

Speaking the Names of Normandy's Fallen Heroes

Daughter pays tribute to father and others, 75 years later



Above: AWON member Barbara George addresses the crowd at the 75th Anniversary of Operation Overlord Commemoration. To the right: Alex Kershaw, and Josiah Bunting III, with other dignitaries.

by Barbara George

I had the pleasure of being invited by the Friends of the National WWII Memorial (*Friends*) to participate in the 75th Anniversary of Operation Overlord Commemoration. The Commemoration was held in Washington D.C. on June 5 and 6, 2019, to mark the 75th anniversary of D-Day, honoring those brave men buried at the Normandy American Cemetery in France. Their numbers include my father, Captain Malcolm George, who died at Normandy June 7, 1944.

On June 5th, I was driven to The Army and Navy Club in Washington D.C., along with Josiah Bunting III, chairman of the *Friends* Board, military officer, college president, author, and speaker. There we were warmly met by the manager of the club who offered us breakfast in the dining room.

Then we went into the ballroom to hear a presentation by Alex Kershaw, a noted author and WWII historian. Mr. Kershaw's latest book, *The First Wave*, is a tribute to the warriors who successfully carried out Operation Overlord, the largest and most difficult military operation in history. During his presentation, he spoke about the men who so courageously landed on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day and showed historical pictures of that legendary day.

After a short break, Alex Kershaw moderated a panel discussion alongside WWII Veteran Eli Linden and me.

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President's Message

by Walt Linne

It is my privilege to welcome our new STAR Editor, Kristin Holmes. Kristin is the daughter of Board Secretary Lorin McCleary and granddaughter of 2LT Lorin D. McCleary, Jr, B-24 pilot, KIA over Chateaudun, France on 11 May 1944.

Kristin and her husband, Greg, have five children, four boys and one girl, the youngest. They homeschool and their oldest son is now attending college. Kristin has been writing since high school and has written e-books and magazine articles. She is very excited to become our new Editor. Welcome aboard, Kristin.

Secondly, I am pleased to announce that Barbara Kelly, Penny LeGrand and I will co-chair the 2020 National Conference in New Orleans. The conference will be at the National WWII Museum's Higgins Hotel from May 11 to May 15 (we wanted to book May 8 - the 75th anniversary of VE Day -but the hotel was full). We request a "heads up" if you plan to attend (not a registration at this time) so we have an idea of how many rooms to reserve. Please send a note to AWON Conference, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216 or send an email to awon@awon.org.

Thirdly, those members requesting a hard copy only of *The STAR* will receive the *E-Star* (electronic newsletter) version of the Summer 2019 issue. Rest assured, everyone who requested a hard copy of *The STAR* newsletter will continue to receive the hard copy. However, we want to show the enhanced features of the *E-Star* - from color photos to the advantage of receiving expanded coverage on specific topics. Also note the revised membership registration form offers family members who join a reduced rate of \$10.00 if they request the *E-Star*. Let us know what you think. Thanks.

Finally, I want to thank everyone for continuing to renew their membership and to welcome our new members.

In Their Memory.

Walt Linne



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The Star is a quarterly publication of the American WWII War Orphans Network (AWON), a nonprofit 501(c)3, nonpolitical public service organization serving the children of of US Servicemen killed in WWII.

The Star is published and mailed from Indianapolis, IN. ISSN 1941-370X (print), 1941-3769 (online) Copyright 2019 by the American WWII War Orphans Network. All rights reserved. Issue 93 - 1M (06-19)

...Speaking, from front page

Alex did a fine job of directing questions to each of us in turn. He started by asking both of us what we were doing 75 years ago. Gulp! I wasn't sure what to say to that, since I was a toddler at the time. Eli talked about his days in the U. S. Army's 90th Infantry Division, giving me a minute to collect my thoughts. While Eli provided his perspective based on his military experience and his 96 years of living, I contributed a bit about the ways in which life was unusual for my family. We lived in a small town where every kid had a mother and father but me. My mother never talked about how she felt, but then again, neither did anyone else.



*Left - Barbara George
with Alex Kershaw and
Eli Linden*

Later that afternoon, the Commemoration continued at the National World War II Memorial with the Reading of the Names, a full accounting of those who gave their lives during Operation Overlord (June 6-August 10, 1944) and were laid to rest at the Normandy American Cemetery. There was an Opening Ceremony from 5:00 to 5:30 pm, prior to the commencement of the Reading of the Names.

I was honored to deliver a speech during the Opening Ceremony. I spoke of my father, Capt. Malcolm L. George, 4th Infantry Division, who successfully led his battalion onto Utah Beach on June 6th, D-Day.

The next day, June 7th, he observed that severe casualties were being inflicted by a hidden enemy machine gun firing into the rear and flanks of the advancing troops. He organized a group of volunteers and personally led them in a successful assault upon the enemy machine gun position. While leading the attack, my father lost his life. He posthumously received the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart.

I went on to say that while it was devastating for my mother and a crushing blow for my father's parents, it was mystifying to my brothers and me to grow up in a time when other kids have a mother and a father. No one talked about war or death in those days.

After the Opening Ceremony, the Reading of the Names continued until 12:30 a.m. as they honored each and every one of the 9,388 fallen heroes buried in the Normandy American Cemetery. It was moving to hear all the names read aloud and especially so because it was at the National WWII Memorial.

The following day, June 6th, included a commemoration of D-Day itself.

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2020 AWON National Conference

May 11-15, 2020

New Orleans, Louisiana

The Higgins Hotel at The National WWII Museum

If you plan to attend, please send a note to AWON HQ
5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis IN, 46216
or email awon@awon.org



And Then There Were None

by Andrew Donaldson



On June 27, 2016, Lt. Col (Ret) Richard Cole stood graveside as Staff Sgt. David J. Thatcher was laid to rest in Montana. From that moment until his death on April 9, 2019 at the age of 103, he had carried a burden. The Doolittle Raiders, as they preferred to be

called, had long since planned for there being only one, and then none of them.

Every year since 1959, a custom set of 80 goblets representing each member of The Doolittle Raiders was presented with a reading of the names and a toast. The living participated, the dead had their names read and their goblets turned over. Each goblet had a man's name on it twice, inscribed so that the name was readable regardless of disposition. Each year the list was read and the number dwindled from the 61 who had survived the war out of the 80 Raiders. In 2013 the 1896 Hennessy VS cognac (Doolittle's birth year) meant to be shared among the last two survivors was opened for the 'final toast' by Cole. Though three Raiders remained, they decided it best not to chance it another year, and nobody was going to quibble. As both the oldest living and ranking Raider, it had long since fallen to Cole to give the toast: "Gentlemen, I propose a toast to those we lost on the mission and those who have passed away since. Thank you very much and may they rest in peace."

After Thatcher's death in 2016 and coinciding with the 75th anniversary of that first offensive strike against Japan in WWII, Dick Cole raised his goblet, the only goblet in a living Raider's hand, to toast the 79. He then turned over Thatcher's goblet, and knew that inside the lined storage case that he himself had designed, only his remained upright.

Now his must be turned.

When Dick Cole made those last few toasts it was at the US Air Force Museum on the grounds of Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio. It is where the Raiders' goblets are permanently displayed, where the final toast occurred among the last three men, and where Cole himself had frequently visited, lectured, and represented this most special of fraternities. It was not far from where he had grown up. A young Dick Cole had rushed to the local air field to see daredevil pilots like Jimmy Doolittle in the skies



Retired Lt. Col. Richard "Dick" Cole opens the 1896 bottle of cognac before The Doolittle Tokyo Raiders shared their last toast at the National Museum of the Air Force, Nov. 9, 2013 in Dayton, Ohio. The Air Force hosted the famed Doolittle Tokyo Raiders' final toast to their fallen comrades during an invitation-only ceremony. Cole was the copilot of Aircraft No 1 (USAF photo/Desiree N. Palacios)

that only a few years before, the Wright Brothers had looked to, determined to find a way up there. Little did he know he would be Doolittle's co-pilot years later in the most daring of the flying legend's exploits.

