

# ★ ★ NATIONAL ★ ★ WWII MEMORIAL

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 2

• A NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL SOCIETY

• FALL 2003

## Message From the National Chairman



*Senator Bob Dole*

**S**ix months and counting — that's all the time remaining before we dedicate the long-awaited National World War II Memorial.

As you can see from the photo below, the memorial is coming along nicely. The pavilions and pillars are in place and inscriptions are being carved into the granite walls. Soon, the bronze sculpture artwork will be in place. Construction should be completed on schedule in March.

We expect the memorial to open to the public in April, a couple of months before our formal dedication celebration over Memorial Day weekend next year.

With four days of activities planned for the official May 27-30 celebration, and a summer of special programs and exhibits planned in Washington, there will be much for members of the World War II generation and their families to enjoy and reminisce over.

I encourage you to read the information in this newsletter carefully. We have included details on the main events, and instructions on how to obtain tickets for the dedication ceremony and entertainment salute to WWII veterans.

Members of the WWII generation will have priority, but seating in these two event venues is limited so the sooner you get your orders in the better chance you have of getting a seat.

For those of you who can't come to the National Mall next May, we are working to make the ceremonies available for viewing in your homes and communities. We want this to be a national celebration of the memorial and the sacrifice and achievement it commemorates.

We cannot thank you enough for all that you have done to get us to this point. To my WWII comrades I say, hang in there, it's almost here.

God bless you, and God bless America.



*The completed south pavilion and pillars sweep toward the Washington Monument.  
Photo by Richard Latoff.*

## PIGGYBACK HERO *by Ralph Kinney Bennett*

*From May 1942 to July 1945, the Eighth Air Force planned and executed America's daylight strategic bombing campaign, and in doing so compiled an impressive record that carried a high price. The Eighth suffered 40 percent of the Army Air Force's casualties (47,483 out of 115,332), including more than 26,000 dead. The following article, excerpted here courtesy of TechCentralStation, describes the remarkable experience of one B-17 pilot and his crew.*

**T**hey laid the remains of Glenn Rojohn to rest in the Peace Lutheran Cemetery in the little town of Greenock, Pa., just southeast of Pittsburgh. He was 81, and had been in the air conditioning and plumbing business in nearby McKeesport. If you had seen him on the street he would probably have looked to you like so many other graying, bespectacled old World War II veterans whose names appear so often now on obituary pages.

But like so many of them, though he seldom talked about it, he could have told you one hell of a story. He won the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Purple Heart all in one fell swoop in the skies over Germany on Dec. 31, 1944.

Fell swoop indeed.

Capt. Glenn Rojohn, of the 8th Air Force's 100th Bomb Group, was flying his B-17G Flying Fortress bomber on a raid over Hamburg. His formation had braved heavy flak to drop their bombs, then turned 180 degrees to head out over the North Sea.

They had finally turned northwest, headed back to England,



*Capt. Glenn Rojohn (left) and Lt. William Leek in 1943. Photo courtesy of the Rojohn family.*

when they were jumped by German fighters at 22,000 feet. The Messerschmitt Me-109s pressed their attack so closely that Capt. Rojohn could see the faces of the German pilots.

He and other pilots fought to remain in formation so they could use each other's guns to defend the group. Rojohn saw a B-17 ahead of him burst into flames and slide sickeningly toward the earth. He gunned his ship forward to fill in the gap.

He felt a huge impact. The big bomber shuddered, felt suddenly very heavy and began losing altitude. A B-17 below him, piloted by Lt. William G. McNab, had slammed the top of its fuselage into

the bottom of Rojohn's. The top turret gun of McNab's plane was now locked in the belly of Rojohn's plane and the ball turret in the belly of Rojohn's had smashed through the top of McNab's.

The two bombers were almost perfectly aligned—the tail of the lower plane was slightly to the left of Rojohn's tailpiece. They were stuck together, as a crewman later recalled, "like mating dragon flies."

No one will ever know exactly how it happened. Perhaps both pilots had moved instinctively to fill the same gap in formation. Perhaps McNab's plane had hit an air pocket.

Three of the engines on the bottom plane were still running, as were all four of Rojohn's. The fourth engine on the lower bomber was on fire and the flames were spreading to the rest of the aircraft. The two were losing altitude quickly. Rojohn tried several times to gun his engines and break free of the other plane. The two were inextricably locked together. Fearing a fire, Rojohn cut his engines and rang the bailout bell. If his crew had any chance of parachuting, he had to keep the plane under control somehow.

