

THE ALUMNI ORANGE & BLACK

NEWSLETTER Issue #5-22

WHS O&B Memorial Day 5-25-22

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, SIOUX FALLS, SD

Serving the Classes of The Great '50's Decade. Photos and Stories Requested!

Published by Jack M. Phillips '54. jackmp@me.com

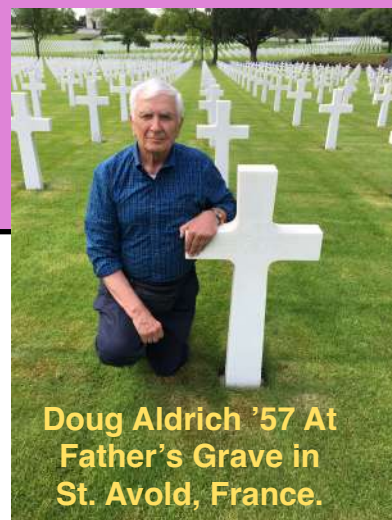
2261 Lauren Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89134 Cell 702-496-3667



Doug Aldrich '57
WHS Senior Photo

On this Memorial Day the O&B is reprinting the sad and moving story of Doug Aldrich '57 and the loss of his father in WWII. Except for the grace of God Doug's loss could have been any one of our losses. Doug's story is one of the most poignant stories the O&B has ever had the privilege of printing. It vividly reminds us of how devastating the terrible tragic times of WWII were not only for all of our mothers and fathers and their friends but also for the entire world. WE MUST NEVER FORGET, WORLD WAR II! It was the deadliest military conflict in history in absolute terms of total casualties. Over 60 million people were killed, which was about 3% of the 1940 world population (est. 2.3 billion).

See Entire Story On Page 17.



Doug Aldrich '57 At
Father's Grave in
St. Avold, France.

Aldrich Story Cont.

Pg.17

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE

This Memorial Day the O&B strongly suggests that you watch this heart warming link. You will be glad you did.

"A Soldier Died Today"

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/eEs4ke7cdNQ?>

Respectfully
and
reverently
prepared by
Jack Phillips
'54



ON ALL O&B PUBLICATIONS OF MORE THAN ONE PAGE YOU MAY NEED TO EITHER DOUBLE CLICK ON THE FIRST PAGE, OR DOWNLOAD THE EMAIL IN ORDER TO OPEN AND VIEW ALL ADDITIONAL PAGES. Jack

This special edition is to remember, honor and thank all WHS Alumni who have served in the military service of our country and to offer a very special tribute and remembrance to those that paid the ultimate price in the defense of our great country.

We grieve that they each died so young! We pray that each of these fine brave young men will eternally rest in peace.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN HONORING THE MILITARY DEAD of WHS

It has been 109 years since Washington High School, our beloved Alma Mater, graduated it's very first class and from those 109 classes, beginning with WWI, literally thousands of our Alumni brothers and sisters have answered the military call of our country. Even though I have been unable to determine the exact number due to incomplete early records I have determined that the number that served from WHS is in the thousands and sadly a very large, but an also unknown number, have paid the ultimate price for the beautiful sweet freedom we all cherish so dearly.

Since this publication is read primarily by graduates from the fifties, I would like to single out and especially honor the four WHS graduates from the 1950's decade who gave their lives for each of us in the service of our country. I think most of us that grew up in the '50's have always felt we were indeed fortunate and even blessed for growing up when we did. One of the many blessings of being part of the '50's generation was that it was the decade that probably called the fewest number of its young people into harms way through military service. Most of us were too young for Korea and too old for Vietnam. Therefore, I was thankful to only find four WHS Alumni from the '50's decade that were killed in war time action. And I thank God there were not more. These four were, **Ronald Ray Van Regenmorter, '54, Roger "Whitey" Axlund '55, Eugene William Kimmel, '56 and Samuel Fantle III, '57.** All four of these truly fine

young men attended WHS at the same time I did and I am so proud to have personally known each of them. My heart aches and tears fill my eyes each time I read of their heroic acts service on behalf of us all. It is extremely sad and tragic that each of their bright, promising, vibrant young lives were cut so short and that each of them were so prematurely taken from their wives, children and loved ones. I hope their stories are as moving to you as they are to me and that each of you will as I do find large lumps in your throats and heavy tears in your eyes.

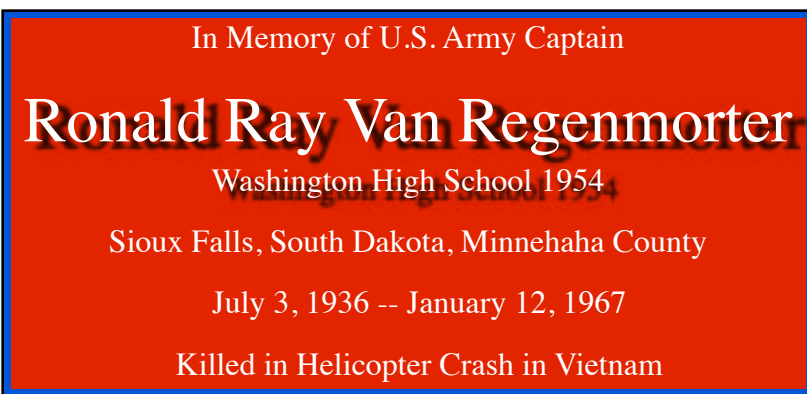
Since there is now a large number of WHS graduates from the '40's and '60's that subscribe to ***The Alumni Orange & Black***, I am including in this memorial edition the names of other WHS Alumni that gave their lives during the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

Unfortunately no records could be found listing casualties from WWII that could be traced back to WHS. You will see below the 10 WHS Alumni casualties of the Korean War and 13 additional WHS Alumni that lost their lives during the Vietnam War.

On this Memorial Day of 2022, let us remember, and honor each of these very special men as well as the hundreds of thousands of their brave comrades, both men and women, that have died defending and preserving our freedom. Let us each pray that God gives them eternal peace. And on this, one of our most meaningful and inspirational holidays, let each of us ask God to bless each one of our men and women that are still in harms way fighting for America and defending our liberties around the world. May God bless each of them and the United States of America.



Ronald Van Regenmorter
WHS '54 Senior Photo.



Ronald Ray Van Regenmorter and his twin brother, Donald, were born to Henry and Nellie Van Regenmorter on July 3, 1936, in Worthington, Minnesota, but were raised in Rushmore, Minnesota. Their father died in 1948 and the family moved to Worthing, where the boys finished grade school. At that point, Ronald moved to Minneapolis where he attended his freshman year of high school apart from Donald. Then they were reunited when they went to live with their sister in Sioux Falls, where they completed their sophomore year at Washington High School. Then Ronald went to Brandon High School for a year while he worked on a farm. After their mother remarried, the twins were reunited and **graduated from**

Washington High School in 1954. During his years at Washington, he met his future wife, **Karen Ann Dibben '56**, whom he married on July 28, 1956, in Sioux Falls. Ronald and Karen eventually had two children, Kim Marie and Randy Ray.

Ronald Van Regenmorter—and his twin brother, Donald, first entered the service after high school in June of 1954 and were trained at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. Ronald went on to Airborne training at Fort Dix, New Jersey, and was then stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, before being sent overseas to serve at Fort Wood in Japan, where Ronald served as a Chaplain's assistant. At that time, Ronald decided to train as a pilot. He attended helicopter training at Camp Wolters, Texas, and Fort Rucker, Alabama. He earned his wings and commission as a warrant officer in 1958; but because he wanted to be “in a position where he could lead men” he then went on to Officer's Candidate School and graduated as a second lieutenant in 1962. First stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado, he went on to duty in Hawaii with the 25th Infantry Division from January 1964 through March 1966. During this time he was promoted to captain. From there he went overseas to Vietnam in March 1966 with the 720th Maintenance Battalion as company commander, but later transferred to the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, 8th Support Battalion as their aircraft maintenance officer. Two days before his death he sent a letter to his family and described his meeting a four-year-old Vietnamese girl who was going blind, so he took her and her mother to a doctor and helped pay their expenses. When asked why he had done it, Ronald mentioned his children at home and he hoped that if they needed help, someone would help them. The following is a short quote from his letter home:

. “Children are the same the world over and if nothing else can get to GI, a kid can... Looking at that little four-year old girl makes me realize how fortunate and lucky we are. God has been good to us and I can appreciate and love more each day our children and you....”

On January 12, 1967, Captain Ronald Van Regenmorter was killed in Vietnam “while moving a helicopter from one part of the airstrip to another when the engine failed and the helicopter crashed and burned” at Tay Ninh near Saigon. After his death, his body was returned to the United States. A funeral service was held at East Side Presbyterian Church and then he was buried at Hills of Rest Cemetery with full military honors.

Among Capt. Van Regenmorter's many awards were the Good Conduct Medal, Airborne Jump Wings, Flight Wings, Vietnam Service and Campaign Medal, Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and Air Medal with multiple Oak Leaf Clusters..

At the time of his death he was survived by his mother, Mrs. Richard Brinkman; four brothers, Peter, Cornelius and Leonard, and his twin brother Captain Donald Van Regenmorter, and three sisters, Mrs. John Poppens, Mrs. Melvin Osterkamp, and Mrs. Eugene Cummings, plus his widow, Karen, and his children, Kim and Randy.

This entry was respectfully submitted by Sami Stadel and Hannah Wattier, 8th grade, Spearfish Middle School, Spearfish, South Dakota, on March 28, 2006. Information for this entry was provided by a South Dakota Vietnam Veteran's bonus application, the *Argus Leader*, issues, January 16, 17, 22 of 1967 and the VVMF website at www.vvmf.org. Additional information and profile approval by Donald Van Regenmorter, Captain, USA Retired, Fremont, Indiana. End Van Regenmorter story



Karen Dibben '56
WHS Senior Photo

WE MUST REMEMBER!