After the raid, and having extracted himself from the pine tree he parachuted into when his aircraft ran out of fuel over China, Cole made his way to friendly Chinese forces. At the time, he, Doolittle, and the other survivors feared the mission had been a failure as all the aircraft were lost (one landed in Soviet-controlled territory and was interred), and they knew at least some of the men had been captured. It wasn't till after the war they learned that 3 men were killed in action, including two who drowned upon ditching in the sea, and eight men were captured by the Japanese. Three (1st Lt. Dean E. Hallmark, 1st Lt. William G. Farrow, Cpl, Harold A Spatz) were executed by the Japanese and another (1st Lt. Robert J. Meder died from maltreatment in captivity. The other four somehow survived.

They were also wrong about failing. The mission, while not being very damaging in terms of actual bombing efficiency, was a huge victory to American morale. Japan could be hit, and a public desperate for some good news in the dark early days of the Pacific campaign had hope. Of the 69 Raiders who returned from the Tokyo raid, 5 were killed in other actions during the war, several others lost in air crashes, but of those who remained all but the two who separated due to sustained injuries would serve till the end of the war. They gathered for the first time in 1946, fulfilling Doolittle's promise to throw them all "a party" after the war. They met every year that followed until 2013.

continued on page 5

...And Then There Were None, continued

But there will be one last reunion of sorts. When Richard Cole is buried in the hallowed ground of Arlington National Cemetery, he will be among not only the mighty company of American heroes laid to rest there, including several other Raiders, but also Hallmark, Farrow, and Meder who died at the vengeful hands of the Japanese they had struck at all those years ago. The last Raider who lived so long a life will forever lay in honor near those Raiders who died first. The man who had watched airplanes as a kid in the Wright Brothers' hometown, joined the pre-war Army Air Corps because "it was a good job," been in the lead aircraft in America's first strike on Japan, and carried the honor and dignity of those heroes every day since, will finally be at rest in his country's most sacred place.



An Air Force cadet removes one of the Doolittle Raider goblets during a ceremony, 2005.


"We were just doing our job, part of the big picture, and happy that what we did was helpful," he answered an interviewer when asked whether or not The Doolittle Raiders felt like heroes.

They were heroes, whether they felt they were or not. Now it is our job to remember them, for they have passed into a history that they left their indelible mark upon. Someone in Dayton will carefully open the display case and turn over one last goblet, all 80 forever now uniform for generations to see and to honor. The name on it inscribed twice, so it can be read in either disposition.

Lt. Col. Richard "Dick" Cole. The last Doolittle Raider.

Originally published at Ordinary Times Magazine, reprinted with permission





Stars of The Star

Volunteers Who Make AWON Work

Kathy LeComte

Former Editor of The Star

Thank you, Kathy, for 12 wonderful years!





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The Mississippi Mission Comes Home

by Wayne C. Johnston

In the April edition of *The Star*, AWON member Wayne Johnston reported some amazing news, news he'd waited a lifetime to hear. The crash site of his father's B-17, *The Mississippi Mission*, had been found in a bird sanctuary near Gerlitz, Germany. *The Mississippi Mission* was shot down January 14, 1945. As pilot, Wayne's father, 1LT Gerald W. Johnston, felt duty bound to keep the plane in the air long enough for his crew to bail out. While five men and Lt. Johnston were killed, five survived thanks to the heroic efforts of Lt. Johnston.

On May 11, 2019, the German couple who discovered the crash site of *The Mississippi Mission*, Michael and Katrin Mischel, visited the United States. They were able to retrieve some parts, which were then sent to Wayne Johnston's cousin Tommy Lofton. Lofton serves as Director of The Mississippi Armed Forces Museum, at Camp Shelby near Hattiesburg, MS.

The Mischels met with the Johnston family and relayed information about the aftermath of the crash. The family learned Lieutenant Johnston's body had been retrieved by a farmer and taken to the church in nearby Gerlitz, where it was buried in the church cemetery. The minister prayed for the fallen pilot and rang the church bell, which was strictly prohibited by the German government at that time.

Tommy Lofton and Wayne Johnston unveiled an exhibit honoring *The Mississippi Mission* on May 24, 2019 at the Memorial Day ceremony held at The Mississippi Armed Forces Museum. The exhibit contains the unearthed parts discovered by the Mischels along with pictures of the plane and crew, and will be on permanent display.

After the exhibit was unveiled, US Representative Steven Palazzo (4th Congressional District, MS) presented Wayne Johnston with an American flag that had been flown over the Capitol and a certificate stating: *The Flag is presented to Wayne Johnston in memory of 1LT Gerald W. Johnston who paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to The United States of America during WWII.* In Johnston's words, "This was unexpected and something I will always cherish."

Ajutant General of Mississippi Major General Jason Boyles was the guest speaker at the ceremony. Afterwards, Boyles and Wayne Johnston placed a wreath at the Gold Star Families Monument on the grounds of The Mississippi Armed Forces Museum in Hattiesburg and *Taps* was played.

A wonderful and much deserved honor for the Johnston family.



Above: Wayne Johnston, son of 1LT Gerald W. Johnston, and family members Aimee and Renee stand with the permanent exhibit of parts from "The Mississippi Mission", The Mississippi Armed Forces Museum, Hattiesburg, MS.



Above: Wayne Johnston and Maj. Gen. Jason Boyles place a Memorial Day wreath at the Gold Star Family's monument.
Below: The Johnston family with US Rep. Steven Palazzo and the flag honoring Lt. Gerald W. Johnston.



A Grateful Nation Honors the Fallen

AWON Members and Other Gold Star Families Visit White House



Above: Three generations - AWON daughter Dianne Wiegand Baczynski, AWON grandson Mike, and AWON great-grandson Max at the White House. Below: Vice President Mike Pence and his wife Karen greet Gold Star Families.



Below Left: The Meek Family. AWON son Robert Meek, wife Nancy, and AWON grandson Robert Meek Jr. proudly attended the reception. Below Right: President Donald Trump addresses the audience of Gold Star Families on May 31.



AWON members Dianne Wiegand Baczynski, Roger Mckee Connor, Marilyn Lieurance, and Robert H. Meek had the honor of visiting the White House May 31, 2019. Along with representatives from 47 other Gold Star Families who have lost loved ones in service of their country, they were invited to attend a reception honoring their fathers' sacrifice.

According to Dianne, Gold Star Families who had lost loved ones in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan were in attendance in addition to those who lost family members during WWII. A candle was lit for all 50 of the fallen heroes. As every name was read, the Gold Star Family stood. Robert H. Meek's father was the oldest service member so honored at the ceremony.

President Trump and First Lady Melania Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and his wife, Karen, and every member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were present at the reception. The First Lady later released a statement that read in part:

To our Gold Star families everywhere – the husbands and wives, the mothers and fathers, the sisters and brothers, and the daughters and sons, we remain indebted to the selfless sacrifices made by these heroes. Thank you to all those who have served or are currently serving in our Armed Forces. May God bless you, your families, and may God bless the United States of America.

Below Left: The candle lit in honor of PFC Frank H. Wiegand, father of Dianne Wiegand Baczynski. Below right, the official White House invitations sent to the 50 Gold Star Families



AWON Moments

by Walt Linne

The mission of our new *AWON Moments* series is to review the history of AWON and celebrate special moments experienced by AWON's orphan members since Ann Bennett Mix founded the organization in 1991. We've all had so many wonderful memories from our time in AWON, let's share them!

From *American WWII Orphans Network Newsletter*, Vol. 2, Spring 1992 - "New Advisors to the Network": "We are pleased to announce that the following persons have agreed to be advisors to the American WWII Orphans Network and have already been very helpful to us in our efforts:

Senator Robert Dole, Wanda Ruffin, Director "In Touch" program for Vietnam Sons and Daughters. Carmella Laspada, Founder, Chairman "No Greater Love", Anne Noggle, author of "For God, Country and the Thrill of It. Woman Airforce Service Pilots in World War II". Lt Col Bill Masciangelo, USMC (Ret), Vice President, The Reunion Network. We are honored to have these people and are waiting to hear from others."

