

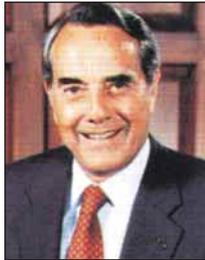
★ ★ NATIONAL ★ ★ WWII MEMORIAL

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 1

A NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL SOCIETY

SUMMER 2003

Message From the National Chairman



Senator Bob Dole

In less than 12 months we will gather on the National Mall to dedicate America's newest national memorial, a lasting tribute to the sacrifice and achievement of the World War II generation.

Planning for the multi-day celebration is intensifying. Much of this newsletter is devoted to those plans. There is still much work to be done, nailing down the details on important aspects of the plan such as seating and transportation, but we've got a good start on putting together a memorable event.

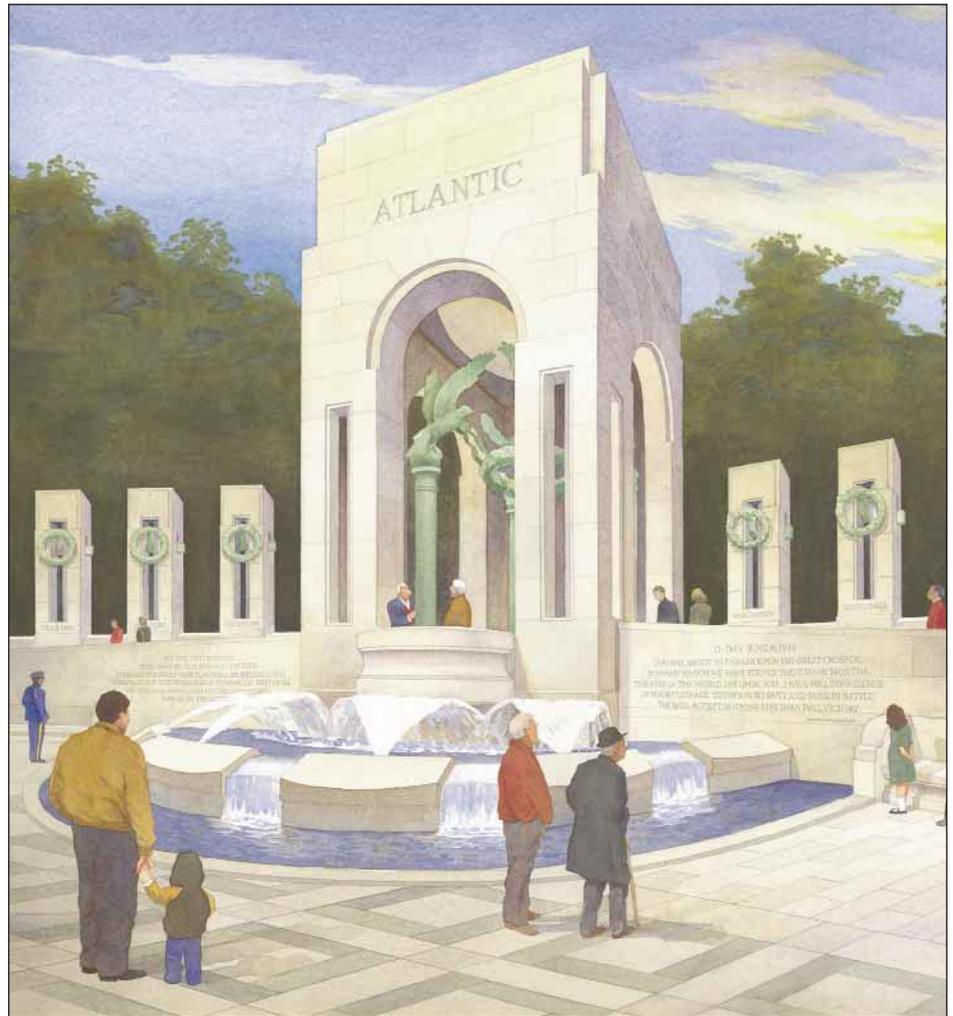
Those who journey to Washington for the May 29, 2004, ceremony will discover much to enjoy. The city and surrounding jurisdictions will help us celebrate the completion of the memorial with a variety of historical exhibits and cultural events.