We pause on this Memorial Day, a brief moment in time,
To bring close to our hearts those memories we hold so dear
Of the men and women before us who unselfishly put their
dreams, their lives on the line.

Where danger lay as a stalker,
waiting to take away each breath, while the soldier
plowed with determination the furrows of death.

We must remember, we must, you and I,



Roger Whitey Axlund
'55 WHS Senior Photo

In Memory of U.S. Air Force 1st LT

Roger C. "Whitey" Axlund

Washington High School 1955

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

August 7, 1937 - August 28, 1963

Killed during combat training 15 miles West of
Destruction Island, Washington in the Pacific Ocean.



Whitey's actual F-105A, #59-142
plane that he crashed in.
His body has never been found.

Sometime during the afternoon of August 27, 1963, First Lieutenant Roger C. Axlund of the 498th FIS, began his flight planning routine for a night ECM/ECCM intercept training mission against an EB-57E (According to the accident report, it was a TB-57E, though the B-57 did not have a training variant. The B-57E had dual controls and was sometimes used for training and was hence designated a TB-57 in those instances. And some referred to it as a TB-57 at all times. Because it was being used as a defense system evaluator, it will be referred to as an EB-57 here.) temporarily deployed to McChord AFB, Washington from Hill AFB, Utah.

Lieutenant Axlund would likely have been taken out to his aircraft about an hour before launch. He was assigned to F-106A #59-142 and took off at 0005 on August 28, 1963, with two+ hours worth of fuel. The EB-57 had departed McChord AFB at five minutes before midnight with 4+ hours of fuel.

SAGE (Semi-Automatic Ground Environment, a kind of Air Defense Ground Control) conducted the approach. Both the B-57 and the F-106 (Six) were in contact with the SAGE controller. The B-57 was communicating with voice comm, while the six was using a data-link (only mandatory safety and intercept calls were made by voice). Weather was clear, visibility was six miles in smoke.

The mission had been fully briefed between the crews of the Sixes and the B-57, since the ECM equipment in the EB-57 was new to the ADC training inventory. The B-57 turned on all of its jammers (four in number) until one of the generators failed, so the crew turned off the forward two jammers. This would be no problem since all of the attacks were expected to be from the aft quarters. There were two F-106s up conducting intercepts, alternating attacks. The B-57 maintained 250 KIAS (Knots Indicated Air Speed) and headings as directed by the SAGE controller.

Axlund called two successful attacks to the SAGE controller, even though there was non-standard language used. Axlund had reported no malfunctions or deficiencies. He made another visual contact on the B-57 and called separation on and visual contact with the other F-106. He then called a lock-on to the ECM jamming source. He continued to attack the ECM Jamming source and collided with the B-57. The six's vertical stabilizer hit the B-57's number one engine (Left) and the six continued on from under the B-57's wing. The top 52 inches of the vertical stabilizer separated from the F-106.

The B-57 reported the collision to the SAGE controller and turned back toward McChord, about 95 miles East. The collision occurred at 0109 local, at 47 degrees 43 minutes N. , 124 degrees 45 minutes West. This was approximately 15 miles off shore, due West of Destruction Island, Washington.

Axlund was observed flying straight and level for about a mile, when he began a gentle left turn. He did not transmit after he reported the ECM lock-on. About three minutes prior to the collision. The UHF antenna was destroyed in the collision. The other F-106 had Axlund in sight and watched him begin and accelerated descent, seemingly stabilized on a heading toward shore. Axlund's aircraft began to pitch down and increased speed, in the opinion of the Six observing him, into the trans-sonic region. Somewhere under 20,000 feet, the observer saw a flash from Axlund's aircraft, which he took to be an ejection. Immediately after that, he lost radar and visual contact with Axlund's plane.

The B-57 returned to McChord safely. The crew was uninjured, though the pilot had to shut down his number one engine due to fire/overheat indications.

It appears, from this partial report, that Axlund was never located. One suspects wreckage from the aircraft was picked up, since the exact measurements of the lost vertical stabilizer appears to be known.

The track on the map that came with this partial report shows that the intercepts were conducted from the North Western tip of Washington down to about even with the Kalaloch area, where the collision occurred. The left and right elevons appear to have drifted quite a ways, having been located somewhere in the vicinity of Grays Harbor.

June 30, 2011: Hi Jack – My name is Russ Huhn (Class of 55). Most know me as Rusty. My brother Robert (Class of 50) and I met you at the all school reunion in 2010. Like so many others I want to thank you for all the time you spend to keep everyone up to date. I have an interesting story about my Gibbs Hi-Y buddy Roger “Whitey” Axlund. After graduation he went off to the Air Force Academy and I enlisted in the Air Force about the same time frame. In 1957 I was walking through the Seattle Air port to catch a flight to Alaska. Out of no where I heard this loud “Rusty” and turned to see Whitey breaking ranks from a line of Air Force cadets and racing across the terminal. He picked me up and held me above his head sporting a big audacious smile. Then he glanced back at his group and said “uh oh – I’m going to get in trouble for this. Oh well, it was worth it. It was great seeing you, Rusty”. With that he gently put me down, smiled, and jogged back to the line of cadets. It was the last time I saw him.



**Russ Huhn '55
WHS Senior Photo**

In the year 2000, my wife, Carole, and I visited the Air Force Academy and we looked up the heroes' wall which honors those of the Academy that have given their lives. We found his marker and took a piece of tissue paper and penciled it. I have to say it was one of the most touching moments of my life. He was a remarkable human being. By the way, did you know that he won the award of Air Defense Command Pilot of the year? I believe it was his first year out of the Academy. Russ Huhn '55

Editor's Note: After several hours of searching I have been unable to find any record of there ever having been a funeral service for Whitey, or even an obituary ever being written. If that is indeed true I suspect it is because his body was never recovered. I was able to discover that Whitey married Judith M. Brawner in 1961. Judith was born, grew up and educated in the Spokane, WA area. She and Whitey had one son, Roger Scott Axlund, who would have been approximately one year old at the time of his father's death.

Whitey was a member of the very first class of the Air Force Academy starting as a freshman in 1955 and then being a member of the first graduation class in 1959. There are no records available for the Academies first baseball team roster in 1956, but if they had a team I am sure Whitey was on it. He is listed as a member of the '57, '58 & '59 teams. Whitey was always an outstanding athlete and while at WHS excelled in football. He was also a very popular and respected young man while at WHS as evidenced by him being elected to homecoming royalty in his 1955 senior year.



I would like to thank Russ Huhn '55, Don Noordsy '58 and Richard O'Connor '58 for sending me some source material on Whitey. End of Axlund story.

Whitey - 1955 WHS football team



We must never forget!

In Memory of U.S. Marine Corps Captain

Eugene William Kimmel

Washington High School 1956

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

August 20, 1938 -- October 22, 1968

Died When an Aircraft He Was Flying Crashed in Combat in Quang Nam Province, Vietnam



Gene Kimmel
WHS Class of '56
(Photo: Sophomore,
University S.D., 1961)



Mary Lou Heacock
From Rapid City
Jr. Yr. Photo at USD '61

E u g e n e

William "Gene" Kimmel was born on August 20, 1938, to Otto and Beatrice Isabel (Mellenberndt) Kimmel in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He attended Washington High School and graduated in 1956. Right out of high school, Eugene joined the service, training with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. During his first enlistment, he completed 36 parachute jumps. After being discharged, he attended the University of South Dakota. While in college, he married his wife, Mary Lou Heacock, on August 1, 1961, in Rapid City, South Dakota. Eugene first received his BA Degree in 1963 followed by an MA in government from USD in 1964. While at USD, he was the editor of the Volante, President of the Strollers, Treasurer and Pledge Trainer of Delta Tau Delta Fraternity, Vice President of the Press Club, President of the Publications Board, and a member of Omicron Delta Kappa. His son, Greg, also told us that Gene was a published writer, loved racing sports cars, and was a skilled hunter who loved the outdoors..

After college Kimmel enlisted in the service again in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in 1963, this time in the Marine Corps where he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and completed flight school. In 1965 he was sent to Vietnam flying the A-4 Skyhawk (a single-seat jet) out of Chu Lai, Vietnam. While in Vietnam in 1966, Captain Kimmel wrote to his parents the following words: "... I'd like to think I have made an attempt, although small it may be, to leave a safer more secure world than the one I had... I don't want you to think this war is for nothing... God made us all different, to think and feel and do what we think is right."

On June 21, 1966, Captain Kimmel's plane exploded in Vietnam just before takeoff on his 113th mission from the Marine Expeditionary Air Base at Chu Lai, Vietnam, and he suffered a lot of burns. After he had some time recovering, he was assigned as an advanced jet instructor in Kingsville, Texas. While there he experienced another close call while he was teaching "a young aviation cadet how to fly a Navy jet over Corpus Christi, Texas," when he and his student had to bail out of the plane. Eventually he went for a second tour of Vietnam in the summer of 1968, this time as a pilot of an OV-10 Bronco, a two-seat reconnaissance plane armed with rockets and machine guns that flew much lower and slower than his A-4 had. Because of that, he wrote home that he had been shot at more in a single month than he had been during his whole first tour in 1965-1966. In a letter to Dr. Farber at USD, he wrote, "...I really enjoyed my tour as an instructor at Kingsville, Texas, but tired of simply reading about the war and not doing anything about it. So I volunteered for another Viet Nam tour and here I am flying as a Forward Air Controller. And it's been exciting. The war is much more personal from these little planes than it ever was as a fighter pilot....but it's a damn sight more dangerous and the daily control over another man's life or death, both from my own guns and from the impersonal air strikes and artillery I control, is a heavy responsibility to carry...."