Many of us had an *AWON Moment* on May 29, 2004, when we met and heard Senator Robert Dole speak at our National Conference in Washington DC at the dedication of the WWII Memorial Monument. Thank you, Senator Dole.

Please send your *AWON Moment* to AWON STAR, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216 or president@awon.org so we can all share in the joy of remembrance!

Walter Linne
Brother of John Linne
Sons of Walter J. Linne
KIA March 24, 1945
Gemmersheim-on-the-Rhine, Germany

...Speaking, from page 3

Below: Presentation of the United States of America Wreath at the WWII Memorial on the 75th anniversary of D-Day



The occasion was fittingly observed with Alex Kershaw serving as Master of Ceremonies, followed by the Presentation of Colors, the National Anthem, the Pledge of Allegiance, Retiring of the Colors, Invocation, Welcome Remarks by Josiah Bunting III, (Chairman of *Friends*) and Jeffrey Reinbold, (Acting Superintendent, National Mall and Memorial Parks), Musical Tribute, World War II Veterans Introductions, and then the Presentation of Wreaths.

I was invited to join Presentation of Wreaths alongside the 37 U.S.A veterans and representatives from each of the Allied Nations who had participated in the Normandy Campaign. The Presentation of Wreaths was followed by the playing of *Taps* and an Armed Forces Medley. While the whole service was meaningful to me, above all else it was hearing those somber notes of *Taps* that brought tears to my eyes as it forced home the reality of those who'd been willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.

It was a beautiful, meaningful two days in Washington D.C. with *Friends* who were heart-warming. In particular, Alex Kershaw and Josiah Bunting III were both extremely gracious individuals. I also want to give thanks to Holly Rotondi, Executive Director of *Friends*, who organized the Commemoration. This was an honor that I never expected and one I will always remember.

Above all else, I cherish the opportunity I was given - the opportunity to honor the memory of my father, Captain Malcolm George, and remember the role he played in winning World War II.

AWON In The News

Local, national, and international news media recently carried stories featuring AWON members



Pictured above: Judi Kramer, Rosalie Francisco, Bob Wasmer, Nancy Kragh, and Barry Barr-Finch

AWON member Barbara George, daughter of Captain Malcolm L. George (KIA June 7, 1944) (<https://www.awon.us/tributes/cpt-malcolm-l-george/>) had the honor of speaking at the Opening Ceremony of the Remembrance Ceremony and Candlelight Vigil in honor of the 75th anniversary of D-Day, June 6. (editor - see page 1 for Ms. George's story in her own words)

The Remembrance Ceremony, held at the National World War II Memorial in Washington DC, featured the Reading of the Names of the 9388 individuals who gave their lives during Operation Overlord, including that of Captain George, who was lost after landing with the invasion force on D-Day.

Captain George, father of three, successfully led a force of volunteers against a hidden enemy machine gun, saving many lives while sacrificing his own. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart and was laid to rest alongside his fellow soldiers at Normandy American Cemetery. Ms. George told the media, "It's awesome and it's sad. It's overwhelming and I'm glad I got to pay tribute to him."

AWON webmaster Rik Peirson actually found himself in the spotlight twice while visiting Europe over Memorial Day. RTL-TV interviewed Rik at Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery May 26, 2019, and he was later interviewed again at the Bastogne War Museum.

The resulting news story was shown all over Europe. Rik mentioned being grateful for the boost his dad, 1LT John Silas Sheffield Peirson, and the entire 75th infantry Division with which he served received. And of course it's always great to spread the word about AWON - even in French!

On May 27, 2019, AWON Members Barry Barr-Finch, Tom Brewer, Rosalie Francisco, Nancy Kragh, Al Kramer, Judi Kramer, Sandy and Terry Walker participated in a Memorial Day ceremony at Tahoma National Cemetery in Kent, Washington, alongside other Gold Star families and other members of the community.

Five AWONers shared stories of their fathers before a crowd of several hundred people. Reporter Keith Eldridge from television station KOMO was there to cover the event. He interviewed several AWON members and their stories were featured on the evening news.

To watch: https://komonews.com/news/local/they-gave-so-much-wwii-orphans-honor-the-fathers-who-never-returned?fbclid=IwAR0_K1cDki7AWJuEH80qbQcXViBdZUa6mJ9pyGxz5awOdJveoL1g-xcBG3U



AWON Connnections

Pictures and Stories of Members Gathering Around the Country



The Lynne Lacronne Annual York Gathering took place April 6, 2019, held as always at Hoss's Steak and Sea House in York. This year's gathering was a bittersweet experience for all as it was the first York Gathering without Lynne's physical presence, but she was surely there in spirit.

Lynne Lacronne organized the AWON York Gatherings for 13 years, starting with the first held back on April 23, 2005, 60 years to the day when Lynne's father was KIA in Germany. Before she passed away in November 2018, Lynne, a notoriously well-organized person due to her career as a schoolteacher, had already made arrangements for this year's gathering.

As Jean Rhinehart put it, "Any time AWON friends get together we have a lot of fun catching up with each other. The bond we share brings us together in such a way as we are brothers and sisters."

The tradition of the Lynne Lacronne Annual York Gathering will be carried on by Jean Rhinehart and Janice Buterbaugh. Stay tuned for announcements about the 2020 gathering!



This is an extra special installment of AWON Connections because we had members gathering not only around the country, but across the entire world!

AWON Vice President Gloria Layne got to meet longtime AWON Overseas Friend Joost Claasens during the Memorial Day ceremony held at the Netherlands American Cemetery

near Margraten on May 26, 2019.

Ms. Layne was present to see her daughters Lynne and Karen present the AWON Memorial Day wreath and to remember her father, S/SGT Rocco M. Zuccarella, 8th Armored Division, KIA April 8, 1945.

Mr. Claasens, in addition to being a great supporter of AWON, has adopted the grave of Chester C. Slaughter, 29th Division, killed on March 21, 1945. He is also a photographer extraordinaire and has kindly shared many pictures of the ceremonies at both Margraten and Henri Chapelle.

Please see pages 12-15 for more pictures of Memorial Day.

Official AWON Superstars Bernard Achten, Regine Villers, and Marie Achten, of Ans, Belgium - originators of the AWON Wreath and Banner Program - met AWON Webmaster Rik Peirson at Henri-Chappelle Cemetery May 25, 2019.

This trip was the first time the four had met after many years of friendship. Marie Achten, age 14, has officially adopted the grave of Peirson's father, 1LT John Silas Sheffield Peirson of the 75th Infantry Division, KIA December 25th, 1944.

A very special moment indeed.



AWON Connections

Pictures and Stories of Members Gathering Around the Country

AWONers from Texas and Oklahoma met for a regional lunch at the Outback Steakhouse in Dallas April 27, 2019. They had a long lunch with lots of conversation, and their dads were definitely with them in spirit.

Left to Right below: Jerry Temte, Patty Temte, Bill Parker, Suzanne Parker, Carroll Rogers, Vicki Phleger Sayers, Gail Brown, Iris Landrum, Bob Landrum, Mary Nguyen, Jerry Pinkerton, Judy Pinkerton



Beautiful weather and great fellowship were both present and accounted for when 19 Midwestern AWON members and their families gathered in Illinois' Starved Rock State Park Lodge on April 6, 2019.

The members shared photos and stories and even heard a few words from AWON President Walt Linne about the future direction of AWON. They discussed several ways individuals could stay involved and support AWON.

Hey...these AWON Connections look like fun!

They sure do, don't they? Do you want to take part in an AWON meetup, but aren't sure where to start? The best way is by taking part in a local or regional group.

