane Heisinger	\$13.95
____ <i>The Hotton Report</i> (about The Battle for Hotton) by Robert McDonald	\$13.95	____ <i>I Can Hear the Guns Now: A WWII Story of Love and Sacrifice</i> by Thomas G. Ratliff	\$20.95
____ <i>World War II: A Legacy of Letters - One Soldier's Journey</i> by Clinton Frederick	\$26.95	____ <i>An 8th Air Force Combat Diary</i> by John A. Clark	\$49.95
____ <i>In Their Memory: American WWII Orphans Network</i> by Turner Publishing Company	Standard Book was \$49.95 SPECIAL \$20.00 Leatherbound Book was \$79.95 SPECIAL \$30.00	____ <i>When I See a Forty and Eight... I Remember World War Two</i> by Jacques Adnet	\$12.00
____ <i>The Fighting Tigers: The Untold Story Behind the Names on the Quachita Baptist University WWII Memorial</i> by William Downes	\$24.95	____ <i>Love Always, Ben</i> by Huey Tyra , nephew	\$19.95
____ <i>The War Journey of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause</i> by Maj. Damon "Rocky" Gause, foreward by Damon L. Gause	\$21.95	____ <i>For Those Who Love, Time Is Not</i> by Kay Brigham	was \$30.00 NOW \$16.00
____ <i>Love, Honor and Cherish: The True World War II Story of a Screaming Eagle and a Courageous Woman</i> by Sandra Bonilla Thompson	\$23.00	____ <i>Lost in the Victory: Reflections of America's Orphans of WWII</i> by Susan Johnson Hadler and Ann Bennett Mix	\$32.50
____ <i>Touchstones: A Guide to Records, Rights & Resources for Families of American World War II Casualties</i> , second edition by Ann Bennett Mix	\$21.95	____ <i>After the Liberators: A Father's Last Mission, A Son's Lifelong Journey</i> by William C. McGuire II	\$16.95
____ <i>No Greater Sacrifice, No Greater Love: A Son's Journey to</i>		____ <i>Shobun: A Forgotten War Crime in the Pacific</i> by Michael J. Goodwin	\$19.95

The Star NEWSLETTERS

- ____ * Individual issues \$2.00 includes P&H
- ____ * All archived issues: \$35.00 includes P&H
- ____ * Special! Most recent five issues: \$7.50 includes P&H

More AWON Merchandise and Order Form on Other Side



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Price List and Order Form



VIDEOS

____ AWON 2004 Conference & WWII Memorial Dedication Special \$15.00	____ AWON 2000 Conference: Journeys - Finding Our Fathers by Justin Taylan was \$15.00 Special \$10.00
____ We Speak Their Names: A Tribute to Our Fathers produced by Patrick Tierney and Terry Boettcher was \$15.00 Special \$10.00	____ Sleep My Sons: The Story of the Arisan Maru by Shawnee Brittan \$30.00
	____ The War in Europe by Shawnee Brittan \$30.00

AWON Logo Products

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____ Denim shirt ____ short sleeve ____ long sleeve (circle size: S M L XL 2X) \$40.00	____ Gold Star Crystal Pendant 1 1/2" (40mm) \$20.00
____ Golf shirt ____ white ____ blue (circle size: S M L XL 2X) \$35.00	NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW!
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	____ * Magnetic WWII Memorial picture \$1.00
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	____ * AWON holiday ornament \$10.00
	NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW! NEW!
	____ *AWON Lanyard and Name Tag/Ticket Holder (4" x 6") blue with white lettering \$6.00

Order Form

Postage and handling: \$5 for each item. Items marked with an asterisk (*) include P&H. For multiple purchases:
Up to \$40: \$9 P&H \$40-\$60: \$10 P&H Over \$60: \$12 P&H

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email: bookstore@awon.org

For more information and color photos go to: www.awon.org/bookstore/bookstore.html

Moving? New Email?

Contact Ann Mix if you change your address or your email. We don't want you to miss a single issue of *The Star* or any other

AWON news:

Ann Mix

P.O. Box 822

Moses Lake, WA 98837

mixmoseslake@aol.com

Save the Date!

**For the 2010 AWON
National Conference in
Annapolis, Maryland
at the Doubletree
Nov. 11-14, 2010**

More Details on Page 2

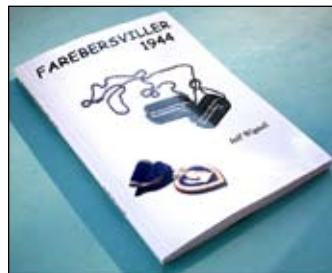
AWONer Publishes New Book

Farebersviller 1944

by Jeff Wignall

This is the story of Pfc. William H. Wignall, a machine gunner in Co. A, 318th Regt., 80th Inf. Div., in Patton's Third Army.

Born in England in 1910, Wignall emigrated to the United States at age 19. He joined the Army in 1943 and at the "old" age of 34 found himself on a



troop ship headed for Europe.

As a replacement, Wignall fought his way across France until he reached the Moselle River, where a brutal slugmatch stymied the army as it attempted to break through the German Westwall defenses - The Siegfried Line - at Farebersviller.

\$18.95

Available at Amazon.com, Abebooks.com, Alibris.com, Booksurge.com, BooksinPrint.com, and GlobalBooksinPrint.com

About the Author

Jeff Wignall was born in 1940 and grew up in Beverly, Massachusetts. He got married in 1960 and relocated to the neighboring city of Peabody, where he and his wife have resided since, raising two children. They also have five grandchildren. His book began as a writing project when Wignall actively started searching for information about his father in the late 1980s. The project morphed into a book several years later. Originally intended as a family document, its final form suggested possible wider interest, and he decided to take it public.