Construction remains on schedule for completion in March of 2004. As you can tell from the photos in this issue, the work has moved above ground. Since the first piece of granite—a 20-ton balcony stone—was installed in February, the memorial architecture has rapidly begun to take shape.

And, we have surpassed \$190 million in total cash and pledges,

Tribute to a Generation: Dedication Taking Shape

*See page 4
for listing of
official events*



Rendering by Joe McKendry

more than enough to cover estimated project costs, which is why you will not find a donation reply slip enclosed. Our success is a direct result of the generosity shown by you and hundreds of corporations, foundations, veterans groups, civic, professional and fraternal organiza-

tions, states, and schools throughout the country.

We thank you for the many ways you have supported our efforts, and look forward to seeing you on the Mall next May.

God bless you, and God bless America.

A PURPLE HEART *by Dwayne Wilder*

Charter Member Dwayne Wilder writes a weekly column for the Denison Daily Post in Texas. The following column was written for Memorial Day 2002 and is reprinted here with permission of the author and the Denison Daily Post.



I have a Purple Heart. No, I didn't earn it. I was entrusted to cherish it and keep it safe. Something I intend to do. I also will pass it down to my youngest son, Ryan, and explain to him who Lonnie C. Wilder was.

My uncle Lonnie earned that Purple Heart in World War II. His widow, Florence Wilder, received it when he paid the highest price, his life, for his country. Uncle Lonnie is buried in the American Cemetery in Florence, Italy with hundreds of other Allied soldiers who died in northern Italy in the last months of the war. He died February 20, 1945.

These facts are important, but they don't tell the entire story. I am Lonnie Wilder's namesake. He was

my father's oldest brother and one my father looked up to as they grew up near Desert and Whitewright, Texas. Dad was only 12 years old when Lonnie was killed in action. It hit him hard. So much so that he named his first son after that brother to honor his memory. Yes, that's me. Lonnie Dwayne Wilder.

Lonnie's widow, who is now Florence Coleman, gave me the Purple Heart just last week. She felt it was time and that I should have it. She just had one request.

"I hope you will cherish it as I have," said Florence with a quiver in her voice. She held the box, opened it and showed me the medal. The first one I had seen in person. I gave it back and she replaced it in the box. Florence held the box for a moment before giving it to me. She had cherished it for 57 years and I will do no less.

"Thank you. This means more to me than you know," was all I could say. Because it's true. I have lived so many years without knowing my uncle. Growing up, I was too busy playing and learning about fun things. I didn't care about my relatives that much. Mom and dad would tell me bits and pieces about him, but all I really knew was that I was named after him. And for a long time, that sufficed.

As I matured and realized what he did for my country and my freedoms, I had to know more. Dad only had a 12-year-old's memory of him and, of course, mom never knew him. So there was little chance of discovering who he was. Or even if I was like him.

Florence had remarried after the



PFC Lonnie C. Wilder

war and moved to Sherman. She had a son and raised him while working in the Sherman ISD food service department for 15 years and managing the Grayson County College Cafeteria for another 15 years. She retired in 1987 and her husband, Charles Coleman, died in the early 1990s.

This spring, I have had the opportunity to talk with her about her first husband, my Uncle Lonnie.

"He was so kind," said Florence on more than one occasion. "My father, Charlie Clark, told me that Lonnie would work himself to death because he was such a hard worker." They had married in 1941 and farmed near that same Desert community. She told me Lonnie loved country music and to read. They were happy, she said.

"My mother just loved him," said Florence with a remembering

*See **Purple Heart**, p.11*

Construction of Memorial on Schedule

Photos by Stefano Terricola



Nearly all of the pillars on the north side of the plaza are installed. Fifty-six pillars representing the U.S. states and territories during WWII are part of the memorial design.



The channel shown coursing through the concrete foundation slab will contain restored fountain jets of the Rainbow Pool being rebuilt in the center of the plaza.



Workers install a section of the granite bench that will run along the perimeter of the memorial plaza.



Sections of the extensive fountain piping that will run through utility tunnels beneath the memorial plaza.