Capt. Rojohn and his co-pilot, 2nd Lt. William G. Leek, Jr., propped their feet against the instrument panel so they could pull back on their controls with all their strength, trying to prevent their plane from going into a spinning dive that would prevent the crew from jumping out.

Capt. Rojohn motioned left and the two managed to wheel the

*See [Piggyback Hero](#), p.9*



# TRIBUTE TO A GENERATION

## DEDICATION CELEBRATION ★ MAY 27-30, 2004

### Event Planning Continues

The four-day *Tribute to a Generation* dedication celebration planned by the American Battle Monuments Commission continues to take shape. The calendar of events, highlighted by the memorial's formal dedication ceremony on Saturday, May 29, will run over Memorial Day weekend 2004 from May 27 through May 30.

Events will celebrate the memorial and its placement on the National Mall. They will also pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of America's World War II generation, many of whom are now making plans to be in Washington to see their memorial dedicated.

The *Tribute to a Generation* will appeal to a wide variety of interests, with the WWII generation being the central focus for each. Activities include wartime reminiscences, reunions, big band and swing music, WWII memorabilia and equipment displays, a religious service, military ceremonial units, and educational opportunities for all ages.

### Dedication

The memorial will be dedicated on Saturday afternoon, May 29, at 2 p.m. Gates will open at 11 a.m.

Two hours of lively pre-ceremony entertainment beginning at noon will take attendees back to the wartime era through music, video images, newsreel clips, and reminiscences of the time. Big band and swing music will be highlighted along with a patriotic finale. Musical groups from the armed forces will entertain.

The dignified dedication that follows will recognize the important addition of the memorial to the National Mall and pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of the WWII generation. President Bush has been invited to receive the memorial on behalf of the nation. Other dignitaries, including our memorial campaign national chairman, former Senator Bob Dole, will participate in the ceremony.

There is strong, nationwide interest in attending the dedication ceremony, particularly by members of the WWII generation. We expect tens of thousands of those who lived and served during the war to attend with their family members. A ticketing system will be used to give priority to members of the WWII generation and to provide as much seating as possible for those whom the memorial honors (see page 4).

An order form for tickets is enclosed.

### WWII Reunion

A National World War II Reunion will be produced by the Smithsonian Institution in partnership with ABMC. This open-air, tented activity will be open daily, Thursday through Sunday, May 27-30, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

A central area where all members of the WWII generation can gather and reunite is planned. Visitors will be able to listen to oral histories and learn how they are developed. There will be historical and cultural activities for children, and WWII equipment will be on display. Throughout the four days, there will be performances of 1940's music and entertainment.

The reunion will be staged on

*See Reunion, p.5*



*The memorial as it will be seen from the west with the Washington Monument and Capitol in the background. Rendering by Joe McKendry.*

## Order Your Event Tickets Now!

**T**ickets for the “Tribute to a Generation” dedication celebrations may be ordered *now* using the enclosed order form.

Tickets are required for the official Dedication Ceremony on Saturday, May 29th, 2004, and for performances of the Salute to WWII Veterans at the MCI Center on Friday and Saturday, May 28th and 29th.

Tickets are free of charge, but will be distributed on a ***first come - first served basis***. We expect ticket demand to exceed available seating.

***If you and your family want to attend these historic events, it is important that you request tickets immediately.***

Please carefully review the enclosed order form and order your tickets by:

- Mailing the enclosed order form to the address on the form; or
- Registering online at [www.wwii-memorial.com](http://www.wwii-memorial.com).

*memorial.com.*

We hope to accommodate all who want to attend the ceremony and salute, but ***WWII generation members will be given priority*** so that as many of them as possible may attend these events held in their honor. We will have designated seating for individuals using wheelchairs.

### Dedication Ceremony

Three primary seating areas on the National Mall will be ticketed, only one of which has a view of the main stage. Attendees in the other two seating areas will view the ceremony on large outdoor screens.

Up to three tickets for seating in the area of the main stage may be ordered for each WWII generation member: one for the WWII honoree and two guests. Additional guest tickets may be requested, but these guests will be seated where space is available.

We recognize the inconvenience

of splitting families. Our priority, however, is to honor the WWII generation by placing as many of them as possible in the area of the main stage. Families of four or more may choose to be seated together, but we cannot guarantee the seats will be in the area of the main stage.

Ticket orders that do not include a WWII honoree will be fulfilled where space is available.