Marine Captain Eugene William “Gene” Kimmel died on October 22, 1968, “in Quang Nam Province, Republic of Vietnam when the aircraft he was flying crashed while on a combat mission.” The body of Eugene Kimmel was returned to his family in the United States and his funeral service was at First Presbyterian Church followed by his burial with military honors at Hills of Rest in Sioux Falls.

At www.vvmf.org, there is a posting in remembrance of Captain Kimmel. In it are the following words: “He was a dedicated Captain of Marines and an exceptional Naval Aviator.” The author, C.P. Calvert, Jr., went on to say, “In support of his brother Marines on the ground that October day in 1968 Gene made the ultimate sacrifice that others might live. I am honored to have known him and inspired by his sense of duty to his country and Corps. As I packed Gene’s gear and wrote the letter of condolence home, I put our loss behind me and continued with the job at hand but never forgetting the sacrifice made.”

Captain Kimmel received lots of awards and honors. Among them were the Air Medal with multiple Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross; the citation is as follows:

“For heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial flight while serving as a Pilot with Marine Observation Squadron Two, Marine Aircraft Group Sixteen, First Marine Aircraft Wing in connection with operations against insurgent communist (Viet Cong) forces in the Republic of Vietnam. On the morning of 22 October 1968, Captain KIMMEL launched as Pilot aboard an OV-10 Bronco observation aircraft assigned as a Tactical Air Controller (Airborne) in support of the First Marine Division. Proceeding to the designated area, he alertly observed the movement of a large enemy force, and while requesting tactical aircraft to conduct air strikes against the enemy emplacements, his aircraft came under intense hostile fire. Upon the arrival of the fixed wing aircraft, Captain KIMMEL directed his comrades to orbit while he skillfully maneuvered his Bronco into a run to pinpoint the hostile locations with smoke rockets. Ignoring a heavy volume of enemy fire directed at his aircraft, he fearlessly commenced his approach and, while attempting to mark the hostile targets, his aircraft crashed. Captain KIMMEL’s courage, exceptional aeronautical ability and steadfast devotion to duty inspired all who served with him and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life in the service of his country.”

In addition, Tom Brokaw wrote about Gene in an essay for the Virtual Wall in September of 2000. In it, he refers to Gene as his friend “who did not come back.” He called Gene “a daring, iconoclastic and brilliant young man from the South Dakota prairie.” He also recalled how before Gene’s second tour, they had talked long into the night about the war. After Gene’s funeral just a few months later, Gene’s father took Brokaw by the hand and quietly remarked, “Whatever he done, he done good, didn’t he?”

Current survivors of Eugene are his widow, Mary Lou Emanuel, Aurora, Nebraska; his son, Greg Kimmel, La Jolla, California; and his daughter, Susan Yurchuck, Woodstock, Georgia. His mother, Beatrice Kimmel, recently passed away.

This entry was respectfully submitted by Samantha Sparrow, 8th grader, Spearfish Middle School, February 7, 2005. This information was provided by the Argus Leader, October 23, 1968, issue, the Vietnam Veterans Bonus Application, and <<http://www.vvmf.org//index.cfm?SectionID=110&anClip=24391>>. Additional information, photos, and profile approval by the Kimmel family via Greg Kimmel. End of Kimmel story.



The Promise Kept

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Their son was only two weeks old; their daughter's years were three

When duty called this pilot to the war across the sea.

"Let's just pretend you're only going on a business trip.

Each day we'll write about the things we've done and then we'll slip
a note into an envelope and put it in the mail.

You send me yours; I'll send you mine, I promise, without fail."

He walked away with pounding heart while fighting back the tears
with "Come home soon, I love you, Daddy" ringing in his ears.

They kept that promise, sealed with love some 30 years ago.

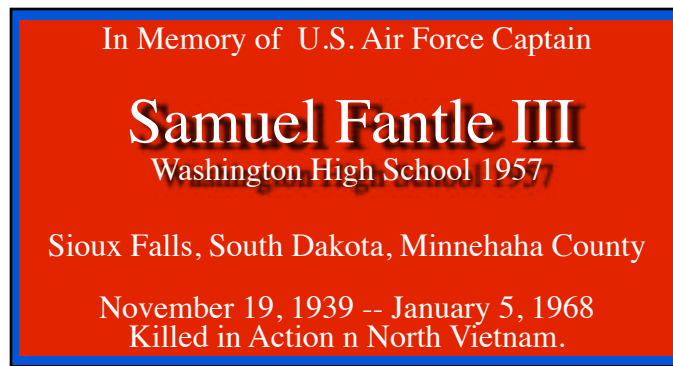
They sent him tapes and photographs so he could watch them grow.

They're married now with children of their own who, at the Wall,
ask "Was my Grandpa brave?" and Grandma says, "Bravest of all."

By Theodore O'Hara, 1847
The muffled drum's sad roll
has beat
The soldier's last tattoo'
No more on life's parade shall
meet
That brave and fallen few;
On Fame's eternal camping
ground
Their silent tents are spread;
But Glory guards with solemn
round
The bivouac of the dead.



Sam Fantle
1956 High School
Football Student Manager



Sam Fantle
Senior Photo from
1957 WHS Yearbook.

Samuel Fantle III was born November 19, 1939, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to Samuel Jr. and Evelyn (Mochlas) Fantle. He had three siblings: Stephanie, Steve, and Susan. The family owned, among other successful business ventures, a chain of department stores in the Midwest. Samuel attended grade school in Sioux Falls and graduated from Washington High School in 1957. Among his high school activities, Sam was a straight- A student, active in Science Club, Pep Club, Boy's State, chorus (including All-State) Spanish, track, debate, and was student manager in football. In addition to being a "handsome, popular boy" he was described as a "big, strong guy," who stood 6'4. Samuel attended the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. He went on to finish his degree at the University of Ohio with a degree in applied mathematics.

Samuel Fantle III first entered the service in September 30, 1960, at Harlingen Air Force Base, Texas. Although he wanted to be a pilot, his asthma, his height, and his superior educational background were factors in his placement as a radar interceptor operator instead. On February 5, 1962, in Houston, Texas, at the Houston Waldorf-Astoria, Samuel married his wife, Mary Louise, whom he had met while he was in flight school. Later Samuel and Mary had two children, Gregory and Melissa. In December 1965, the Air Force approved orders for Sam to attend Stanford University to obtain a Ph.D. in applied mathematics. Samuel, Louise and son Greg were in the process of moving to California when Sam received a temporary reassignment to go to Vietnam to fly the "100" missions requirement. They were redirected to go to Nellis AFB at Las Vegas, NV where Samuel trained for his war mission. Greg was three when his father was first sent overseas to Takhli AB, Thailand in May 13, 1966. In 1967, Louise went into labor with Melissa; while she was at the hospital, a category-5 hurricane, Beulah, destroyed their home. Louise, Greg, and newborn Melissa had no possessions until the Red Cross provided some relief. Shortly afterward, Samuel came back on leave and bought a house for his family in Alamo, Texas.

Stationed in Thailand as an Electronics Warfare Officer in the U.S. Air Force, 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Captain Fantle flew aboard an F-105 "Thud" Thunderchief. Called the Wild Weasels, these two-seater aircrafts' job *"was to precede a strike force into the target area, entice enemy surface-to-air missile and antiaircraft radars to come on the air, and knock them out with bombs or with missiles that homed on the radar's emissions. Often they were in a high-threat area for half an hour while the strike force attacked its targets and withdrew,"* according to the *Air Force Magazine Online*.

The following details about Captain Fantle's death were at www.pownetwork.org. On January 5, 1968, Captain Samuel Fantle III, co-pilot of an F-105, went on a combat mission over North Vietnam from the Air Force Base at Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base. As the lead plane of four, "at about 35 miles northeast of Hanoi" Fantle's plane was hit by enemy fire "causing the plane to go out of control and forcing the crew to eject." A

witness saw Samuel landing but “*intense hostilities prevented rescue.*” At that time, he was officially listed as missing in action and his family was notified.

This was Samuel’s 99th mission and he was set to rotate back to the United States and his family after his 100th. His wife, Louise, remembers clearly the day the three military men drove up to her house. Since they were not living close to the Air Force base, she knew immediately why they were there. After a long period of waiting, when no further word was received, in January of 1969, Samuel’s parents asked Senator McGovern to meet with North Vietnamese officials who claimed Samuel had “*hit a rock on bailout.*” Although other plausible scenarios exist as to the fate of Captain Fantle, the official record states that he was considered missing in action until December 9, 1969, “*the date on which evidence received in the Department of the Air Force was considered sufficient to conclusively establish the death.*” Sometime after the war was over, Samuel’s remains were “*discovered*” and returned to U.S. authorities. He was buried with military honors at the Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1976. Samuel Fantle is survived by his mother, Evelyn, Aurora, Colorado; his sister, Susan Fantle, Denver, Colorado; his widow, Louise Fantle, Aurora, Colorado; his son, Greg (Barbara) Fantle and their three children, Sarah, and twins, Max and Lauren, Littleton, Colorado; and his daughter, Melissa (Thomas) Davis, and their two children, Samuel and Nathan, Hupperath, Germany .

This entry was respectfully submitted by Gavin Cordell, 8th grade, Spearfish Middle School, Spearfish, South Dakota, on March 29, 2006. Information for this entry was provided by a South Dakota Vietnam Veterans’ bonus application, the *Sioux Falls Argus Leader* issue, Sunday January 7, 1968, www.pownetwork.org, and <http://www.afa.org/default.asp>. Additional information by Greg Fantle, son, and Louise Fantle, widow. Profile approval by Louise Fantle. End of Fantle story.