Workers apply waterproofing to the lower fountain pool basin below the north arch.



TRIBUTE TO A GENERATION DEDICATION CELEBRATION ★ MAY 27-30, 2004

Event planning for next year's dedication of the National World War II Memorial is in high gear. The four-day dedication celebration planned by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) will run over Memorial Day weekend 2004, from May 27 through May 30. The official dedication ceremony is set for Saturday, May 29.

Titled *Tribute to a Generation*, dedication activities will commemorate the memorial and celebrate the contributions of America's World War II generation, many of whom are expected to be in Washington for the ceremony.

Events are planned to appeal to a wide variety of interests. They include wartime reminiscences, WWII memorabilia and military equipment displays, ceremonial military units, a religious service, swing music, and WWII educational activities for all ages.

Dedication

The memorial will be dedicated on Saturday afternoon, May 29, at 2 p.m. Gates will open to the public event at 11 a.m. Pre-ceremony entertainment beginning at noon will include live music, video images of the wartime era, and historical information about the memorial.

The dignified dedication ceremony will recognize the important addition of the memorial to the National Mall and acknowledge the service and sacrifice of the WWII generation. President Bush has been invited to receive the memorial on behalf of the nation.

We expect the dedication to be

attended by thousands who lived and served during the war, as well as many interested visitors to the nation's capital. Priority consideration for seating, transportation and other amenities will be given to members of the WWII generation; determining how best to accomplish this is a planning priority.

WWII Reunion

The National World War II Reunion will be produced by the Smithsonian Institution in partnership with the American Battle Monuments Commission.

The four-day event (May 27-30) will provide an opportunity for members of the WWII generation to gather together, meet former comrades in arms, relate wartime experiences, and enjoy 1940's music and WWII equipment displays. The open-air and tented attractions will be exhibited on the National Mall from late morning to early evening.

An important goal of the reunion is to educate all generations on the importance of WWII to our nation. All activities will be open to the public at no charge.

Veterans Salute

The military service ceremonial units stationed in Washington, D.C., are planning to join in rendering a musical and narrative Salute to World War II Veterans. Elements from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard will assemble at the MCI Center in downtown Washington to perform a special tribute to veterans that will inspire everyone with their individual talents and musical excellence.

Three performances are planned: an afternoon matinee and evening show on Friday, May 28, and an evening performance on Saturday, May 29. Details for this free ticketed event will be available at a later date.

Memorial Service

An interfaith service of remembrance 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 service at the cathedral known as *A National House of Prayer for all People*.

Attendance at the service will be controlled due to the limited seating in the cathedral. Efforts are being made to develop alternate viewing sites in the Washington, D.C., area.

Details Coming

Specific arrangements for these events and other activities associated with our *Tribute to a Generation* will be made available through updates to the memorial web site (www.wwiimemorial.com), our toll free number (1-800-639-4992), our Fall 2003 newsletter, and through the media.

Many memorial supporters will be on hand for the dedication activities, particularly members of the WWII generation. With large crowds expected, all should be ready for long lines, unpredictable weather, and inconveniences that could arise.

The ABMC dedication staff is working to meet the special needs of our WWII generation guests. We urge all attendees to consider the challenges they may face before making travel arrangements.

Regional Celebration Expands Dedication Tribute

Tens of thousands of people are expected to attend the memorial dedication celebration. For many, the journey to the nation's capital will be more than just a vacation, as WWII generation honorees arrive to witness the dedication of the long-awaited and long-overdue memorial.

The American Battle Monuments Commission is working closely with the Washington, D.C. Convention & Tourism Corporation, and convention and visitors bureaus throughout the National Capital Region, to ensure that visitors have an enjoyable and memorable experience. Museums, theatres, hotels, restaurants and local businesses throughout the region are ready to roll out the red carpet in welcoming guests.

A regional celebration, "America Celebrates the Greatest Generation," will begin Memorial Day Weekend 2004 and continue throughout the summer. Members of the WWII generation will be distinguished guests at special exhibitions, concerts, lecture series and other events designed to honor the military and home front contributions of the generation.



Smithsonian "Castle" building, Washington, D.C.