AWON has roughly 50 hardworking regional coordinators. A Local Regional Coordinator, or LRC, is a source of first contact for new members, reaching out to welcome them to AWON. They will also ask if new members wish to be further contacted for gatherings. Gatherings don't have to be fancy. They can take place in a local restaurant, a park, a private home. They can even be as simple as presenting a wreath at a local national cemetery on Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, or at a Gold Star Families Memorial Monument on the upcoming Gold Star Mother's Day, September 29, 2019. As AWON Regional Coordinator Barry Barr-Finch says, we're limited only by our imagination.

If you joined AWON thinking that maybe getting together with people wasn't your cup of tea but have since changed your mind, it's not too late! Just contact Barry Barr-Finch at barrfinch1@gmail.com and he will put you in touch with your LRC. And don't worry, your personal information is always kept confidential!

And if you haven't ever been contacted by your LRC, it may be that your area is lacking one. That could be you! AWON does not have LRCs in all areas, and in many of the larger states, distance is a factor. It's just too far for people to travel no matter how badly they would like to meet their AWON brothers and sisters. Having more people willing to organize gatherings and help keep our membership database current is of paramount importance to keeping AWON going into the future.

If you are interested in contacting your LRC or becoming a Local Regional Coordinator yourself, please contact Barry Barr-Finch at barrfinch1@gmail.com.

And if you're an LRC and haven't been in touch for a while, please reach out to Barry as well. Even if you'd prefer not to continue on in your coordinator role, AWON leadership would appreciate being updated on that decision so we can find another person to pick up the mantle. Thank you!



The flag flies at half-staff over Henri-Chappelle American Cemetery and Memorial, May 25, 2019. Photo Courtesy of J. Claasens, G. Coppus

Since 2003, AWON Members, family, and overseas friends have traveled the globe to attend Memorial Day ceremonies at the American cemeteries where our AWON fathers are buried or memorialized. They participate in the official programs, presenting a floral tribute along with other dignitaries. The AWON Memorial Day Wreath Project is possible through the generous support, time, and financial contributions of AWON wreath coordinators, AWON Overseas Friends, and member donations. Thank you for commemorating our fathers.



Right: The AWON Wreath at Henri-Chappelle was presented by Rik Peirson, his wife Dianna, and the son of Pvt. Willie E. Creel. Left: The AWON Henri-Chappelle wreath in all its glory.



Bernard Achten, Diane and Rik Peirson, Regine Villers, and Marie Achten with the AWON wreath. A special AWON thanks to the Achten-Villers family. Photos on this page courtesy of Joost Claasens and Gijs Coppus.



A lovely detail on the AWON wreath presented at Henri-Chappelle American Cemetery and Memorial.



Memorial Day 2019 - Overseas



Above: The AWON Wreath at the Netherlands American Cemetery (Margraten) Photo courtesy of Kees Spammer. Right: This statue stands before the reflecting pool at the Netherlands American Cemetery, representing women's loss and grief. Photo courtesy of Joost Claasens and Gijs Coppus

Below: The AWON Wreath at the Netherlands American Cemetery was presented by Lynne Layne, AWON granddaughter. Her mother, AWON Vice President Gloria Layne, was also present. Photo by J. Claasens and G. Coppus



Above: The Layne family and friends at Netherlands American Cemetery May 26, 2019. Right: a close up view of the AWON wreath presented at Margraten. Photos by J. Claasens and G. Coppus





*Above:
AWON's Memorial Day wreath at the Sicily-
Rome American Cemetery. Photo courtesy of Robert
Meek. Below: AWON Overseas Friend Tomas Lin
presented AWON's wreath at the Manila American
Cemetery in the Phillippines. Many thanks to the Lim
family. Photo courtesy of Patricia Temte, Manila
American Cemetery Staff*



UNCLE SAM WANTS AWON...

...Members to send in Memorial Day photos!

You may have noticed that we seem to be missing some photos. Not all cemeteries are represented in these pages, but with your help, they can be!

Since this is a transitional edition between the former and new editors of *The Star*, a few people were not sure where to send pictures by the deadline. But we want to be absolutely certain to get a photo of every AWON Memorial Day Wreath placed at the overseas cemeteries where our loved ones rest.

The Star's new editor will be running even more Memorial Day photos in our fall edition! And even more in winter, if need be! If you have photos of wreaths at home or abroad and you weren't sure where to send them, or maybe things just got a bit hectic and you hadn't managed to download them yet, it's ok! There's plenty of time.

And if the word "download" makes you break into a cold sweat, that's ok, just mail them! We're happy to return any original photos upon request.

Send your photos to:
Kristin Holmes, editor, *The Star*
atomicsagebrush@gmail.com
PO Box 242
Creston, WA 99117

And THANK YOU, AWON MEMBERS!!



Above top left: The Memorial Day Ceremony at Ardennes American Cemetery and Memorial

Above top right: The AWON wreath presented at Ardennes May 25, 2019

Center: Close up on the AWON wreath at Ardennes American Cemetery. Ardennes pictures courtesy of Bernard Achten

Right: (from right) Presenters Vanita Rae Smith, Nick Chadd (great-grandson of Edmund H. Roberts, Jr.) Alix Bonnyman Prejean, along with Vanita Rae Smith's grandnephew Solomon at the Honolulu Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, May 27, 2019 Photo courtesy of Susan Chadd with thanks to Penny Yazzie



Memorial Day 2019 Stateside

Right: AWON speakers and wreath presenters at the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Manhattan May 27, 2019. L-R: Elizabeth 'Betsy' Harris, Margaret 'Maggie' Malone, August 'Augie' Alegi and Robert 'Bob' Harding Jr.



Below: Tahoma National Cemetery in Washington State, Barry Barr-Finch, Judi Kramer, Rosalie Fransisco, Bob Wasmer, Nancy Kragh, Sandra & Terry Walker, Al Kramer, & Tom Brewer gathered to present a wreath created for the occasion by Brewer. Photo by Tom Brewer.



Above: The wreath presented at the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument on behalf of AWON. Manhattan photos courtesy of Maggie Malone



Above, Left: Eagle Point National Cemetery in Eagle Point, Oregon, decorated for Memorial Day, May 27, 2019. Photo courtesy of Penny Yazzie and the Eagle Point & Upper Rogue Community Facebook Page

AWON BOOKSTORE

Price List / Order Form

Books



Authors in **BOLD** are orphan or family members

Items marked with (*) include P&H

____ *A Daughter's Quest: Retracing My Father's Footsteps During World War II*

By Laura Smail Sims New!! \$16.95

____ *The Gun Club: U.S.S. Duncan at Cape Esperance*

By Robert Fowler New!! \$15.99

____ *Collateral Damage, A World War II Orphan: Lost and Found*

By Reda Reynolds New!! \$9.00

____ *Feisty: Chronicles & Confessions of an Old PR Warhorse*

By Joe Finnigan New!! \$12.99

____ *A Bit of Earth*

By Wendy Crisp Lestina \$13.95

____ *K.I.A.: An Orphan's Search for His Father Through the Fog of War*

By Patrick Audinet \$10.00*

All proceeds from Audinet book benefit AWON

____ *The Beauty of What Remains: Family Lost, Family Found*

By Susan Johnson Hadler \$15.00*

____ *In Search of a Pilot: Hanford "Rusty" J. Rustand*

By Marilyn Rustand Lieurance \$7.00*

____ *My Father: More than a Picture, a Beer Bottle and a Flag*

By Jerry W. Pinkerton \$12.00*

____ *The Lost Submarine: A True Story of Love and War*

By Nancy Kenney \$16.00

____ *"Daddy's Gone to War": The Second World War in the lives of America's Children*

By William M. Tuttle Jr., PhD \$30.00

____ *In My Father's Words: Letters From a WWII Soldier*

By Bill McElvain \$16.00

____ *Farebersville 1944*

By Jeff Wignall \$18.95

____ *A Soldier's Daughter*

By Lois Brown Klein \$17.00

____ *The Ordinary Infantrymen: Heroes Then, Heroes Again*

By Imogene Woods and Twelve WWII Infantrymen \$15.00

____ *Full Fathom Five: A Daughter's Search*

By Mary Lee Coe Fowler \$29.95

____ *Love Always, Ben*

By Huey Tyra, nephew Reduced! \$2.00

____ *Sporty Course* (bomber pilots)

By Col. Jack Swayze \$10.00

____ *The Hotton Report* (About the Battle For Hotton)

By Robert McDonald \$13.95

____ *World War II: A Legacy of Letters-One Soldier's Journey*

By Clinton Frederick \$26.95

____ *An 8th Airforce Combat Diary*

By John A. Clark \$49.95

____ *When I See a "Forty and Eight"... I Remember World War II*

By Lt. Col. Jacques Adnet USAF (ret.) Reduced! \$5.00!