REMEMBER ME

This long black wall is somber, true.
Name after name of those who died for you,
And as I sit and weep beneath a tree
I hear them scream, 'REMEMBER ME'.

I touch the granite stone. It's cold.
Their average age was but twenty years old.
They hardly left their mother's knee!
"Remember me. PLEASE, remember me".

Vietnam was so very far away.
Their call was duty, not for play.
Our country had a pledge to keep.
They answered it. We stayed to weep.

I reach to touch each name I can.
Some left, a boy; returned a man.
The others are upon this wall I see
I hear them whisper, "Remember me".

--Esther B. (Campbell) Gates

The Hero

The angel hovered just above-
The lifeless form below-
A life that started with a cry-
Not many years ago.

Come now my son, you must arise-
Your work here now is ended-
You have fought for right and freedom-
Your country you have defended.

We go now to another place-
Where peace and love abide-
And join your comrades who will greet you-
In your heavenly home on high.

All those you love, and those who love you-
In their hearts you will forever be-
The one who gave his very all-
That the living may be free.
Ex Sergeant, Claude Peter Dhuet
USAF World War II

WHS KOREAN WAR CASUALTIES

In Memory of
U.S. Air Force First Lieutenant

Kenneth D. Frank

Washington High School 1932

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

February 25, 1918 – November 14, 1951

Died in an Plane Crash in Farmingdale, SD



In Memory of
U.S. Army Private First Class

LeRoy Kenneth Halvorson

Washington High School 1942

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

March 29, 1925 – June 6, 1951

Killed in Action in Korea

In Memory of

U.S. Air Force Captain

Garland DuWayne Hanson

Washington High School 1943

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

January 4, 1925--December 7, 1954

Killed in Non-Hostile Crash of a T-33
Jet Trainer near Lake Huron, Michigan



In Memory of

U.S. Army Private

Richard Calvin Hargus

Washington High School 1949

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

August 23, 1929 – August 6, 1951

Killed in Action in Korea

In Memory of

U.S. Naval Fireman E3

Dale Lloyd Hoover

Washington High School '48

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

May 11, 1930 -- September 26, 1950

Missing in Action, Lost at Sea



Dale was the
brother of
Dwight "Ike"
Hoover '52



In Memory of

U.S. Army First Lieutenant

Burdell Merle Krueger

Washington High School 1943

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

July 29, 1925 – October 30, 1954

Died in a Car Accident near Gainesville, TX

In Memory of

U.S. Marine Corps Private First Class

Ronald Dean Murphy

Washington High School 1943

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

October 30, 1929 – March 26, 1953

Killed in Action in Korea



In Memory of
U.S. Army Sergeant

Marvin Edward Pascoe

Washington High School 1942

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

October 14, 1925 – January 1, 1951

Killed in Action in Korea

In Memory of
U.S. Army Private

Ronald Lee Preston

Washington High School 1948

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

July 18, 1932 -- July 25, 1950

Killed in Action in South Korea



In Memory of

U.S. Air Force Captain

Talvin Judine Roraus

Washington High School 1939

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Minnehaha County

May 27, 1922 – October 20, 1950

Killed in Action in Korea



WHS VIETNAM WAR CASUALTIES

In Memory of U.S. Navy Captain

Donald Deane Aldern

Washington High School 1948

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

May 5, 1930 – June 29, 1970

Missing in Action, Declared Dead in So. Laos



In Memory of U. S. Army Private First Class

Louis James Cunningham, Jr.

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

November 19, 1947 – December 19, 1965



In Memory of U.S. Marine Lance Corporal

Paul Olynn Evans

Washington High School 1962

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

June 21, 1945 -- December 22, 1966

Killed in Action in Quang Tri Province, So. Vietnam



In Memory of U.S. Marine Private First Class

Edgar Allen Flowers

Washington High School 1967

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

August 16, 1948 – March 31, 1969

Killed Near Quang Nam Province, Vietnam

In Memory of US Army Specialist Fourth Class

Ronald Charles Gehler

Washington High School 1960

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

September 12, 1943 -- February 15, 1967

Killed in Action in Vietnam



In Memory of Army Cpl.

Robert Milton Jacobs

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

June 15, 1946 – May 10, 1968

Killed in hostile ground action in An Nukt Tan, Gia Din Province, South Vietnam

In Memory of U.S. Marine Private First Class

Dennis Clark Knutson

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

November 17, 1945--July 23 1966

Died of Wounds in Vietnam



In Memory of U.S. Navy Hospitalman

Roger Miller Nelson

Washington High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

September 16, 1947 – April 7, 1968

Killed in Action at Khe Sanh, Vietnam

In Memory of Marine Lance Corporal

Roger Allen Petersen

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

February 8, 1947 - October 14, 1966

Died in Quang Ngai Province, South Vietnam



In Memory of U. S Marine Corps Private First Class

Donald Wayne Simonson

Washington High School 1967

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

March 14, 1949 – August 29, 1968

Killed in Action in Quang Nam Province in Vietnam

WHS VIETNAM WAR CASUALTIES

Continued

In Memory of U.S. Army Private First Class

Darrell Dean Venenga

WHS & Lincoln High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County
September 3, 1947 – November 17, 1967
Died of Wounds in Vietnam



In Memory of U.S. Army Specialist Fifth Class

Randall Lee Williams

Washington High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County
February 8, 1947 – June 2, 1969



In Memory of U.S. Marine Lance Corporal

Larry Dean Winterton

Washington High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

June 3, 1947 – July 17, 1968

Died in the U.S. General Army Hospital,
Yokohama, Japan from wounds received in Vietnam.



We all walked the same halls, sat in the same classrooms, and attended programs in the same wonderfully grand old auditorium at Washington High School, but the path the men above chose after leaving WHS led them in such a different direction. It was a path of such great distinction and service that made not only those that knew and loved them so very proud, but all of America proud. It took them in a direction that ultimately asked for all they had to give, *and they did indeed give all they had to give*. It is so inadequate, but now all we can offer these extremely brave and selfless men are our tears and a simple, *Thank You and May God Bless You For Eternity*.

**104,366 Brave Americans Are
Buried In Our 20 Beautiful & Sacred
American Military Cemeteries Across Europe.**

1. The American Cemetery at Aisne-Marne, France... A total of 2289



2. The American Cemetery at Ardennes, Belgium... A total of 5329



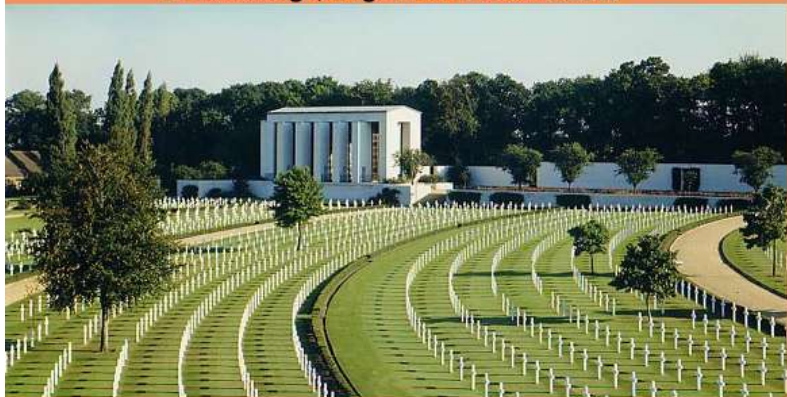
3. The American Cemetery at Brittany, France... A total of 4410



4. Brookwood, England - American Cemetery... A total of 468



5. Cambridge, England... A total of 3812



6. Epinal, France - American Cemetery... A total of 5525



7. Flanders Field, Belgium... A total of 368



8. Florence, Italy... A total of 4402



9. Henri-Chapelle, Belgium... A total of 7992



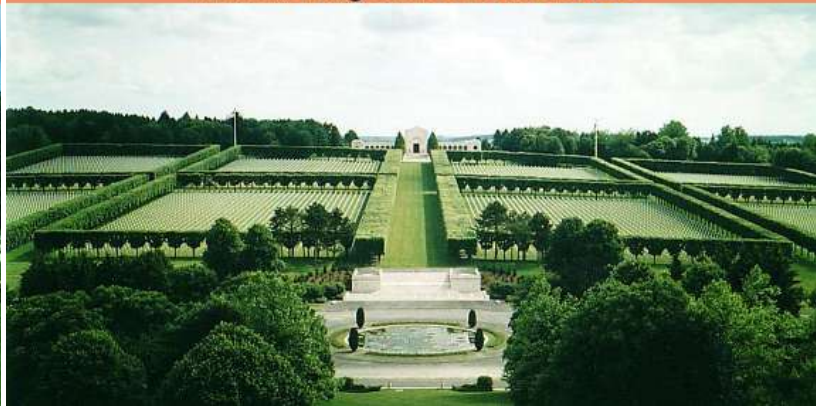
10. Lorraine, France... A total of 10,489