### Salute to WWII Veterans

Please indicate on the order form which guests want to attend the Salute to WWII Veterans. There are three performances. Be sure to specify which performance you wish to see.

Remember, all ticket assignments will be made on a first come – first served basis. A confirmation of your ticket allocation will be sent by mail or e-mail.

Please review the enclosed order form carefully, discuss your plans with your family, and place your orders now!

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## Washington, D.C. and Capital Region To Honor the Greatest Generation

**A**s the countdown continues to the much-anticipated and long-overdue dedication of the World War II Memorial, Washington, D.C. and the Capital Region’s hospitality and cultural communities are preparing to roll out the red carpet to honor the Greatest Generation.

A cultural celebration entitled “America Celebrates the Greatest Generation” will take place throughout the summer of 2004, launching over Memorial Day weekend and continuing through Labor Day.

Produced by The American Experience Foundation and organized by the Washington, D.C. Convention & Tourism Corporation (WCTC), Cultural Tourism D.C., and regional cultural institutions and destination marketing organizations, the celebration is designed to honor the military and home front contributions of the generation.

“America Celebrates the Greatest Generation” will include dozens of themed exhibits, walking tours, performances, programs, restaurant experiences and hotel packages. Some institutions planning exciting programming include the National Museum of American History, the U.S. Holocaust Museum, the National Museum of

Health and Medicine, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

For more information about the regional celebration plans, visit the WCTC web site at [www.washington.org](http://www.washington.org) or call toll free to 1-800-422-8644, ext. 1945.



*Norman Rockwell's The Four Freedoms will be on view at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. © Norman Rockwell Family Agency. Photo courtesy of the Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge.*



Washington National Cathedral

### **Reunion**, continued from p.3

the National Mall from 3rd to 7th Street, NW, between the Smithsonian's Air & Space Museum and the National Gallery of Art.

### **Salute to WWII Veterans**

The armed forces ceremonial and musical units stationed in Washington, D.C. will stage an entertainment salute to all WWII veterans. This narrative and musical tribute will be performed by talented members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard.

Be prepared to experience again scenes of service and sacrifice of the men and women who preserved freedom during the war, along with stirring music and military precision.

The two-hour performances will be held at the MCI Center, a

large indoor arena in downtown Washington, D.C. Tickets are available for three shows: Friday, May 28, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., and Saturday, May 29, at 7 p.m. The MCI Center is accessible via Metro, and is surrounded by a variety of dining establishments.

Tickets to the performances may be requested on the enclosed order form.

### **Memorial Service**

An interfaith service is scheduled for Saturday, May 29, at 10 a.m. at the Washington National Cathedral. This service will celebrate the dedication of the memorial and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II.

Military and civilian clergy, as well as WWII dignitaries, are expected to participate in the serv-

ice at the cathedral known as *A National House of Prayer for all People*.

Seating space in the cathedral is extremely limited, so attendance will be controlled. We are working to establish alternate sites in the Washington area at which the many who want to experience the memorial service can view a simulcast of the program.

### **Information Updates**

As we get closer to the dedication date, the latest information on the *Tribute to a Generation* dedication events will be posted on the memorial web site at [www.wwi-remember.com](http://www.wwi-remember.com) and available from our toll free number at 1-800-639-4992.

We continue to hear from memorial supporters who are making plans to attend the dedication events, particularly members of the WWII generation. Large crowds are expected, so all attending should be ready for long lines, unpredictable weather, and inconveniences that could arise. The ABMC staff is working to meet the special needs of our WWII generation guests.

Many members of the WWII generation will not be able to make the trip to Washington for the dedication. ABMC encourages organizations and communities to schedule local events and activities that pay tribute to the generation during the dedication celebration period, and include a simulcast viewing of the National Mall ceremonies.

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## **ACCESSIBILITY**

**W**ashington, D.C. is one of the most accessible cities in the world for persons with disabilities. When booking a hotel room, be specific when communicating

your special needs. The more information you provide, the better the hotel staff will be able to serve you.

ABMC has received guidance on special needs from Access Infor-

mation, Inc., an excellent source of disability-related information. They can be contacted by calling (301) 528-8664 or visiting their website at [www.disabilityguide.org](http://www.disabilityguide.org).

## Reunions and Tour Groups Growing

Since our last newsletter, we have been contacted by many reunion and tour groups planning trips to Washington, D.C. for the dedication celebrations.