____ *In Their Memory: American WWII Orphan's Network*

By Turner Publishing Company
Was 49.95 Reduced \$10.00

____ *The Fighting Tigers: The Untold Story Behind the Names on The Quachita Baptist University WWII Memorial*

By William Downes \$24.95

____ *The War Journey of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause*

Forward by Damon L. Gause \$21.95

____ *No Greater Sacrifice, No Greater Love: A Son's Journey to Normandy*

By Walter Ford Carter Reduced! \$18.00

____ *D-Day + 60 Years: A Small Piece of Airborne History*

By Jerome J. McLaughline \$25.00

____ *They Also Served: Women's Stories From the WWII Era*

By Jeanie Sutton Lambright
New Price! Hardcover \$20.00 Softcover \$10.00

____ *Finding Billy*

By Diana Thompson Dale, niece \$16.95

____ *Father Found: Life and Death as a Prisoner of the Japanese In WWII*

By Duane Heisinger \$13.95

____ *Shobun: A Forgotten War Crime in the Pacific*

By Michael J. Goodwin \$19.95

AWON BOOKSTORE

Price List / Order Form

CD/DVD

___ *Leather and Strings*

by **Mark LaPoint**, grandson of Sgt. William G. Aubet featuring *Somewhere in Germany*, written and sung by Mark at AWON's 10th conference memorial service \$6.00

___ *Letters of Love and War* (CD for Mac or PC)

By 1LT John and Betty Peirson \$19.44

___ *AWON 2004 Conference & WWII Memorial Dedication* (VHS)

Reduced!! Was \$5.00 \$3.00*

___ *We Speak Their Names: A Tribute to Our Fathers* (VHS)
produced by Patrick Tierney and **Terry Boettcher**

Reduced! was \$15.00 now \$3.00

___ *AWON 2000 Conference Journeys - Finding Our Fathers* (VHS)

by Justin Taylan was \$15.00 \$5.00*

___ *Sleep My Sons: The Story of the Arisan Maru*

by Shawnee Brittan Reduced! was \$30.00 \$20.00*

AWON Logo Products

Closeout on the Following AWON merchandise

___ Scarf (royal blue fleece - only 3 left!!) \$15.00

___ 20th Anniversary Tote Bag (small)
REDUCED! \$5.00

___ Tote Bag (large) \$20.00

___ 20th Anniversary Garden Flag (without holder) \$15.00

___ AWON Gold Star Crystal Pendant 1 1/2" (40mm)
(chain not included, only 2 left!!) \$20.00

___ *AWON lapel pin \$10.00

___ *AWON Button 2 1/4" \$3.00

___ *AWON Lanyard w/ nametag and ticket holder (blue with white lettering, 4"x6"holder)

\$6.00

___ *AWON notecards & envelopes (pkg of 20) (Only 2 left!!) \$20.00

___ *AWON bookmarks

Circle amount: 1 for \$1.00 5 for \$3.00 10 for \$5.00

___ *AWON Holiday Ornament \$10.00

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 Inc. P&H

Ordering Information

Postage and handling: \$8 for each item. Items marked with an asterisk (*) include postage and handling.

For multiple purchases: Up to \$40 - \$10 P&H \$40-\$60 - \$12 P&H \$60 and up - \$15 P&H

Washington State residents please add 7.8% sales tax

For more information and color photos please visit www.awon.org/bookstore/bookstore.html

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

Total Enclosed (check/money order payable to AWON): _____

Send check or money order to:

AWON Bookstore

5745 Lee Road

Indianapolis, IN

46216

email: bookstore@awon.org

HAVE YOU SENT FOR THESE BASIC RECORDS?

Compiled by AWON Founder Ann Mix

There are many military records available to the next of kin from WWII and benefits you may not know about. You will want to send for the basic ones right away.

The main records you want are: the **VA Claim file**; the **Official Military Personnel File (OMPF)** the **Individual Deceased Personnel file (IDPF)**, records from the overseas burial by the **American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC)** and the **World War II Army Enlistment Records**. There are many more records and benefits that you are entitled to which are published for members on the AWON website, awon.org and in *The Star*. Although out of print, the book *Touchstones; A Guide to Records, Rights and Resources for Families of American World War II Casualties* by Ann Bennett Mix can be found on Amazon and other places on the Internet.

The first thing you need to get records is the Service Number. This is not the Social Security Number. You can ask AWON to research this for you if you don't have it. Email awon.org

If buried overseas or missing you can start your research and get the Service Number at:

I. AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENT COMMISSION

A quick phone call or visit to their website will give you the SN and other information: 703) 696-6900 <https://www.abmc.gov/database-search> They have no information on those who are buried at home. If traveling overseas to visit your father's grave you are entitled to a free passport. To obtain this, ask for a letter from the ABMC.

If not buried overseas you can find the SN on line in the

II. WORLD WAR II ARMY ENLISTMENT RECORDS

National Archives at College Park

8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD, 20740-6001.

PHONE: 301-837-0470; FAX: 301-837-3681

OR

National Archives website Access to Archival Databases (AAD)

www.aad.archives.gov/aad/index

This record gives SN, State, County, Place of enlistment, Date of enlistment, date of birth and more

Once you have the Service Number you can request:

III. OFFICIAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FILES (OMPF)

You will need a form *S180*. Be sure to mention your relationship to the person who died and that you are requesting the records under the Freedom of Information Act. Also say you want a copy of every item in the file also known as the "Jacket". (You cannot request records by phone.)

Download the form at:

<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html>

continued next page →

Mail a letter or *Standard Form 180 (SF 180)*, *Request Pertaining to Military Records* to:

National Personnel Records Center

1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO 63138

Fax a letter or *Standard Form 180* to: 314-801-9195

The Center will respond in writing by U.S. Mail.

In an effort to expand access to and ensure the preservation of the records, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) together with the Department of Defense (DOD) developed a schedule, signed July 8, 2004, making the Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF) permanent records of the United States. This schedule mandates the legal transfer of these files from DOD ownership to NARA ownership 62 years after the service member's separation from the military.

The opening of these records is part of the ongoing transfer of all OMPFs from the ownership of the military services to the legal custody of NARA. Separation from service is defined as discharge, retirement or death in service based on a rolling date. For example, if today's date is January 1, 2019, then the discharge, retirement or date of death must be January 1, 1957 or before for the record to be considered archival. Archival records are no longer the property of the agencies that created them, in this case the Military Service Departments, but are records of the National Archives, open to the general public

Based on a rolling date of 62 years, all military personnel records will eventually become archival records, open to the general public. Records with a discharge date of 1957 or prior are archival and are open to the public.