For more information about the regional celebration plans, visit the Washington, D.C. Convention & Tourism Corporation web site at www.washington.org or call toll free to 1-800-422-8644.

WWII Registry of Remembrances Opens July 4th

We are pleased to announce that the WWII Registry will officially go online for the general public on Independence Day, July 4th this year. The Registry will be accessible through the memorial's web site at www.wwiimemorial.com.

The Registry comprises more than 1.3 million names of those who helped win World War II, whether in uniform or on the home front. While most listings have been entered by our Charter Members, the Registry also includes the National Archives list of those killed in service in WWII, the names of those buried in American Battle Monuments Commission's overseas WWII cemeteries, and the names of those listed on ABMC Tablets of the Missing.

After July 4th, please go to www.wwiimemorial.com and click on the "WWII Registry" link to view the Registry or enter a new name. The Registry will also be available for viewing on site at the memorial when it is dedicated in May 2004.

Dedication Staff Working to Ensure Access and Seating

The memorial staff is working to ensure that members of the WWII generation attending the dedication have priority seating for the ceremony.

A special seating area will be reserved exclusively for members of the WWII generation. Our challenge is to accommodate all who deserve a seat, while meeting a demand that will likely exceed seats available at the memorial site.

Due to space constraints, we cannot guarantee in advance that all individuals or groups will have a seat at the memorial site. Blocks of seats cannot be reserved for groups.

No final decisions have been made on how to meet this seating challenge. The ABMC is working with other government agencies and experts in major event management

to accommodate attendees at on-site and off-site seating areas so all may enjoy the celebration in a safe and secure environment.

As the seating plans evolve, we will release detailed information through our web site, toll free telephone number, the Fall 2003 newsletter, and the media.

Security

A consortium of law enforcement professionals will provide security for the event, including the National Park Service Police, Capitol Police, Metropolitan Police of the District of Columbia, U.S. Secret Service, and Metro Transit Police.

Information and recommendations regarding security issues will be available on the memorial web site and in the Fall newsletter.

Accessibility

Washington, D.C., is one of the most accessible cities in the world for persons with disabilities. When booking a hotel room, please be very specific when communicating your special needs. The more information you provide the hotel, the better they will be able to serve you.

An excellent source of disability related information in the Washington Metropolitan Area can be found on the internet at www.disabilityguide.org or by calling (301) 528-8664.

Washington's mass transit system—METRO—offers a free guide that provides information on its bus and rail system for the elderly and physically challenged. For copies, call (202) 647-7000 or visit www.wmata.com.

We Want to Hear from Reunion and Tour Groups

We are very interested in learning about reunions and tour groups planning to attend the dedication celebration. This will be helpful to our planning, and will allow us to provide information to groups that may prove valuable as they make arrangements.

For example, tour buses will not be allowed near the memorial site because of limited space, traffic congestion and the large crowds expected. Instead, tour buses will be directed to one of several alternate staging areas and provided information on Metro shuttles to the dedication site.

So we may facilitate your group's visit to the dedication ceremony, please provide the following information to Ms. Betty Hemby:

- Group name
- Group hotel
- Point of origin
- Contact name, phone, fax, and email
- Number of passengers and number with special needs

Information may be emailed to hembyb@wwiimemorial.com or faxed to (703) 588-1560. You will receive a confirmation.



Capital Area Hotels Offer Special Rates for Dedication

Many hotels in the Washington Metropolitan Area are offering special rates to members of the WWII generation and others attending the dedication. To reserve a room:

- Phone the hotel directly. Be sure to tell the reservations operator that you are attending the dedication and ask to receive any special rate the hotel is offering.

- Contact your local travel agent.
- Phone the toll-free number of your favorite hotel chain.
- Check an on-line travel service.

Travel agents, hotel chain toll-free reservation operators, and on-line booking services are likely *not* to be aware of special dedication rates hotels are offering. We recommend that you phone the hotel directly, or ask your agent to request special WWII dedication rates

when booking a room for you.

Once you have arrived, you will discover a wide variety of cultural, historical and recreational attractions in Washington, D.C. and each of the jurisdictions in the metropolitan area. D.C. is easily accessible from most jurisdictions via public transportation.