If you haven't contacted us yet and you are a tour director planning a trip for members of the WWII generation; a WWII reunion group holding an annual conference during the dedication period; or considering contacting a company to organize a tour, there is important information you need to know to facilitate your planning.

Tour buses will not be allowed near the memorial site on Saturday, May 29, 2004. Because of limited space, traffic congestion, and the

volume of buses and large crowds expected, we will direct tour buses to one of several staging areas. Shuttle buses will run from the staging areas and downtown metro stations to the memorial site.

All tour and reunion organizers of groups of 25 or more should contact Betty Hemby as soon as possible via email to [hembyb@wwiimemorial.com](mailto:hembyb@wwiimemorial.com) or fax to 703-588-1560. She will provide a tour packet that contains information on Metro, traffic websites, brochures, motor coach parking, frequently asked questions, and other information to plan your group travel to Washington.

Once you review the packet materials, please complete the regis-

tration form and return it so bus staging assignments can be made and your group's ticket request can be processed. Tickets will be mailed to the group's main point of contact once we confirm the registration information.

Our objective is to help your group plan a smooth and memorable visit to Washington and the National WWII Memorial dedication.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## WWII Registry Up and Running

The WWII Registry is now accessible on the memorial web site at [www.wwiimemorial.com](http://www.wwiimemorial.com).

At a time when fewer than one in ten adults recognize that 16 million Americans served in uniform during the Second World War, the American Battle Monuments Commission encourages all members of the WWII generation to enroll in the Registry. Any American that served in the armed forces or contributed to the war effort on the home front, whether in factories and shipyards or farms and neighborhoods, is eligible.

There is no charge to place a name in the Registry. Individuals can be enrolled through the web site or by calling the memorial's toll free number at 1-800-639-4992. The Registry contains more than 1.3 million records, most submitted by the public. ABMC has been compiling names for several years, but

has only scratched the surface of the database potential.

The database also includes National Archives and Records Administration lists of those killed in service during the war, and names of those buried in ABMC WWII overseas cemeteries or listed on its Tablets of the Missing.

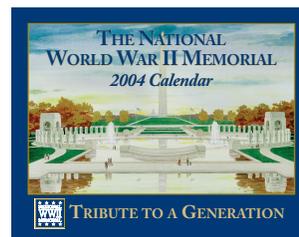
Of 1,002 U.S. adults responding to a phone survey last May, 22 percent believed that only 100,000 served in uniform during the war, 34 percent thought one million served, 14 percent thought 8 million served, just 8 percent correctly stated 16 million, and 22 percent didn't know.

If you haven't yet enrolled yourself or an eligible family member in the Registry, do so now. The Registry will be accessible from the memorial site on the National Mall when the memorial opens to the public.



### WWII Memorial Merchandise Online!

[www.wwiimemorial.com](http://www.wwiimemorial.com)



Go to the WWII Memorial Web site [www.wwiimemorial.com](http://www.wwiimemorial.com) and click the link to the Memorial E-Store!

- Great for gift ideas for active or retired military.



Questions? Contact Customer Service at **1-800-639-4992**

# Booking Hotels for the Dedication Weekend

The National Capital Region is comprised of the District of Columbia and several counties, or jurisdictions, outside the District. Each jurisdiction offers a wide variety of cultural, historical and recreational attractions—as well as fine hotels and restaurants.

Washington, D.C. is easily accessible from most jurisdictions via public transportation. To obtain a Visitors Guide with detailed information, contact any or all of the Visitors Bureaus listed below.

Hotels in the National Capital Region are rapidly filling for Dedication Weekend. To reserve a room:

- Contact your local travel agent.
- Phone the toll-free number of your favorite hotel chain.
- Check an on-line travel service.
- Check with organizations and associations of which you are a member to see if you are eligible for special hotel (and airline) rates.
- Identify an area and hotel you wish to stay in and phone the hotel directly. Be sure to tell the reservations operator that you are attending the memorial dedication and ask to receive any special

rate the hotel is offering. If you are a WWII generation member, senior discounts also may be available.

Depending on how you book your reservation, rates for the same hotel room may vary significantly. It is always best to check a few sources to secure the best rate. Be sure to get a confirmation number or ask that a written confirmation be mailed to you.