11. Luxembourg, Luxembourg... A total of 5076



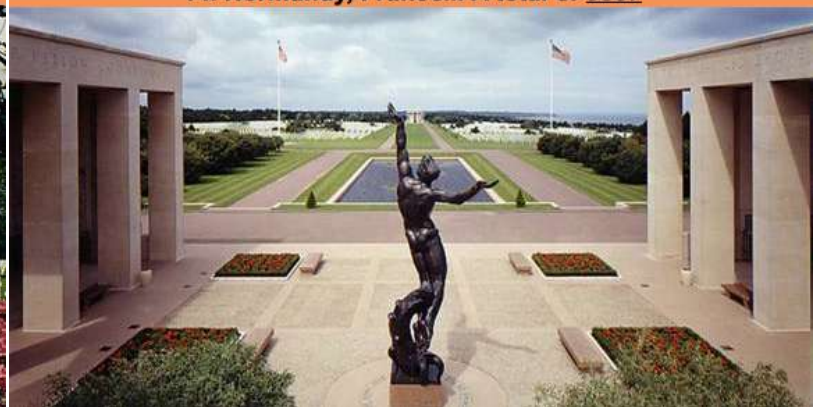
12. Meuse-Argonne... A total of 14246



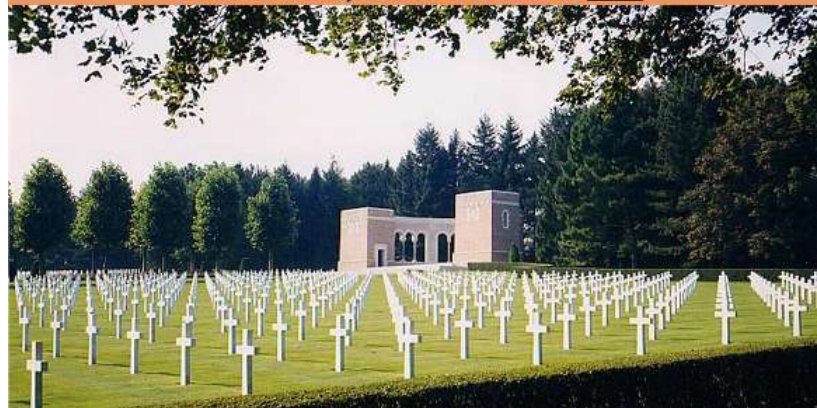
13. Netherlands, Netherlands... A total of 8301



14. Normandy, France... A total of 9387



15. Oise-Aisne, France... A total of 6012



16. Rhone, France... A total of 861



17. Sicily, Italy... A total of 7861



18. Somme, France... A total of 1844





The count is 104,366 brave
Americans buried in Europe.

We should never apologize to anyone!
We should remind them of our sacrifice,
and to not confuse arrogance with leadership.

How many French, Dutch, Italians, Belgians
and Brits are buried on our soil....
after defending us against our enemies?

We don't ask for praise....
but we have absolutely no need to apologize!

*In memory of many,
In honor of all,
Thank you*

Memorial Day May 30, 2022



Doug Aldrich '57
WHS Senior Photo

ALDRICH STORY CONTINUED

In Honor of Pvt. James C. Aldrich
Killed In Acton In Europe On November 16, 1944



Marcia Aldrich '58
Sister, WHS Senior
Photo, Deceased

On Apr 12, 2017, **Doug Aldrich '57** <doug.aldrich@comcast.net> wrote:

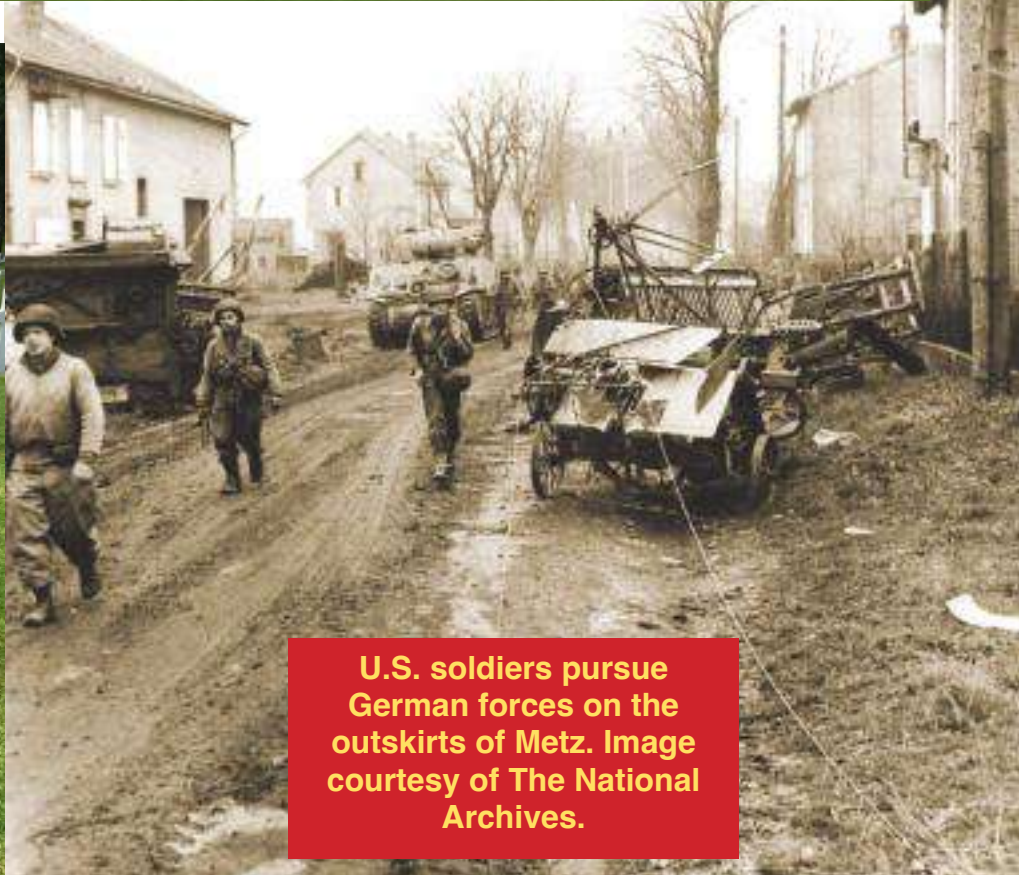
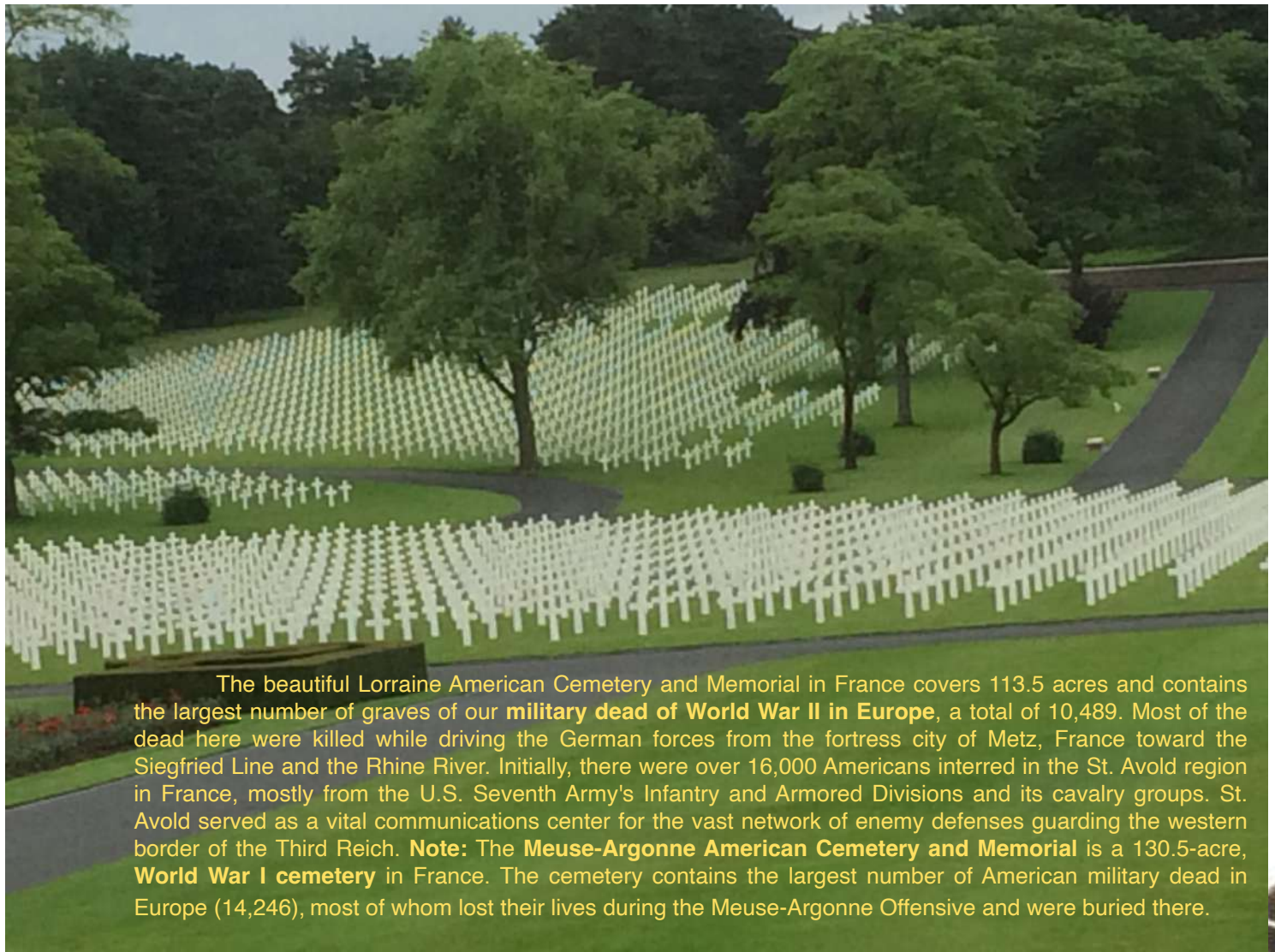
Jack, thank you for such a quick response. Please feel free to choose whichever picture you like of me at the cemetery site. It was still a very moving moment on my third visit. My four children and four of my grandchildren have been there too.