IV. MORTUARY AFFAIRS RECORDS, INDIVIDUAL DECEASED PERSONNEL FILE (IDPF.)

This is a separate record from the Deceased's Personnel Jacket and includes different information. These records were created by the Mortuary Services, which dealt with a war casualty's body and sending personal effects to the next of kin. Be prepared as they can be very graphic but are especially useful if the personnel records were burned. If no body was recovered, there will be a report of the investigation.

continued next page →

AWON Wishes To Thank Our New and Renewing Members from April, May, June

Barry Barr	Eugene Fromm	Robt. Wasmer	Jerome Lederer
Robert Meek	Judi Kramer	Judith Markland	Diana Vuillemin
Madeline Teremy	Lawrence Dexter	Norma Brubaker	Judy Gamble
Phyllis Fish	Catherine Miedema	Linda Chauvin	Apryl Graham
Norma Hamilton	James Boese	Judy Basjak	Diane Wood
Linda Dolmer	Diane Richardson	Millie Cavanaugh	Catherine Light
August Alegi	Dale Moyer	Barbara Kelly	Dawn Martin
Theresa Cook	James Barnes	Carla Sue Holcomb	Sherry Haxby
Kristin Holmes	Don Perillo	Richard Davis	Naomi Rauff
Angela Christian	Sandra Brown	Peggy Lockwood	Ron Burrus
Carol Le Bounty	Rosalie Francisco	Daniel Denning	Alice Irving
Theodore Krismann	MM Hansen	Judith Epsha	Doris Portley
Carol Brooks	Donna Hurt	Everett Roberts	Laura Sims
Marg Fenstermacher	Karl Rosazza	Diane Sagen	Bonnie Dale Johason
Ellen Houx	Lois Ciccone	Nancy Maxwell	Penny Ann Dale
Marilyn Jensen	Suzanne Parker	Kathleen Anderson	Pinkerton Bernstein
Julie Jones	Sharon Sullivan	Shirley Santini	
Wm. McElvain	WH Rogers	Elda Hoffer	
Eric Rosen	Martha Lapore	Carol Ann Verbeek	Welcome New
Jennie Sauer	Margaret Malone	Lois Wohlers	AWON Members!
Maxine Stanley	Louis Kunz	Nancy Thaut	Heather McCleary
Wm. Wilson	Frances B. Randall	Geri Demicco	James Barr-Finch
Diana Clark	Janice McPherson	Vivian Malizia	Brendan Barr
Thomas Wiedmeyer	Felicity Hallanann	Paula Baker	Doris Chalmers

All the mortuary records for World War II are being scanned and moved from the National Archives in Suitland, MD to the National Archives in St Louis, MO. This is ongoing so your record may be at either place. If you request a file it may take a while to get it depending on what stage of the process it is in.

The records are currently "under the control" of the HRC, FOIA office and require you asking for copies under the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA. The file will not be redacted except for new information, possibly another request with a name and address.

First you must fill out a *SF180* with all the information you have. This can be downloaded and printed. If you are emailing a request you can add to an email as attachment.

<https://www.archives.gov/files/sf180-request-pertaining-to-military-records-exp-april2018-1.pdf>

You may not be able to supply all the information but by now you should have the name and service number from writing to the VA, or asking the AWON database manager for help at awon@awon.org.

Be sure to mention your relationship to the person who died and that you are requesting the records under the Freedom of Information Act. Also say you want a copy of every item in the file. (You cannot request records by phone.)

US Army HRC, Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Center

Attn: Public Affairs (FOIA)

1600 Spearhead Division Avenue

Fort Knox, KY 40122 Y 40122-5405

Or you can Email: foia.hrc@conus.army.mil

Human Resources Command (HRC) administers the individual deceased personnel files (IDPFs) for all U.S. World War II dead, regardless of the branch of service in which the deceased was serving at the time of death.

V. For MIAS

HRC is also in charge of the records for the MIAs. The term MIA is no longer used. They are now called the "Unaccounted For." HRC is going through these files and compiling a summary about each person and what happened. Remains are still being found and these records are being updated. If you would like to see if a new summary has been added to your persons file you can contact the HRC.

To email a request or ask for information on an "Unaccounted For" you can email:

Greg Gardner, currently officer in charge. army.hrc.pastconflicts@mail.mil

Emailing may be the fastest way to get an answer.

Or you can call (800) 892-2490 (This is the team line and during normal business hours someone should pick up and get you to the right person)

Or write to:

U.S. ARMY HUMAN RESOURCES COMMAND

ATTN: CMAOD/PCRB

1600 SPEARHEAD DIVISION AVENUE DEPT #450

FORT KNOX, KY 40122-5405

VI. VA CLAIM FILE

This updates the method of getting these files as of May 2019. According to the VA they are now digitalized. Documents in this file will include the serviceman's serial number and possibly social security number. The file is very helpful and will also contain the names of the designated next of kin and possibly marriage and birth records, changes of address of beneficiaries and amounts received. If someone, i.e. the widow, is still receiving benefits you may have to get her permission to get the Claim File: To obtain this file, write a letter with your name, relationship to the serviceman and to the person who was receiving the benefits. Ask for a full copy of the Claim File and say it is RETIRED and why you want the file. You may even want to include you birth certificate. They will determine if you are eligible to receive the file and send a disk to you address. Put you name and address in the body of the letter. Mail to:

Department of the Veterans Affairs

Evidence Intake Center

PO Box 4444

Janesville, WI 53547-4444

Or FAX to 1 844 531-7818 Attn. Intake Center

continued next page →

VII. NEXT-OF-KIN MEDAL REQUESTS

You can get another copy of all your father's medals!

Write to:

National Personnel Records Center

1 Archives Drive

St. Louis, MO 63138

Give them the date of death,

Army, Navy, and Marine Corps Air Force and Coast Guard

Give your relationship

VIII. GOLD STAR LAPEL BUTTON

You are entitled to have and wear the Gold Star Lapel Button.

Who receives the Gold Star Lapel Button? (AR 600-8-1, I-1d)

A6. One Gold Star Lapel Button will be furnished without cost to the widow or widower, to each of the parents, each child, stepchild, child through adoption, brother, half-brother, sister, and half-sister of a member of the armed forces who lost his or her life while in the active military service during the periods indicated in AR 600-8-1, I-1d. The term "widow or widower" includes those who have since married, and the term "parents" includes mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, mother through adoption, father through adoption, and foster parents who stood in loco parentis.

Requests are accepted at NO COST.

A Gold Star for AWON

by Kristin Holmes

When a member of the military is lost, most Americans picture a widow or a grieving mother. But the void left behind every casualty is infinitely greater. Every life touched so many others and every loss echoes through the generations.

Until recently there's been little recognition of the loved ones of those who died in service of their country. The siblings, grandchildren, extended family, and especially the children of our fallen troops have sadly never gotten the recognition that they deserve, have never received an adequate thank you from our nation for their sacrifice.

One Marine is working to change that - Hershel "Woody" Williams, one of America's last surviving WWII Medal of Honor recipients, and a true living legend. Through his charity, the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation, Woody Williams has dedicated the remainder of his life fighting to honor those left behind - the Gold Star Families.

The Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation is dedicated to, as Williams says, "the idea of bringing recognition to a tremendous number of people who have never been recognized." That not a single memorial existed to pay tribute those who gave not their life for their country, but their love, losing a beloved family member - a brother, a cousin, a father - that didn't sit right with Woody.

In addition to creating a scholarship program for Gold Star Children and raising awareness of the families that our fallen troops leave behind, the HWWMOHF is building not just one memorial, but dozens nationwide, not only to honor the troops we lost, but in gratitude to their families.

The Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Project seeks to place at least one memorial in all 50 states, to publicly acknowledge America's Gold Star Families who may sometimes feel that their sacrifice has been forgotten in the victory. 47 monuments have been erected to date and 57 more are underway. There is a Gold Star Family Memorial Monument standing or being built in 41 states at present and Woody Williams plans to attend the dedication of every single one personally for as long as he is able.

AWON is honored to be involved with recent efforts to erect a Gold Star Family Memorial Monument in San Diego, CA. AWON and the Hershel Woody Williams Medal of Honor Foundation are proud to be working together to bring much deserved recognition to the children of fallen heroes.

Do you want to learn more about this great cause? Please visit <http://hwwmohf.org> for more information about the Gold Star Family Memorial Monument Project, to see some photos of these beautiful monuments, and to find the location of a monument near you.



The US Army Returns to Classic Retro Uniform

In an effort to aid recruitment and boost morale, the United States Army recently announced a return to a time-honored look - the pinks and greens.

Officially called the "Army Greens", the new uniform features an olive drab wool blend topcoat over lighter tan slacks and dress shirts with a slight pinkish hue.