The following jurisdictions are looking forward to welcoming members of the World War II generation, their families and friends:

## Washington, D.C.

 [www.washington.org](http://www.washington.org)  
Washington D.C. Convention & Tourism Corporation  
1212 New York Avenue, NW, Suite #600  
Washington, DC 20005  
Toll Free: 800-422-8644, ext. 1945  
Phone: 202-789-7000

## Alexandria, Va.

 [www.funside.com](http://www.funside.com)  
Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association  
421 King Street, Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
Toll Free: 800-388-9119 • Phone: 703-838-4200

## Arlington County, Va.

 [www.stayarlington.com](http://www.stayarlington.com)  
Arlington Convention & Visitors Service  
1100 North Glebe Road, Suite 500  
Arlington, VA 22201  
Toll free: 800-677-6267 • Phone: 703-228-5720

## Fairfax County, Va.

 [www.visitfairfax.org](http://www.visitfairfax.org)  
Fairfax County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
8300 Boone Blvd., Suite 450  
Vienna, VA 22182  
Toll Free: 800-732-4732 • Phone: 703-790-3329

## Frederick County, Md.

 [www.fredericktourism.org](http://www.fredericktourism.org)  
Tourism Council of Frederick County  
19 East Church Street  
Frederick, MD 21701  
Toll Free: 800-999-3613 • Phone: 301-644-4045

## Loudoun County, Va.

 [www.visitloudoun.org](http://www.visitloudoun.org)  
Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association  
222 Catocin Circle, S.E., Suite 100  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
Toll Free: 800-752-6118 • Phone: 703-771-2617

## Montgomery County, Md.

 [www.visitmontgomery.com](http://www.visitmontgomery.com)  
Montgomery County Conference & Visitors Bureau  
11820 Parklawn Drive, Suite 380  
Rockville, MD 20852  
Toll Free Groups: 877-789-6904, ext. 3  
Toll Free Individuals: 800-925-0880/301-916-0698  
Phone: 301-428-9702, ext.3

## Prince George's County, Md.

 [www.visitprincegeorges.com](http://www.visitprincegeorges.com)  
Prince George's County Conference & Visitors Bureau  
9200 Basil Court, Suite 101  
Largo, MD 20774  
Toll Free: 888-925-8300 • Phone: 301-925-8300

# Mass Transit Recommended

The use of mass transit provided by the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro) will be the key to successfully moving between event venues during the dedication celebrations.

## Metro

The American Battle Monuments Commission realizes that many seniors have not ridden a subway with walkers and wheelchairs. Metro officials also are sensitive to the needs of senior citizens with limited mobility and persons with disabilities.

The audience attending the memorial dedication events could be similar in volume experienced by Metro over a 4th of July holiday, but the audience profile will be different. A large contingent of those attending the dedication will be 75 years of age or older. For many, this will be the first experience riding a subway in a major metropolitan area.

Metro personnel will schedule additional transit supervisors to work alongside WWII Memorial volunteers. All will be trained and sensitive to the needs of senior citizens and those with disabilities. Assistance will be provided on the subway platforms, at fare card machines, and at elevator and escalator entrances and exits.

A brochure titled "Metro Welcomes People with Disabilities" is available by calling Metro at (202) 962-1100. Please address any Metro concerns or questions through this number.

Metro also offers free guides to its bus and rail system. For copies, call (202) 637-7000 or visit their web sites at [www.wmata.com](http://www.wmata.com) or [www.metroopensdoors.com](http://www.metroopensdoors.com).

We strongly recommend using the Metro system and shuttles for all of your transportation needs while in Washington, D.C.

## Auto

Many people will travel to the dedication events by automobile. Parking will not be available near the dedication site. Public parking at Metro stations is free on weekends. If metro parking becomes full, additional satellite parking lots near Metro stations are available.

Parking in the District of Columbia is extremely limited and

restricted during rush hours and some weekend hours. Special events such as dedication often require road closures and increased traffic gridlock. If your vehicle is towed Friday after 7 p.m. or anytime on weekends, you won't be able to retrieve it until Tuesday after 9 a.m.

If you plan to stay with relatives or friends in the Washington area, you may need them to obtain a visitor parking permit for their neighborhood. Permits must be requested by residents in Washington, D.C., Silver Spring, Md., Arlington, Va., and Alexandria, Va.



Map of the Washington, D.C. Metrorail system. The Smithsonian station, circled in red, is located on the National Mall.

*Piggyback Hero, continued from p.2*

grotesque, collision-born hybrid of a plane back toward the German coast.

Rojohn, immediately grasping that the crew could not exit from the bottom of his plane, ordered his top turret gunner and his radio operator, Tech. Sgts. Orville Elkin and Edward G. Neuhaus, to make their way to the back of the fuselage and out the waist door behind the left wing.