For general travel and tourist information, contact one or all of the following Visitors Bureaus:

Washington, D.C.



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
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.arlingtonvirginiausa.com
Arlington Convention & Visitors Service
1100 North Glebe Road, Suite 1500
Arlington, VA 22201

Toll free: 800-296-7996 • Phone: 703-228-0873

Fairfax County, Va.



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

Loudoun County, Va.



www.visitloudoun.org
Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association
222 Catoclin Circle, S.E., Suite 100
Leesburg, VA 20175

Toll Free: 800-752-6118 • Phone: 703-771-2617

Montgomery County, Md.



www.cvbmontco.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

Prince George's County, Md.



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

SPECIAL HOTEL RATES *will be available throughout the summer of 2004 for the regional celebration, "AMERICA CELEBRATES THE GREATEST GENERATION."*

Getting Here is Half the Fun (or So They Say)

The first thing to keep in mind when making reservations for air, rail or bus travel, as well as hotels and tours, is that restrictions and financial penalties may be incurred if you need to change or cancel your reservation, so plan your trip carefully.

The following information is provided to assist your advance planning.

Travel by Air

Three major airports serve the Washington Metropolitan Area. They are:

- Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA); www.mwaa.com; DCA is located just across the Potomac River from D.C.
- Dulles International Airport (IAD); www.mwaa.com; IAD is located in Northern Virginia, about a 35-45 minute ride to D.C.
- Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI); www.bwiairport.com; BWI is located on the outskirts of Baltimore, Md., and is an estimated 40-45 minute ride to D.C. In addition to taxis and public shuttles, train service from BWI to D.C. is available via MARC, METRO and AMTRAK.

Taxis, Super Shuttle and other methods of transportation are available at each airport, and many hotels near the airports provide complimentary shuttle service.

Travel by Rail

AMTRAK (www.amtrak.com or 1-800-872-7245) is a widely used method of transportation. Washington's Union Station is located near the U.S. Capitol Building, a short



Dulles International Airport, Virginia

cab or METRO ride to many hotels in D.C. and surrounding areas.

Travel by Auto

For individuals traveling by car, a detailed transportation plan will be posted on the memorial web site at a later date.

Metro

Within the National Capital Region, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority operates the second largest rail transit system and the sixth largest bus network in the U.S.

Safe, clean and reliable, "America's Transit System" transports more than a third of the federal government to work and millions of tourists to landmarks in the Nation's Capital. ABMC encourages all area residents and visitors to use the Metrobus and Metrorail systems. All bus and train operators and station managers receive training on the special needs of people with disabilities.

Shuttle bus transportation to the dedication events will be available

throughout the four-day period of the dedication celebration via Metro and other area transportation services.

Shuttles will run from the downtown stations to the memorial site on dedication day—Saturday, May 29, 2004. Golf carts and wheelchairs will be available at entry points for persons with mobility concerns.



Metrorail trains



MAIL CALL

We welcome your letters and will print a selection in the newsletter as space permits. Letters are subject to editing and should be sent to Editor, NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL Newsletter, 2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 501, Arlington, VA 22201. Please include a daytime phone number and, if available, an e-mail address.

Two readers offered alternative dates for events chronicled in the Fall 2002 newsletter.

According to Herbert A. Shapiro, president of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the 11th Airborne Division Association, "Your article [Triple Play: POW Rescue in the Philippines] states in the Los Banos section that our division's action was '...early on the 15th...' Please note that the correct date of this action was on Feb. 23, 1945."

Larry Sitney presented a different perspective of the 1944 prisoner exchange at Lorient, France [Red Cross Negotiates POW Exchanges in Europe], which he states "occurred on the 17th, rather than the 16th of November."

THANKS!

I would like to thank everyone involved with the construction of the memorial and Registry of Remembrances. My dad, Bill Lierman, served in WWII aboard the USS Bache DD 470. He was proud of his ship, which was hit by a kamikaze on Mother's Day 1945.