I have some clear memories as a four-year-old, and do remember my father while we lived in Ft Dodge Iowa. He always wore a suit going to work, and one day was late coming home. When I asked why, he said he was tied up there.....which gave me images of ropes around him! We listened



Lorraine American cemetery in St Avold France

to radio music and lived in a small house, which I drove by many years later, and saw how tiny it was. In the autumn, I remember his Army leave and wearing an air corps cap; I didn't know he was shipping out. The next related memory was that my mother, sister and I shopped for a Christmas tree. After coming home, a young man came upstairs with The Telegram, and my mother fell apart. I will never forget that





Doug's Younger Son & Two of His Grandchildren Paying Homage.



Karolyn and Doug Aldrich '57,



Doug's Mother, Ruby Brown Aldrich WHS '34, his sister, Marcia '58, 2 years old, deceased and Doug, at age 4. Doug's mother played in the WHS Band with Ardeen Foss and 23 years later Doug played French horn and Marcia played clarinet in Mr. Foss's WHS Band and Orchestra. Doug, & Marcia attended Mark Twain and their Mother attended Lowell.

moved us to Sioux Falls where her folks lived, and my life unfolded from there.

In 1944, manpower was strained due to many casualties fighting around the world, so drafting and enlistments were sought. We know from records that my father volunteered that spring and went to basic training at Camp Fannin, and ended up assigned to Patton's Third Army. Since the encircling Falaise pocket didn't close after D-Day, 100K Germans slipped back to their border. This made the fighting around Metz particularly vicious with less-than-adequate training of the troops placed there. (I still have my father's penciled note on lined paper written some days before my 5th birthday. He wished me Happy Birthday, and thought my mother would take me to a show.) An uncle serving nearby found out that my father was hit his first night on the lines, then suffered and died ten days later. Soldiers killed were placed in temporary graves until the American cemetery as completed and final internment was given there.

The Lorraine American cemetery is in St Avold France, just north of Metz amid gentle rolling hills and trees. The tall memorial overlooks the crosses and inside are several recollections of maps, flags, MIA's and blessings. (Jack, I'm enclosing a few pictures to give you impressions on a cloudy day, not that you should necessarily need use them.) In the opening scene from "Private Ryan" at the Normandy cemetery, the same emotions wash over you as you walk the grounds, and then find father's place. When my younger son went there, picture enclosed, he and two grandchildren are contemplating the cross. (My grandson is his namesake too.) The silence is overwhelming and the scene so tranquil.

Another grandson is also in the military serving. At Christmas, I gave him the 48-star flag my mother received after the war, as well as the Purple Heart medal and its certificate. He will be assembling everything in a flag case, and maybe pass it on to his son or grandson someday. It was an emotional but uplifting time.

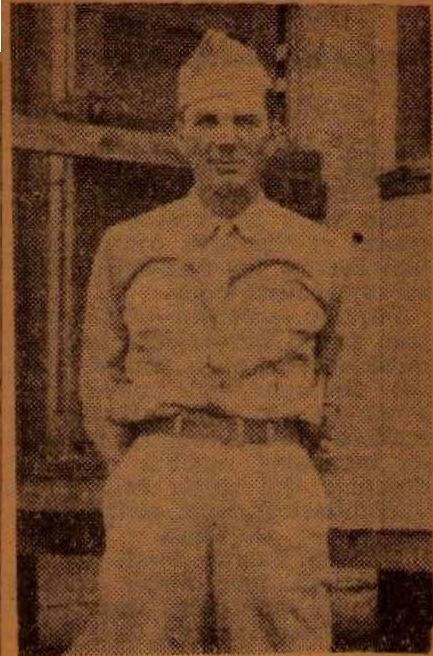
As an aside, my mother's cousin went down in the *Oklahoma* at Pearl Harbor. His remains were just identified through DNA, so he was just finally interred in a full Navy ceremony on May 12, 2017 in the Iowa family plot. Whether in military cemeteries around the world or entombed in sunken ships, Memorial Day should be a time of thankfulness to those men and women who died, served and are still doing so for our country. **Doug Aldrich '57**



U.S. Army Private James C. Aldrich shown while in basic training at Camp Fannin, TX in 1944. Camp Fannin was a U.S. Army Infantry Replacement Training Center and prisoner-of-war camp located near Tyler, Texas. It was opened in 1943 and only operated for four years, before closing in 1946. It is credited with training over 200,000 U.S. Soldiers, sometimes as many as 40,000 at one given time.

FORT DODGE, (IOWA), M

Killed In Action



PVT. JAMES ALDRICH

Still another Fort Dodger, Pvt. James C. Aldrich, 29-year-old infantryman, has been killed in action in Europe.

As previously reported by The Messenger, Aldrich died Nov. 16 while serving with Gen. George Patton's third army.

His wife and two children, Douglas, five, and Marcia, three, live at 1412 Second avenue north. His parents live at Sioux Falls, S. D.

Aldrich was manager of the tire and battery department of Montgomery Ward and company's local store. He had been associated with the company for a number of years before coming to Fort Dodge in August of 1943.

He entered the army in April of this year, landed in France Oct. 10 after training at Camp Fannin, Tex.

Private James Aldrich's last letter to his son, Doug. Written in November 1944. Private Aldrich was killed in action Nov. 16 1944.

Doug.
Take this
Clayton wrote
it to you for
your 5th birthday
Shortly before I
he died.

Jack, enclosed is the post-it my Mom left for me with the note from my Father. It brings a real lump to my throat to know that it was his last. Doug

Dear Doug,
In case I cannot
get to a place where I
can buy you a birthday
present here is wishing
you a very happy
birthday and you tell
mother I said to take
you to a show. Maybe
you can take a friend
too
Yours, dad

We must never forget, World War II was the deadliest military conflict in history in absolute terms of total casualties. Over 60 million people were killed, which was about 3% of the 1940 world population (est. 2.3 billion).

*"THE" Most Dreaded and Feared Telegram
For Everyone With A Loved One In Military Service.*

CLASS OF SERVICE	WESTERN UNION	1201	SYMBOLS
This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless the deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.	(30) A. N. WILLIAMS PRESIDENT		DL = Day Letter NL = Night Letter LC = Deferred Cable NLT = Cable Night Letter Ship Radiogram
The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams is STANDARD TIME at point of destination			
MR N87 29 GOOVT PD=WUX WASHINGTON DC 5 45 3P			
MRS RUBY I ALDRICH=			
125 10TH AVE NORTH FORT DODGE IOWA=			
THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR HUSBAND PRIVATE JAMES C ALDRICH WAS KILLED IN ACTION ON SIXTEEN NOVEMBER IN FRANCE LETTER FOLLOWS= DUNLOP ACTING THE ADJUT GENERAL			
CFM JAMES C ALDRICH			

**Jack, enclosed is the telegram. I last saw it 72+ years ago,
the night it was delivered to my mother. Doug**

End of Aldrich Story: Doug, thank you again for sharing your story with the O&B. I know it brings back many sad and painful memories for you and I am so sorry for that. Please always know that it was truly an honor and privilege for me to publish it. Jack





LaDell Swiden '57
WHS Senior Photo

**Thanks to LaDell
Swiden '57 for
submitting this
heartwarming story.
It so sadly reminds us
what Memorial Day is
all about.**

AN AIRLINE CAPTAIN'S REPORT

My lead flight attendant came to me and said, "We have an H.R. on this flight." (H.R. stands for Human Remains.)

"Are they military?" I asked.

'Yes', she said.

'Is there an escort?' I asked.

'Yes, I've already assigned him a seat'.

"Would you please tell him to come to the Flight Deck. You can board him early," I said...

A short while later a young army sergeant entered the flight deck. He was the image of the perfectly dressed soldier. He introduced himself and I asked him about his soldier.

The escorts of these fallen soldiers talk about them as if they are still alive and still with us. 'My soldier is on his way back to Virginia,' he said. He proceeded to answer my questions, but offered no words. I asked him if there was anything I could do for him and he said no. I told him that he had the toughest job in the military, and that I appreciated the work that he does for the families of our fallen soldiers.

The first officer and I got up out of our seats to shake his hand. He left the Flight Deck to find his seat.

We completed our preflight checks, pushed back and performed an uneventful departure. About 30 minutes into our flight, I received a call from the lead flight attendant in the cabin.

'I just found out the family of the soldier we are carrying, is also on board', she said. She then proceeded to tell me that the father, mother, wife and 2-year old daughter were escorting their son, husband, and father home. The family was upset because they were unable to see the container that the soldier was in before we left.

We were on our way to a major hub at which the family was going to wait four hours for the connecting flight home to Virginia. The father of the soldier told the flight attendant that knowing his son was below him in the cargo compartment and being unable to see him was too much for him and the family to bear. He had asked the flight attendant if there was anything that could be done to allow them to see him upon our arrival. The family wanted to be outside by the cargo door to watch the soldier being taken off the airplane. I could hear the desperation in the flight attendants voice when she asked me if there was anything I could do. 'I'm on it', I said. I told her that I would get back to her.

Airborne communication with my company normally occurs in the form of e-mail like messages. I decided to bypass this system and contact my flight dispatcher directly on a secondary radio. There is a radio operator in the operations control center who connects you to the telephone of the dispatcher. I was in direct contact with the dispatcher. I explained the situation I had on board with the family and what it was the family wanted. He said he understood and that he would get back to me.

Two hours went by and I had not heard from the dispatcher. We were going to get busy soon and I needed to know what to tell the family. I sent a text message asking for an update. I saved the return message from the dispatcher and the following is the text:

'Captain, sorry it has taken so long to get back to you. There is policy on this now, and I had to check on a few things. Upon your arrival a dedicated escort team will meet the aircraft. The team will escort the family to the ramp and plane side. A van will be used to

load the remains with a secondary van for the family.