Then he got his navigator, 2nd Lt. Robert Washington, and his bombardier, Sgt. James Shirley to follow them. As Rojohn and Leek somehow held the plane steady, these four men, as well as waist gunner Sgt. Roy Little and tail gunner Staff Sgt. Francis Chase, were able to bail out.

Now the plane locked below them was aflame. Fire poured over Rojohn's left wing. He could feel the heat from the plane below and hear the sound of .50 caliber machinegun ammunition "cooking off" in the flames.

Capt. Rojohn ordered Lt. Leek to bail out. Leek knew that without him helping keep the controls back, the plane would drop in a flaming spiral and the centrifugal force would prevent Rojohn from bailing. He refused that order.

Suspended in his parachute in the cold December sky, Bob Washington watched with deadly fascination as the mated bombers, trailing black smoke fell to earth about three miles away, their downward trip ending in an ugly boiling blossom of fire.

In the cockpit, Rojohn and Leek held grimly to the controls trying to ride a falling rock. Leek tersely recalled, "The ground came up faster and faster. Praying was allowed. We gave it one last effort

and slammed in the ground."

The McNab plane on the bottom exploded, vaulting the other B-17 upward and forward. It hit the ground and slid along until its left wing slammed through a wooden building and the smoldering mass of aluminum came to a stop.

Rojohn and Leek were still seated in their cockpit. The nose of the plane was relatively intact, but everything from the B-17's massive wings back was destroyed. They looked at each other incredulously. Neither was badly injured.

Movies have nothing on reality. Still perhaps in shock, Leek crawled out through a huge hole behind the cockpit, felt for the familiar pack in his uniform pocket and pulled out a cigarette. He placed it in his mouth and was about to light it. Then he noticed a young German soldier pointing a rifle at him. The soldier looked scared and annoyed. He grabbed the cigarette out of Leek's mouth and pointed down to the gasoline pouring out over the wing

from a ruptured fuel tank.

Two of the six men who parachuted from Rojohn's plane did not survive the jump. But the other four and, amazingly, four men from the other bomber survived. All were taken prisoner.

Rojohn, typically, didn't talk much about his Distinguished Flying Cross. Of Leek, he said, "In all fairness to my co-pilot, he's the reason I'm alive today."

Like so many veterans, Rojohn got back to life unsentimentally after the war, marrying and raising a son and daughter. For many years, though, he tried to link back up with Leek, going through government records to try to track him down. It took him 40 years, but in 1986, he found the number of Leek's mother, in Washington State.

Yes, her son Bill was visiting from California. Would Rojohn like to speak with him? Two old men on a phone line, trying to pick up some

*See Rojohn, p.11*



*Rojohn's original crew. Standing (l-r) George Hogue, Bernard Jurist, William Leek, Glenn Rojohn. Kneeling (l-r) Herman Horencamp, Orville Elkin, Edward Neuhaus, Joseph Russo, Roy Little. Photo courtesy of the Rojohn family.*



# MAIL CALL

## PURPLE HEART

I enjoyed the article "A Purple Heart" by Dwayne Wilder. I also am named after my uncle who received a Purple Heart. I am proud that it has been entrusted to me. It has a special place in my home, and each time I look at it I am reminded of all the sacrifices that have made this country free.

My uncle, 2nd Lt. Howard Quentin Daniel was the bombardier on a B-24D named the Dirty Gertie. He was assigned to the 319th Bomb Sqd, 90th Group, 5th Division flying missions in the South Pacific. Their plane exploded in flight on a mission on March 16, 1943. The entire crew was killed in action. People often ask why I was named Quentin, and I am proud to tell them why.

God bless all veterans and thank you for your sacrifices.

*Quentin Galbraith*  
Springdale, Ark.

## THANKS

It is truly amazing in this day and age to receive mail that does not contain a donation form. It is gratifying to know that this monument has generated support to such a degree that contributions are no longer needed.

It is high time America stood up and recognized the sacrifices of "The Greatest Generation." Although I was a young boy during WWII, I was old enough to know that the young men in my neighborhood were going off to fight a war in order to keep me free. As a result, when I became 18 in 1951, I saw fit to enlist in the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

May our country never forget the courage and sacrifice of the men and women of WWII, and may it be an inspiration for generations to come.

*Ronald J. Dakin*  
Spring Hill, Fla.

My father served in the Aleutians and in Europe; my father-in-law served in Europe; and my uncle served in the South Pacific. Thanks to them and to all who served in the cause of freedom. God bless you.