He never talked much about his Navy days, but in June 2000 I was able to get him to write a short story for me and trace on a map his trip in the Navy. He gave that to me in September 2000 when he and my mom came to visit for my son's birthday. When they returned home to Indiana, he passed away suddenly four days later. His story is such a treasure for me.

My dad wanted to see this memorial built. Unfortunately, he won't be there when it is dedicated. I feel blessed to be a member of the

Memorial Society and to be able to contribute my dad's information for the Registry of Remembrances. He would be so proud.

I would like to thank all of our WWII veterans for the service they gave our country. The Library of Congress is collecting veterans' stories and will send a free Veterans' History Project Kit if you call 1-888-371-5848, email vohp@loc.gov, or visit their web site at www.loc.gov/folk-life/vets/.

Mary Wagner
Pittsburgh, Pa.

SEEKING INFO

My grandfather, Liston Hitchcock of Bone Cave, Tenn., fought in WWII. He has been very excited about the development of the WWII Memorial, and he is very pleased with the Registry and newsletters.

He has asked me to write the newsletter in an effort to locate men he may have fought beside or their families. He fought in the 134th Infantry of the 35th Division, E Company. He can be reached at Rt. 1, Box 510, Bone Cave, TN 38581.

Jessica Hitchcock
Bone Cave, Tenn.

During WWII, not many veterans or historians ever heard of the Persian Gulf Command, although some 38,000 served in that area of the world. We were the main supply line to Russia because the German subs sank our ships sailing in the North Sea and a safer route had to be established.

During the summer months in southern Iran, the truck drivers had to wear gloves and eggs could be fried very quickly on the hoods of their trucks. We could be court-martialed if we were caught off the camp grounds during the hot summer days.

I served in Tehran (Hqs. and Hqs. Co.) and Hqs. Co. of the 9th Port Battalion in Ahwaz and Korramshar, and finally made it back to the states in July 1945. If there are any vets reading this who served in Iran, I would like to hear from you at 8181 Folsom Blvd., #90, Sacramento, CA 95826.

Ralph G. Carter
Sacramento, Calif.

In the American Cemetery at Normandy is buried Elizabeth Richardson, who died in a plane crash in France on July 25, 1945. She was a Red Cross worker in England and then France, born in Indiana, educated in Wisconsin.

Would anyone who knew her please contact me at Madison@indiana.edu or at 2901 Olcott Blvd., Bloomington, IN 47401.

James H. Madison
Bloomington, Ind.

I hope to locate anyone who remembers seeing or talking with the late A.B. "Happy" Chandler, who was one of five U.S. senators who undertook an around-the-world inspection tour in summer 1943. The senators spent two months visiting American forces across the globe, stopping in North Africa, India, China and Australia. Their mission

See *Letters*, p.10

Letters, continued from p.9

was to secure firsthand information on the morale and living conditions of our fighting forces.

Chandler, who later served as commissioner of baseball, always considered this trip one of the highlights of his long career. As his biographer, I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has memories of "Happy" from his wartime inspection tour. I may be reached at the History Department, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY 40475.

Thomas Appleton
Richmond, Ky.

On Aug. 7, 1944, I was one of 51 WACs who landed on Omaha Beach in France. Each of us had been individually selected from U.S. Army bases in England to be among the first WACs to arrive in France. We had sailed from Southampton.

The day after our arrival, we were transported to Cherbourg and there given our new assignments. Because none of us had known one another prior to our departure for France, it was only after our arrival there that we began to get acquainted with each other. Among my new-found friends were Avis Lowry (recently deceased), Kay Perram (deceased) and Margaret Sargo.

I would like very much to hear from any other members of this group of WACs. My name at the time was Catherine Holder. My e-mail address is walcat@core.com.

Catherine Dreyfus
Evanston, Ill.

I am hoping to locate anyone who may have known my grandfather, 2Lt. Paul K. Fabian of Laconia, N.H. He was a member of the 390th Bomb Group(H), 568th Bomb Squadron. He was a bom-

bardier killed in action on Jan. 21, 1944. He was stationed in Framlingham, England. He flew on a B-17, PubPete/Dinah Mite #237818.

Any information would be greatly appreciated. Please send info to me at 100 Gardiner Street, Lynn, MA 01905.