The family will be taken to their departure area and escorted into the terminal, where the remains can be seen on the ramp. It is a private area for the family only. When the connecting aircraft arrives, the family will be escorted onto the ramp and plane side to watch the remains being loaded for the final leg home.

Captain, most of us here in flight control are veterans. Please pass our condolences on to the family. Thanks.

I sent a message back, telling flight control thanks for a good job. I printed out the message and gave it to the lead flight attendant to pass on to the father. The lead flight attendant was very thankful and told me, 'You have no idea how much this will mean to them.'

Things started getting busy for the descent, approach and landing. After landing, we cleared the runway and taxied to the ramp area. The ramp is huge with 15 gates on either side of the alleyway. It is always a busy area with aircraft maneuvering every which way to enter and exit. When we entered the ramp and checked in with the ramp controller, we were told that all traffic was being held for us.

'There is a team in place to meet the aircraft', we were told. It looked like it was all coming together, then I realized that once we turned the seat belt sign off, everyone would stand up at once and delay the family from getting off the airplane. As we approached our gate, I asked the copilot to tell the ramp controller, we were going to stop short of the gate to make an announcement to the passengers. He did that and the ramp controller said, 'Take your time.'

I stopped the aircraft and set the parking brake. I pushed the public address button and said: 'Ladies and gentleman, this is your Captain speaking: I have stopped short of our gate to make a special announcement. We have a passenger on board who deserves our honor and respect. His name is Private XXXXXX, a soldier who recently lost his life. Private XXXXXX is under your feet in the cargo hold. Escorting him today is Army Sergeant XXXXXX. Also, on board are his father,

mother, wife, and daughter. Your entire flight crew is asking for all passengers to remain in their seats to allow the family to exit the aircraft first. Thank you.'

We continued the turn to the gate, came to a stop and started our shutdown procedures. A couple of minutes later I opened the cockpit door. I found the two forward flight attendants crying, something you just do not see. I was told that after we came to a stop, every passenger on the aircraft stayed in their seats, waiting for the family to exit the aircraft.

When the family got up and gathered their things, a passenger slowly started to clap his hands. Moments later, more passengers joined in and soon the entire aircraft was clapping. Words of 'God Bless You', 'I'm sorry, thank you, be proud, and other kind words were uttered to the family as they made their way down the aisle and out of the airplane. They were escorted down to the ramp to finally be with their loved one.

Many of the passengers disembarking thanked me for the announcement I had made. They were just words, I told them, I could say them over and over again, but nothing I say will bring back that brave soldier.

I respectfully ask that all of you reflect on this event and the sacrifices that millions of our men and women have made to ensure our freedom and safety in these United States of AMERICA.
End



Sally Taylor Bjorge's Beautiful Poem

On May 23, 2014, at 4:43 PM, Sally Taylor Bjorge '55 <sbjorge@comcast.net> wrote:



Sally Taylor '55
WHS Senior Photo

Hi Jack, I live not far from Arlington Cemetery. I live even closer to a little known cemetery called Alexandria National Cemetery where the remains of some identified and some unidentified Revolutionary War soldiers are buried.

In 2003 I was asked to help with the reception after the burial of the remains of a crew of Vietnam vets lost when their plane was flying over Laos. It had been trying to escape enemy fire and climb out of a valley, over the mountain. Instead, it crashed into that mountain and the crew became MIAs. Their remains were finally found and identified, some by the engraving on their wedding rings.

It was a truly humbling experience to attend their burial, then ...serve a light meal after the service. And my heart was torn when I learned that - because so much time had passed - some of those men didn't have family to remember them.

I was prompted to write a poem for those men, and others like them... it was read at the funeral. Then the chaplain asked if he could use it on other occasions. Of course my answer was yes. After reading the recent Orange and Black, it seems like an appropriate occasion to share the poem again. It is titled 'My Name is America.'

Sally Taylor Bjorge '55

Editors Note: Dear Sally, such a beautiful letter and beautiful poem! Thank you for sharing them both with us. And, thank you for the service you give to The Alexandria National Cemetery.

MY NAME IS AMERICA BY SALLY BJORGE

My Name is America. I have long shores, tall mountains, broad plains and few deserts.

My cities teem with people, my country sides are lush with trees and lakes and crops.

My people came from everywhere to work and smile. I blessed them with bounty.

Their children are so eager to learn and laugh as they dance the rhythms of life.

I teach them my many songs of freedom, and feed them hope for tomorrow.

I teach them lessons on life and liberty, what must be done to preserve it.

I tell them to look beyond themselves to seek justice and peace for all.

I sift all responses and call only those with ears to hear, eyes to see.

I plumb those young bodies to find that extra measure of courage.

I hold my breath as they go on the missions of peace and hope.

I shudder and weep when my precious child dies out there.

I remember each of their smiles, and all of their dreams.

They lived and they died so my hope would live within others.

I am America. I have long shores, tall mountains, broad plains and few deserts.

I am home to all who honor me and my freedom, all who give their lives to maintain me.

Welcome home my child, you were away too long. My green grasses and my trees missed you.

Now you rest deep within my bosom, safely within my peace, and I will cradle your passions forever.

MY NAME IS AMERICA.

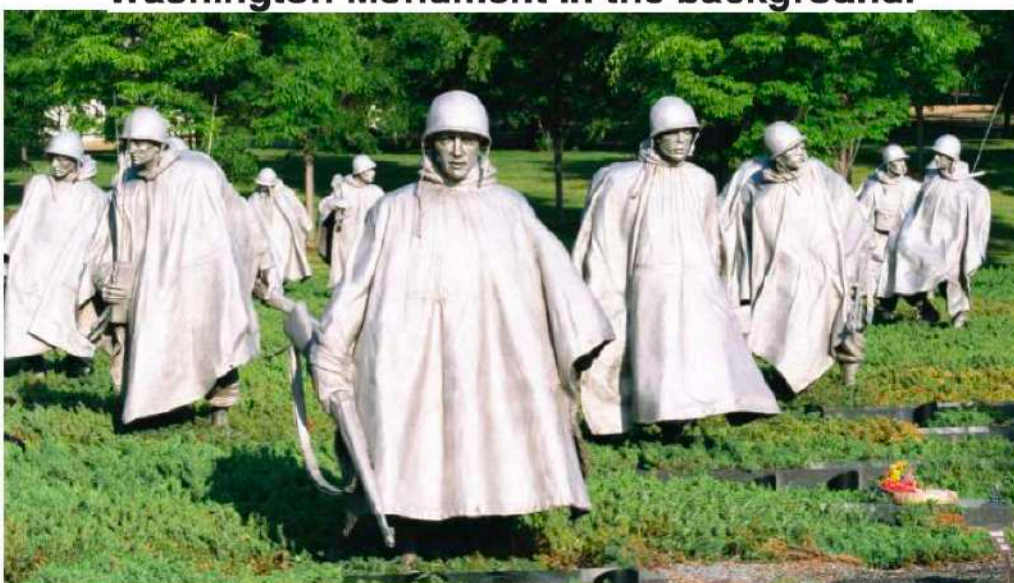
Memorial Day 2022:

Sally, I must tell you that each Memorial Day when I re-read your beautiful and inspirational poem I am more moved and taken by it than I was the year before. I truly love it's warmth and beauty and each time I read it, I consciously thank God for America and for making it my home.