*Rachel A. Lowers*  
Wyoming, Mich.

## RECORDS SEARCH

I am writing regarding a letter that appeared in the summer 2003 issue. It is not unusual for a response from the National Personnel Records Center to take a year or more. In my case it took 13 months.

Chances are that records there exist only partially, if at all, because on July 12, 1973, a fire at the Center destroyed a major portion of the Army records from 1912 through 1959. In any event, a reply to inquiries should be received. Use Standard Form 180, "Request Pertaining to Military Records," which can be obtained from local or county veterans' affairs offices.

Many divisions and regiments that served in WWII have historians overseeing their own archives, including copies of Morning Reports. If an individual's company, regiment or division is known, try contacting them. Some even maintain web sites that facilitate communications.

I hope this information is helpful.

*Dick Clair*  
Morris Township, N.J.

## SEEKING INFO

In WWII, my brother, Vernon Hass, was killed on July 26, 1944, in the battle of St. Lo in France. I would like to locate men he may have fought beside. He fought in the 117th Infantry, 30th Division. Please contact me. (11800 West Bluff Road, Malcolm, NE 68402)

*Oris Hass*  
Malcolm, Neb.

I want to get in contact with anyone who served in the 8th Air Force, 392nd Bomb Gp, 577th Sq. We served from 1942 through 1945 at the Wendly Air Base, Wendly, England, east of Norwich. I wonder if any are alive. Our crew chief, Carmen (nose) Nora and wife are deceased. I hope my friend Mike Cushnir (Russian), my friend and confidant, will be at the memorial dedication.

I also would like to hear from a dear Blackpool friend, Carol Ashley, and her friend Penny. I think Carol, my almost wife, immigrated to New Jersey after the war and married a G.I. of Armenian descent.

Thank you for your efforts. (2601 Falcon Court, Union City, CA 94587)

*Regge Minnitte*  
Union City, Calif.

My father, Damon P. Heyer, Jr., served in WWII. He was a Tech. 4th Grade, 88th Cavalry Reconnaissance Sq. His nickname was "Sad Sack." He was inducted into the army at Ft. Dix, N.J. and then went to Fort Knox and Camp Polk before being shipped out to Germany. Some of the friends he spoke about were Slocum, Hansen,

See *Letters*, p.11

*Letters, continued from p.10*

Gould, Hood, Bill Haley, Capt. Gales, Capt. Kelly, Sgt. Futtrell; his commanding officer at one point was Joe Medwicks, who he said played ball for Brooklyn.

My dad, now deceased, was extremely proud of his service years and served well, earning many ribbons and medals. I am in the process of composing a book from the love letters that he wrote to my mom from 1942-45. Anyone who has any remembrance of him, please write to me. Thank you. (99 Village Green Way, Hazlet, NJ 07730, or [kheyer1448@aol.com](mailto:kheyer1448@aol.com)).

*Karen Heyer  
Hazlet, N.J.*

I am hoping to find anyone who might have served in WWII with my dad, Leland J. Kammerud, from Darlington, Wis. He was in Co. F, 274th Regiment, 70th Infantry Division. I know he was in the Battle of the Bulge. Other than that I know nothing else. He never spoke to us about any of it, and because he is gone we've lost all possibility of finding out.

Thank you. (937 Arthur St., Darlington, WI 53530, or [dmrhee@mhtc.net](mailto:dmrhee@mhtc.net))

*Donna Marhee  
Darlington, Wis.*

My brother, Master T-Sgt Truman A. Grandy, USMC, was aboard the carrier USS Franklin

when it was bombed on Mar. 19, 1945, near Okinawa. He was missing in action for a year and then declared dead. If any of your readers were on the Franklin or were acquainted with him, I would like very much to hear from them. (2035 Starlight Drive, Salina, KS 67401, or [LADSDLS@aol.com](mailto:LADSDLS@aol.com))

*Dorothy L. Shottenkirk  
Salina, Kan.*

Any members of LST 693, which served in the South Pacific and Philippines, who are planning to attend the dedication of the WWII Memorial, please contact me. Wouldn't it be wonderful to

*See Letters, p.12*

Hooray for the WWII Memorial Newsletter. It has rekindled hope that my quest for information concerning my dear husband, Robert E. Ramsey, RDM 2/C, deceased, may yet be realized.