Michelle Ennis (Fabian)
Lynn, Mass.

I am interested in anyone who served in the 29th Division 116th Regiment with my dad. His name was John O'Brien, but he was often called Obie. He came from Elizabeth, N.J. He was a skinny guy with blue eyes and brown hair. His service records say he was a truck driver.

If anyone has any information about him, I would appreciate if you would contact me at 116 Ravenwood Blvd., Barnegat, NJ 08005.

Nancy O'Brien
Barnegat, N.J.

I am seeking viable, tangible information, namely current addresses and phone numbers of fellow Army service colleagues who served with me in the 326 Airborne Medical Detachment of the 101st Airborne Infantry Division during WWII in the European Theater of Operations: France, Belgium, Germany and Austria.

Information should be sent to me at 3340 S. 107th Ave., Omaha, NE 68124.

Spiro Moustakes
Omaha, Neb.

I am hoping to locate anyone who served with my uncle, SSgt. Francis J. Schulte. He served in the 78th Division, 31st Regiment, 1st Battalion, Hq. Co., and in the 30th Division, 120th Regiment, 2nd Battalion, G Co.

While with the 30th, he was wounded around Nov. 16, 1944,

near Linden-Neusen, and killed in action around Jan. 13, 1945, during the Battle of the Bulge. At the time of his death I believe he was near the towns of Geromont, Baugnez and Thirimont.

If you served with my uncle, either stateside or in combat, I would appreciate hearing from you. You can write to me at 49 Douglas Drive West, St. Peters, MO 63376. Thank you, and God Bless all of you who served.

Cindy Onder
St. Peters, Mo.

My brother, William V. Norris of LaGrange, Ga., served in the Utah Beach landing in France. He was in the 28th Infantry Regiment, 8th Infantry Division, E Co. He was killed in France on Sept. 3, 1944.

Anyone who served with him or who might remember anything about him, please contact me at 764 Azalea Dr., LaGrange, GA 30240.

Ralph Norris
LaGrange, Ga.

My uncle, PFC John J. Byrnes, was a member of the 378th Infantry Regiment, 95th Division. He was from Ireland and was killed in France in 1944, I believe. His family knew him as Jack. Anyone who served with him or who might know anything about him, please contact me at 12 Greene St, Wollaston, MA 02170.

*John Byrnes &
Joanne Hildebrand*
Wollaston, Mass.

My uncle, Louis V. Hunziker Jr., entered the Army in January 1941. For his heroism displayed during the invasion of France he was awarded the Bronze Star. On Dec. 17th, 1944, while serving with the First Army in Belgium during the Battle

See Letters, p.11

Letters, continued from p.10

of the Bulge, he was killed.

I am the only surviving relative and have tried getting information about his records during his service time. I have tried the National Personnel Records Center for over a year with no help. If some of your readers know of another course of action or may have known my uncle, I would appreciate hearing from them.

Please send any information to me at 131 E. Golden Lake Lane, Circle Pines, MN 55014.

Michael Meuhlbauer
Circle Pines, Minn.

I am writing a book about WWII. I need information from anyone who was aboard the USS Nevada on D-Day. Please call me collect, evenings, Eastern Time at (585) 321-1573.

Jim Wojcieszon
Rochester, N.Y.

My father and two uncles served in WWII, and growing up I never told them thank you. So through this letter, I would like to express my thanks to all who served in the military during WWII and risked their lives for my freedom and for this great country.

I am seeking information from anyone who served with my father, Frank E. Cartlidge, or my uncle, Chester R. Cartlidge. My father passed away in 1991. I know he was a gunner on board the USS Mobile in 1945. My uncle served with the 9th Tactical Air Force and was with the 365th fighter group, 387th fighter squad. He said this group was called the Hellhawks. Please contact me at 770 Sudduth Dr., Bridge City, TX 77611.

Judith McKinney
Bridge City, Texas

Purple Heart, continued from p.2

laugh. "She would make his favorite cornmeal pie for him." Lonnie was drafted into the army in May 1944. He had a furlough in September, but wouldn't tell his wife that he was to be shipped overseas to Europe.