AWON members with grandchildren or great-grandchildren in the military will be pleased to see the heroes of today clad in the same stylish fashion as the heroes of the past.

The current uniform, the "Army Blues", will be used for formal dress occasions while the new "Army Greens" will become the everyday business uniforms for all soldiers. The new uniforms are also higher quality and are expected to provide greater durability and longer service life.

The new uniforms will be issued beginning in 2020 and will be fully phased in by 2028. *Photo courtesy of US Army*

Call For Tributes!

Add a tribute to the AWON Website! This could be one of the most long-lasting and satisfying ways to remember your father, grandfather, brother, or uncle. Just be a current AWON member!

Here's how: 1) Have a look at our tribute section at www.awon.org (click "Our Fathers") to see what others have done. 2) Check out "How to Prepare a Father Tribute". (www.awon.org/check5.html) 3) Scan (or have a copy shop such as Kinko's scan) your best pic of your loved one in uniform into a JPG format. 4) Collect your thoughts, memories, and your loved one's service record into 500-1000 words. 5) Send your JPG image and your written tribute to our Tribute Stager, Nancy Sue Johnson at janceysue@gmail.com. Or, for her mailing address please call Nancy Sue at 406-529-2315.

Don't let another day go by...AWON is honored to help you honor your father or loved one. A Tribute Page in their memory is yours for the asking.



S/SGT George J. LeComte



The Star Guidelines for Submitting Material

Topics considered for publication include but are not limited to: unit reunions, visiting battle or crash sites, cemeteries, ceremonies, family histories, seeking and finding families and veterans, poetry, etc.

The Star is here to serve AWON.

We want to tell your story.

We accept submissions both electronically and via US mail. If you have an article or picture and aren't sure how to submit it, that's ok. Message *The Star* editor and we will work with you. Photos returned upon request.

Please keep text reasonable in length - 500-1000 words or one page is a good guideline.

Preference is given to material written by, for, and about AWON members and families.

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

Kristin Holmes, Editor
PO Box 242, Creston WA
99117 (509) 279-5241
atomicagebrush@gmail.com

The 2019 AWON Annual Business Meeting is scheduled for:
September 21, 2019

This will be a GoToMeeting Video Teleconference.

www.gotomeeting.com

Membership is invited to attend!

AWON News The Star Readers Can Use

You can help AWON save a little money! As the price of postage has increased, it costs a significant amount to mail a paper version of *The Star* to members. It would be very helpful for all members with computers to switch over to the e-version of *The Star*, preferably by January of 2020. And if you find reading on computers or tablets to be difficult, *The Star* staff is working to make the layout easier to read on electronic devices. If you'd like to change formats and save AWON some money, we need your valid email address (send to awon@awon.org or drop us a line at AWON HQ, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216) by October 2019 to ensure uninterrupted delivery of *The Star*.

Did you know AWON has a Facebook group? We do, but first, what IS a Facebook group, anyway? It's just a fun (and private) way to keep in touch on Facebook with lots of friends all at once - like AWON's listserve, only with the ability to post pictures and share articles with one another. To join, please search for AWON on Facebook and send a request to join. We'll add you right away! Please keep in mind that since our AWON group is for honoring our fathers and all veterans, and discussing our lives and our shared experiences as war orphans, posting religious and political subject matter isn't allowed.

If you are a Local Regional Coordinator, please get in contact with Barry Barr-Finch at barrfinch1@gmail.com if you haven't already.

Even if you'd prefer not to continue in your role as Local Regional Coordinator, we'd like to touch base with you before you move on. AWON relies on our Local Regional Coordinators to act as a direct link between AWON leadership, volunteers, and members, and to update us when we need to update contact information in the database. Thank you!

AWON Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Paul Bremer 6-30-19

General Fund - \$15,747.52

Bookstore Account - \$640.02

Money Market Savings - \$47,818.14

If you plan to attend the video teleconference please send a note to:

AWON HQ
5745 Lee Road,
Indianapolis, IN 46216

Or email us at awon@awon.org

The Star has a new editor--

Kristin Holmes, daughter of AWON secretary Lorin McCleary and granddaughter of 2LT Lorin D. McCleary Jr, KIA May 11, 1944.

If you have pictures, stories, poems, thoughts, questions, concerns, please send them to Kristin via email at atomicagebrush@gmail.com or send to PO Box 242, Creston, WA 99117. Pictures returned upon request.

Minutes AWON 2018 Board of Directors (BOD) Tele-Meeting 12-2-18

Minutes on website: Rik Peirson (RP) requested that complete copies of the minutes be posted on the .org website.

President's Remarks: Walt Linne (WL) mentioned the passing of Lynne LeCronne and several ways were discussed to honor her.

Membership: The BOD reviewed a list of 25 items of importance, and discussed how best to prioritize them. Suggestions were made to prioritize membership forms, membership fees, and membership cards. Changes in pricing for family memberships to \$10 was suggested. However, no changes in dues or structure were adopted at this time.

Treasurer's Report: Paul Brewer (PB) gave a financial report noting \$29k in expenditures and 16,609 in income through 11-23-18.

Facebook: Barry Barr-Finch (BF) reported 292 members on the FB group.

Database: Lorin McCleary (LM) reports the database operational on new server, which will reduce the annual cost. LM suggests we list both new and renewing members in *The Star*, this motion was voted on and approved.

Website Consolidation: RP updated on the status of the website consolidation. The need for ePay on the AWON website was also discussed.

Voice Survey: RP reports 12 responses were received and tabulated. The deadline was extended to 1-15-19 to allow more responses.

Budget: PB reported Jerry Pinkerton sent a financial report thru 11-13-18, and financial records to the Indianapolis Office Key Bank. Once info to the end of the year is received a budget can be developed. PB and LM discussed creation of an audit program to track expected revenue from membership forms vs. money received and deposited.

Wreath Program: Gloria Layne (GL) wrote to Sharon Conner to get a list of wreath coordinators and see if there are vacancies that require filling. RP and Jean Rhinehart (JR) were voted in as coordinators for the AWON Overseas Cemetery Wreath Program. GL suggests AWON become more active in the Wreaths Across America Program. LM suggests regional members get involved in US National Cemetery wreathlayings.

Minutes AWON 2018 Board of Directors (BOD) 1-20-19

Special Teleconference to discuss *The Star* Newsletter

First Inquiries: The BOD discussed how to handle first inquiries. Ann Mix unable to continue in this role. It was suggested Janice Buterbaugh may be willing to take on the task and JR planned to get in touch with her.

The Star Editor: With the resignation of *The Star's* editor, several options were laid upon the table as to how to proceed. GL suggested putting a "help wanted" ad in *The Star*. It was agreed to hire the former editor to do the April issue and she will be paid to do so. WL needs to get a price quote from the American Legion for printing and mailing.

E-Star: WL mentioned the importance of encouraging members to switch to the e-version of *The Star*. LM suggested reduced pricing for *The e-Star*.

Father/child photos: Patricia Gaffney-Ansel told WL that someone needs

to contact Ann Marsh at Florida State University to see if AWON can be given a copy of the father/child photos.

White House Contact: WL suggested contacting Marilyn Lieurance to see if she will continue on as White House Liaison.

Minutes AWON 2018 Board of Directors (BOD) Tele-Meeting 1-27-19

President's Report: WL received a preliminary quote from the American Legion regarding price for printing and mailing *The Star*.

Father/Child Photos: The BOD discussed how to get access to the photos at Florida State University. Judi Kramer (JK) expressed concern that Patricia Gaffney-Ansel may have copyrighted the photos when they were not hers to do so and wondered what FSU planned to do with them.

Star Production: Former editor of *The Star* will produce April edition, but not July. AWON must begin search for new editor. Discussion was had regarding who was responsible for the task and the technical requirements needed for the job.

Budget: PB sent a copy of the budget to all BOD but understands not all may be able to access it without the appropriate software and provided a web address where those without Excel may view the budget. Operating income will be similar to 2018. Costs of the Gala and web hosting were discussed.