Petty Officer Ramsey served aboard the USS Walker, DD517, during her extended tour of duty in the South Pacific in 1943-44. His military records are unavailable, and I need documented proof of his heroism aboard ship.

Hope one of the old Radar Gang or other buddies will read this. It would mean so much to me. (Send information to: 14336 Anola Street, Whittier, CA 90604-1727)

*Charlotte B. Ramsey  
Whittier, Calif.*



*Four buddies aboard the USS Walker somewhere in the South Pacific. Petty Officer Robert Ramsey is second from left. Photo courtesy of Charlotte Ramsey.*

*Rojohn, continued from p.9*

familiar timbre of youth in each other's voice. One can imagine that first conversation between the two men who had shared that wild ride in the cockpit of a B-17.

A year later, the two were reunited at a reunion of the 100th Bomb Group in Long Beach, Calif. Bill Leek died the following year.

Glenn Rojohn was the last survivor of the remarkable piggyback flight. He was like thousands upon thousands of men—soda jerks and lumberjacks, teachers and dentists, students and lawyers and service station attendants and store clerks and farm boys—who in the prime of their lives went to war in World War II. They sometimes did incredible things, endured awful things,

and for the most part most of them pretty much kept it to themselves and just faded back into the fabric of civilian life.

Capt. Glenn Rojohn, AAF, died after a long siege of illness. But he apparently faced that final battle with the same grim aplomb he displayed that remarkable day over Germany so long ago. Let us be thankful for such men.

*Letters, continued from p.11*

have a reunion? (327 West 5th St., Beach Haven, NJ 08008)

*Joseph L. Dunkerly*  
Beach Haven, N.J.

My father, Sydney Jack Bernstein, served in the 220th Ordnance Armored and Combat Vehicle Repair Co. and was killed in France on Feb. 4, 1945. If any of you have any information about his unit or him individually, I would be very grateful to hear from you. Thank you. (401 East Pratt Street, Suite 800, Baltimore, MD 21202, or [steinchar@yahoo.com](mailto:steinchar@yahoo.com))

*Charles G. Bernstein*  
Baltimore, Md.

My grandfather, Donald McDonald, served in WWII with

the 362nd Infantry, 91st Division. He was killed in action on July 14, 1944 in Florence, Italy. Anyone who served with him and who might remember anything about him, please contact me. It will be greatly appreciated. (P.O. Box 203, Markleeville, CA 96120)

*Donald A. Skinner, Jr.*  
Markleeville, Calif.

The USS Spence, DD 512, was lost in the December 1944 typhoon in which the Navy lost three ships and 790 seamen in one of the Navy's most disastrous encounters ever.

I am seeking the current addresses of former crewmen of the Spence, or the surviving family members, so I may send them a free document describing the warship's celebrated war actions in 1943 and

1944. (508A Heritage Village, Southbury, CT 06488, or [graceras@earthlink.net](mailto:graceras@earthlink.net))

*Dick Strand*  
Southbury, Conn.

I was just three years old when my grandfather, George J. Mahlin, passed away. The only thing I remember about him was playing at his feet while he sat in his favorite chair. I always knew that he had served in a war, but never knew much about it until I was much older. I've heard numerous stories about my grandpa from my mom and uncles, but I want to learn more about him.

My grandfather was in the Navy and stationed on the USS Pocomoke as a cook. He was promoted to 2nd class in October 1944. He was from St. Louis, Mo. If you have any information or knew my grandpa, please contact me. I would love to hear any kind of story you might have about him. Thank you so much. (1899 Fox Pointe Dr., Arnold, MO 63010, or [KUJHawks413@hotmail.com](mailto:KUJHawks413@hotmail.com))

*Renee Bryan*  
Arnold, Mo.

I hope that no one forgets the ultimate sacrifice made by so many of our loved ones during WWII. 1st Lt. Royal G. Madden was killed in a fighter crash in France on Aug. 18, 1944. He was a member of the 485th Fighter Sq., 370th Fighter Gp. He was only 21 years old. His parents were devastated, but proud that their son had served his country so valiantly.

I am sorry that I did not know him very well (I am his stepmother's niece), but I have inherited some of his possessions along with pictures and memorabilia. If anyone remembers Royal, please contact me. (1125 Miramar Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32207, or [BFEjax1@aol.com](mailto:BFEjax1@aol.com))

*Betty J. Evans*  
Jacksonville, Fla.



*The Freedom Wall and Field of Gold Stars honor the 400,000 Americans who lost their lives during World War II. Rendering by Joe McKendry.*



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