"But I knew just by being around him," recalled Florence. By Nov. 18, he was in Italy fighting, she said. He sent her a Christmas gift of Italian crystal during December and Florence still has the last letter he sent to her.

"I've been blessed to have had two good husbands in my lifetime," she said as her eyes teared up. "I loved him so much."

And so do I, Florence. To know that he sacrificed so that I could write these words today and they could be read by free and independent people is so truly amazing. We talk about how wonderful things are in a casual conversation, but what

Uncle Lonnie and thousands of Americans did in so many wars is what is truly and seriously important in this world.

Uncle Lonnie died by machine gun fire in a foxhole in the mountains of northern Italy so I could grow up in a free democracy and not worry if I was going to be killed today. Cherish that Purple Heart? Cherish is just a word we humans use when nothing else really explains the depth of our feelings.

I owe my life and the way I live my life because of veterans like Uncle Lonnie. Men and women who gave their lives for what they believed in. People who left loved ones behind knowing that what they were doing was the right thing. Oh, I will cherish this Purple Heart and I will always remember what it means.

No matter how many times I say it, there will never be enough. For all you stood for and for sacrificing everything, thank you Uncle Lonnie.



WWII Memorial Merchandise Online!

www.wwiimemorial.com



Go to the WWII Memorial Website www.wwiimemorial.com and click the link to the Memorial E-Store!



- Great for gift ideas for active or retired military.

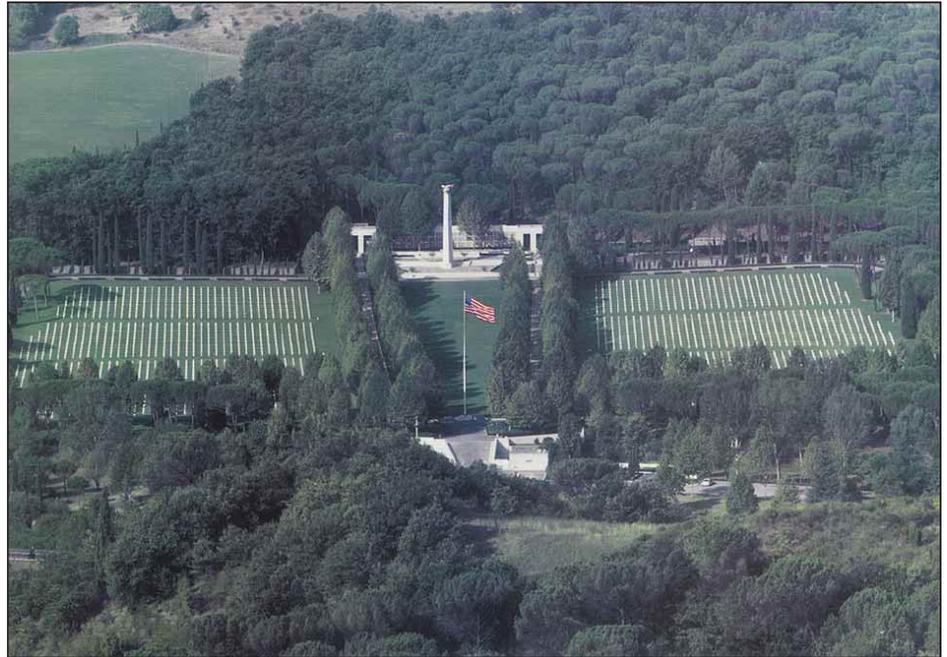
Questions? Contact Customer Service at **1-800-639-4992**

ABMC Cemeteries



Florence American Cemetery, mentioned in Dwayne Wilder's column on page 2, is located about seven and one half miles south of Florence, Italy. The 70-acre site contains 4,402 American graves; another 1,409 names are inscribed on Tablets of the Missing.

Florence is one of 24 overseas cemeteries operated and maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission. Interred in the cemeteries are 124,917 U.S. war dead, including 93,245 killed



in World War II.

For more information about ABMC cemeteries and memorials, including best routes and modes of travel to the cemetery sites, visit the

ABMC web site at www.abmc.gov or write to the American Battle Monuments Commission, 2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22201.



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