Jeff Wignall's Farebersviller 1944 is a self-published book. Anyone with questions about the self-publishing process may contact Jeff at: jeff5320741@yahoo.com or Jeff Wignall, 27 Martinack Ave., Peabody, MA 01960.

Guidelines for submitting material for publication

•Topics considered for publication in *The Star* include, but are not limited to, unit reunions, visiting battle or crash sites, cemeteries, ceremonies, seeking or finding families and veterans, poetry, etc.

•Email copy-ready articles and pictures to the editor in Word, WordPerfect, RTF, or in the body of an email. High resolution jpeg, bitmap, gif or tiff images are preferred. Text and pictures also can be mailed. Photos returned upon request.

•Please keep text to one page (500 to 1,000 words), including pictures.

•Email short articles about resources, queries, book/movie recommendations, and general information for the List Tips column to the assistant editor.

•Preference is given to material written by and about AWON members.

•Authors retain copyright to published original writing. Permission to reprint should be obtained from the author by contacting the editor.

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**Deadline for the
June Issue is
May 1**

AWON Election in September

The 2010 election for AWON's Board of Directors will be held in September.

Members in good standing (dues paid) will receive candidate biographies and a ballot by mail.

Five positions are up for election. The term is for four years.

Directors attend six monthly meetings per year via telephone, and alternately the National AWON Conference and retreat.

Remember a Loved One with a Tree

Trees in Memory and *Trees in Celebration* are ways to remember loved ones or to celebrate special occasions with the planting of trees in our national forests.

It's an opportunity for appropriate tributes while helping to enhance the environment for future generations.

For more information, call 888-448-7337, or visit arborday.org/memory or arborday.org/treesincelebration.



AWON Project Leaders

Listed below are the names and contact information for AWON's on-going projects. Contact these people to volunteer, contribute, or learn more:

Frequent Flyer Program

Roger Connor
rmcusa37@gmail.com

Knit Your Bit Project

Norma Nicol Hamilton
rlhnnh@comcast.net

Margraten Liaison/Fund

Gerry Conway Moreski
dutiem@comcast.net

Mama Jo Memorial Fund

Dave Stanek
davestanek@att.net

Memorial Day Wreath Project

Sharon Crowley Connor
sharonconnor@gmail.com

National WWII Museum Campaign

Chickie Shields Berry
chkebry@msn.com

Reading Air Show

Norm Burkey
normanburkey@verizon.net

Regional Coordinator Project/ Spirit of '45 Campaign

Barry Barr-Finch
barrfinch@clearwire.net

American WWII Orphans Network

Application, Registration & Renewal Form

- ☐ I would like to become a member
☐ Register my father/family member and me only
☐ Renew my membership

Information about You

Name _____
Spouse's Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____ (home, work, cell, other)
E-mail _____
Relationship to Serviceman _____
Your Date of Birth _____
Would you like to receive *The Star* electronically? Y N
Where did you hear about AWON? _____

Information about WWII Serviceman Who Died

Be as complete as possible. If you do not have some of the information, leave it blank and we may be able to provide it to you.
Do not delay mailing the application for lack of information.

Name _____
Last First M.I.
Birth Date _____ Date of Death _____
Place of Death _____
Where Buried _____
Military Unit _____
Service Number _____
Additional details about serviceman's death
and/or service: (rank, medals, etc.)

Home Town and State _____
Wife's Maiden Name _____
Did widow remarry? Y N
Names and addresses of your siblings with same
father, and/or additional family members:

(Please include information on another sheet, if necessary.)

Membership Levels

Any child of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, Coast Guard or Merchant Marine, who was killed, remains missing in action, or who died in the line of duty or later died of wounds or injuries sustained during World War II, is eligible to join as an **Orphan Member**. Any direct relative is eligible to join as a **Family Member**. Any individual, including friends of those killed in World War II, those who wish to participate in AWON activities, or organizations with an interest in and compatible with AWON's purposes and goals, are eligible to join as an **Associate Member**.

Check Your Membership Category:

☐ Orphan ☐ Family ☐ Associate

Dues and Payment Options

Basic annual membership dues are \$25. Members wishing to provide additional financial support to AWON and its activities are encouraged to join at one of the following supportive levels:

Check one: ☐ Basic: \$25 ☐ Sponsor: \$50
☐ Gold Star: \$100 ☐ Donor: \$150
☐ Patron: \$250 ☐ Founder: \$500
☐ Benefactor: \$1,000

Members at the Sponsor level and above are entitled to a free copy of the second edition of *Touchstones: A Guide to Records, Rights and Resources for Families of American World War II Casualties*, by AWON Founder Ann Bennett Mix.

I am donating at the Sponsor level or above and would like my free copy of the second edition of *Touchstones*:
Yes ☐ No ☐

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

I give permission to AWON to release my name, address, email address, phone number and relationship to and pertinent information about the serviceman to other members. I understand the list of members is confidential and will *never* be sold or given to any other organization or business. I hereby release AWON from any liability that may arise from the release of information.

Signature (optional) _____

AWON is a humanitarian, nonprofit, nonpolitical, public service organization under Section 501(c)3 of the U.S. Federal Tax code (EINB #91-1538912). Membership is not required to register in our database.

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www.awon.org



AWON Mission

To locate and bring together sons and daughters of those who died or are missing as a result of American involvement in World War II, honor the service and sacrifice of our fathers and provide information and support to these people who were orphaned by the war.

AWON Directory

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