Voice Survey: RP reports 30 surveys returned. The results of the surveys should be summarized and action taken to address member concerns.

Database: LM reports the number of active members has grown from 360 members to 440. Barbara Kelly has been trained for database entry and accounting for new members and renewals. Ann Mix is unable to continue as New Inquiry Coordinator and replacements were discussed. It was suggested to review the information being sent out to first inquirers to improve converting inquiries into members.

Archives: There is a need for an archivist to take over the archives.

Website Report: RP has redesigned father tributes and hopes to upgrade them to improve them.

AWON Director Email Addresses

Barry Barr-Finch	barrfinch1@gmail.com
Paul Bremer	bremergolf@aol.com
Judi Kramer	ladybug5@juno.com
Gloria Layne	glayne731@gmail.com
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Minutes AWON BOD Tele-Meeting March 17, 2019

President's Report: WL continues trying to get in contact with the WWII Museum.

Treasurer's Report: Current balance \$47,795 in Money Market, \$15,122 in General Fund, \$593 in Bookstore Acct., and \$215 in Conference Acct.

Wreaths: Wreath/Banner Names: GL moved to have father's names on Memorial Day Wreath Banners. A vote was taken and the motion passed 5 Y, 2 N. Motion carried.

Wreaths Across America: GL continues to work on the Wreaths Across America project. Sandra Walker will help with this.

Dues Structure: A motion was made by GL to set annual dues at \$25 for orphan members and \$10 for family members. LM suggested that the \$10 apply only to those family members receiving the E-Star. This motion was amended to allow family members to purchase a discounted membership with E-Star. The motion passed, 7 Y, 1 N. Motion carried.

Membership: The Membership Committee will set a date for their next meeting by teleconference.

Archives: The need for an archivist to digitize all AWON archive materials before turning them over to another organization for preservation was discussed. An article calling for volunteers will be run in Issue 92 of the Star.

Newsletter: Issue 92 of The Star will include an ad for a Star Editor. The discussion regarding the Star was tabled for the next meeting.

Grants: Getting a grant writer to write grants for AWON was discussed, and it was decided to talk to Sam Tannenbaum about this. Motion carried.

Website: RP continues working on an updated AWON website. What to do with already existing websites owned by AWON was discussed.

First Inquiry Coordinator: Janice Buterbaugh will be assuming duties as First Inquiry Coordinator as health allows.

Purple Heart: WL has met with the American Legion regarding having two Purple Heart awards, one for death in combat, another for wounding.

Budget: Due to several BOD members not having seen the budget prior to the meeting, discussion on the budget was tabled till the next meeting.

Minutes March 31 2019 AWON Executive Committee Teleconference Overseas Wreath Procedures

Present at this meeting were LM, PB, WL, GL. Since much discussion was had, in the interest of space this will be a brief summary of the discussion without attribution.

At the time of the transfer of funds to the current BOD the Wreath Fund is held in the General Fund and the Money Market Account. It was stated that there are 15 overseas cemeteries for which AWON purchases wreaths and the cemetery coordinators have a limit of \$200 for wreath purchases (this may be raised to \$225 or \$250). The purpose of the designated wreath fund is to reimburse the cemetery coordinators for the cost of the wreath and for the production and shipping of banners.

When members renew, many also add a donation for wreaths at that time. While cemetery coordinators are encouraged to fundraise, some find this difficult, and so the Wreath Committee should spearhead the fundraising efforts. Members should understand their money will go into the wreath fund generally, but effort is made to be sure members' donations go to the specific cemetery where the donator's father is buried. When there is excess money donated for any given cemetery above the \$200 limit required to purchase a wreath, it is used to fund other cemeteries' wreaths should any cemetery not receive adequate donations to cover them.

Every AWON member, present and past, who has a father in an overseas cemetery will have their father's name listed on a banner regardless of whether they have donated. General fund money does not go to fund overseas wreaths because not all members' fathers are buried at those overseas cemeteries. It was mentioned that a separate wreath fund is not necessary because while wreath donations are kept in the General Fund, they are held separate and not used for general AWON business.

LM believes a clear procedure on wreaths is needed and will draft one, but needs feedback from the Wreath Committee.

Minutes AWON BOD Tele-meeting 4-14-19

Treasurer's Report: PB reported that the Wreath Fund donations are held in the General Fund account but are accounted for separately. PB will provide the amount of monies in each account, expenses paid out, and current balances at every meeting. From 1-1-19 to 3-19-19 AWON had operating income of \$4191 and expenses were \$1544.

Membership Report: Lapsed memberships were discussed along with potential strategies to encourage renewals.

2020 National Conference: The upcoming 2020 National Conference will be held May 11-15, 2020, in New Orleans. This should be mentioned in the Summer Star to get a feel for how many people will be attending.

Wreath Fund and guidelines: LM has written a draft of guidelines for the Wreath Fund. He will need input from the Wreath Committee and Cemetery Coordinators.

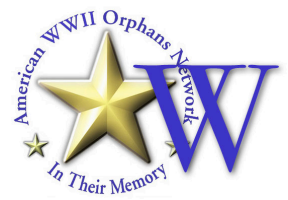
Father/Child Photos: Contact will be made with Patricia Gaffney to clarify the copyright issues.

Gala Budget: The DC Gala receipts were about \$1700 short of covering expenses. The previous BOD had to take money from the General Fund to cover the deficit.

Star Newsletter: An editor needs to be named by May 1. Discussion was had regarding potential articles for The Star and also increasing connectivity online.

This is a condensed version of the minutes received by The Star staff as of 6-30-19. For complete versions of the minutes visit www.awon.org

American WWII Orphans Network Application, Renewal, & Registration Form



Join or Register

- ☐ I would like to become a member
☐ A family member would like to join
☐ Register my father only
☐ Renew my membership

Membership Categories

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 WWII is eligible to join as an **Orphan** Member. Any direct relative of that person may join as a **Family** Member. Other individuals with an interest in WWII who wish to support and participate in outreach activities and programs are encouraged to join as **Supporting** members. Check your membership category.

Orphan ☐ **Family** ☐ **Supporting** ☐

Dues and Donation Options

Dues are for a 1, 2, or 3 year period which begins when we receive your check. Dues for each membership category includes your choice of the electronic or print version of our quarterly publication, *The Star*. Dues for **Family** members who opt to receive the *Star* via electronic delivery are \$10 per year. Sponsor & Gold Star memberships also available.

<i>(circle your choice)</i>	1year	2year	3year
Orphan	\$25	\$48	\$70
Supporting	\$25	\$48	\$70
Sponsor	\$50	\$96	\$140
Gold Star	\$100	\$192	\$280
<i>(please circle Star format choice)</i>	Email	Print	
Family - Print Star	\$25	\$48	\$70
Family - Email Star	\$10	\$20	\$30

Total Dues

Please consider a **donation***

AWON Memorial Day Wreath Fund

AWON Operations and Outreach

Total Enclosed

+ _____
+ _____
= _____

AWON Treasurer
5745 Lee Rd
Indianapolis, IN 44216

Please make your check payable to AWON and mail this form and your check to:



About you or a family member:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

renewing members may skip to dues options

RELATIONSHIP TO SERVICEMAN _____ YOUR D.O.B. _____

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT AWON _____

Information about your WWII Serviceman:

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

NAME _____
LAST FIRST M.I.

BIRTH DATE _____ DATE OF DEATH _____

PLACE OF BIRTH _____

WHERE BURIED _____

MILITARY UNIT _____

SERVICE NUMBER _____

HOMETOWN AND STATE _____

WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME _____

ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT SERVICEMAN'S DEATH OR SERVICE (Rank, Medals, Etc. Use additional sheet, if necessary.)

*AWON is a humanitarian, non-profit, non-political, public service organization under Section 501(c)3 of the US Federal Tax Code (EINB #91-1538912). Membership is not required to register in our database.

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The Star

"Breaking Down the Wall of Silence"

AWON Headquarters
5745 Lee Road
Indianapolis, IN 46216
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.

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