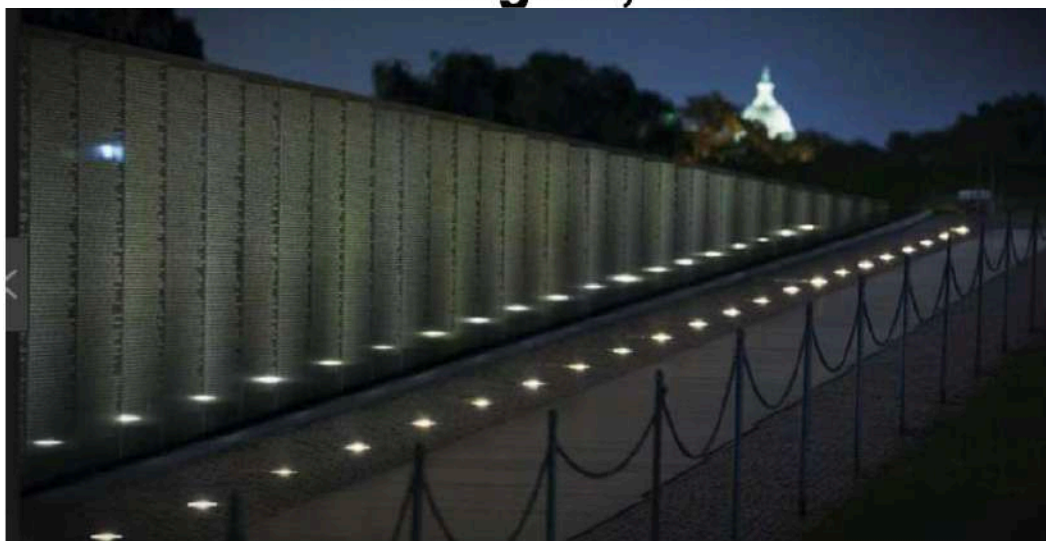
Jack Phillips '54



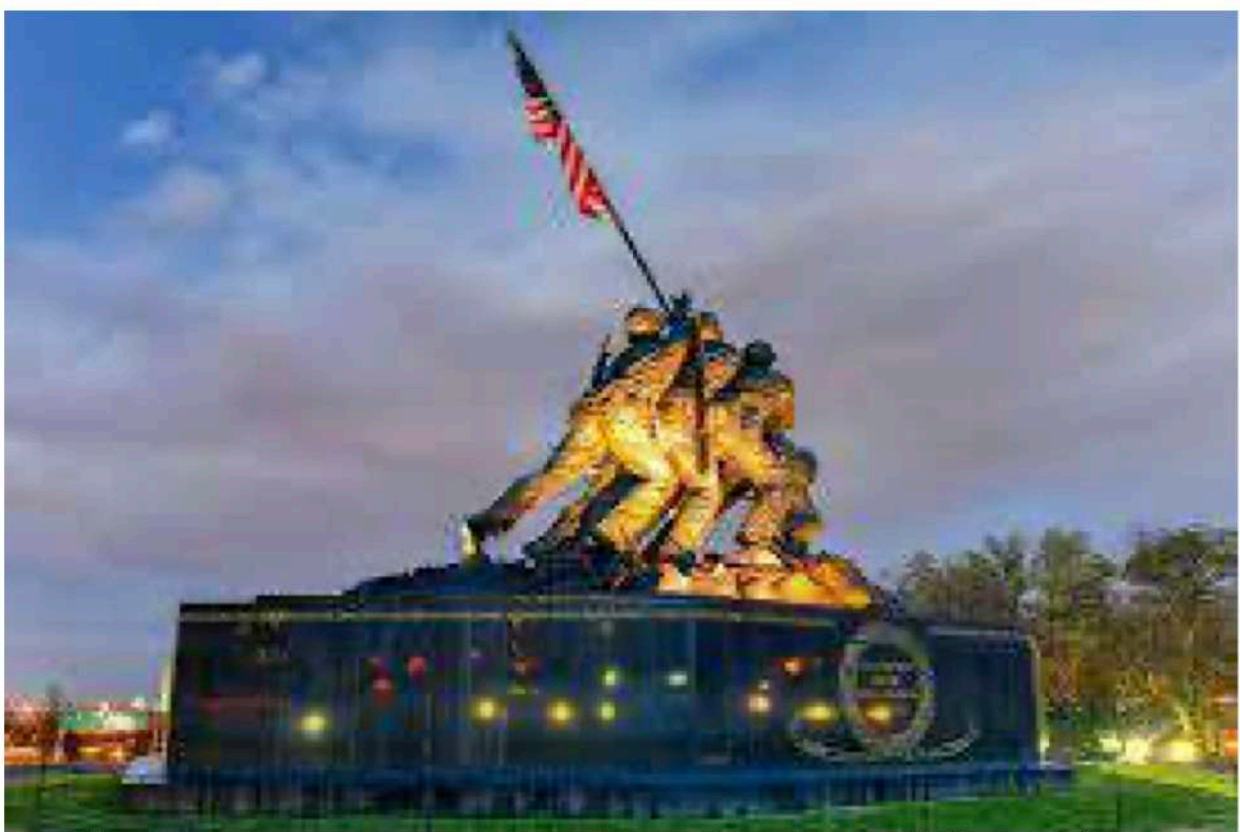
World War II Memorial Washington, DC
Washington Monument in the background.



The Korean War Memorial
Washington, DC



The Vietnam Memorial
Washington DC



The United States Marine Corps War Memorial
is a national memorial located in Arlington County, Virginia, in the United States. The memorial was dedicated in 1954 to all Marines who have given their lives in defense of the United States since 1775.

THEN & NOW



WAR & PEACE



**Above
June 6, 1944
Royal Marine
Commandos Landing.**

**What difference
70 years makes!**

**Below
May 6, 2014
Peaceful Juno Beach**





Above: June 1944 Omaha Beach: American craft of all styles pictured at Omaha Beach, Normandy, during the first stages of the Allied invasion. Below: June 7, 2014 Peaceful Beach





ABOVE: June 1944: Boats full of US troops wait to leave Weymouth to take part in Operation Overlord.



BELOW: April 2014: A view of the harbor of the English town today. This location was used as a launching place for Allied troops participating in the invasion of Nazi-occupied France on D-day.

Job Well Done! Let's Go Home!

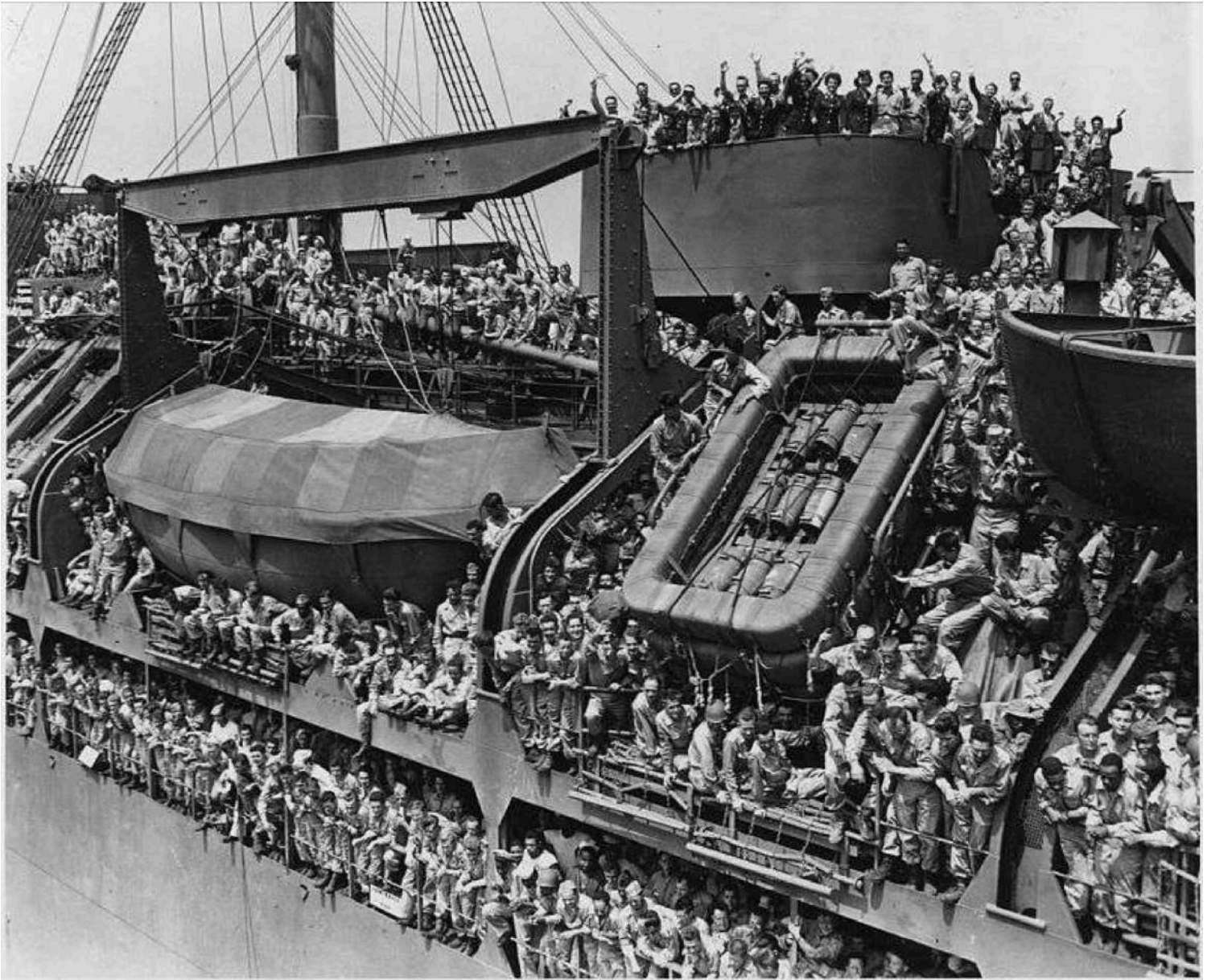
We Must Never Forget!

"Magic Carpet" - the ride home..... Hard to imagine!

In 1939, there were 334,000 servicemen, not counting the Coast Guard.

In 1945, there were over 12 million, including the Coast Guard. At the end of the war, over 8 million of these men and women were scattered overseas in Europe, the Pacific and Asia. Shipping them out wasn't a particular problem but getting them home was a massive logistical headache.

Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall had already established committees to address the issue in 1943.



Soldiers returning home on the *USS General Harry Taylor* in August 1945

When Germany fell in May 1945, the U.S. Navy was still busy fighting in the Pacific and couldn't assist. The job of transporting 3 million men home fell to the Army and the Merchant Marine. 300 Victory and Liberty cargo ships were converted to troop transports for the task.

During the war, 148,000 troops crossed the Atlantic west to east each month; the rush home ramped this up to 435,000 a month over 14 months.



Hammocks crammed into available spaces aboard the *USS Intrepid*

In October 1945, with the war in Asia also over, the Navy started chipping in, converting all available vessels to transport duty. On smaller ships like destroyers, capable of carrying perhaps 300 men, soldiers were told to hang their hammocks in whatever nook and cranny they could find. Carriers were particularly useful, as their large open hangar decks could house 3,000 or more troops in relative comfort, with bunks, sometimes in stacks of five welded or bolted in place.



Bunks aboard the Army transport *SS Pennant*



The Navy wasn't picky, though: cruisers, battleships, hospital ships, even LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank) were packed full of men yearning for home. Two British ocean liners under American control, the *RMS Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth*, had already served as troop transports before and continued to do so during the operation, each capable of carrying up to 15,000 people at a time, though their normal, peacetime capacity was less than 2,200.

Twenty-nine ships were dedicated to transporting war brides: women married to American soldiers during the war.



Troops performing a lifeboat drill onboard the *Queen Mary* in December 1944, before *Operation Magic Carpet*

The Japanese surrender in August 1945 came none too soon, but it put an extra burden on *Operation Magic Carpet*.

The war in Asia had been expected to go well into 1946 and the Navy and the War Shipping Administration were hard-pressed to bring home all the soldiers who now had to get home earlier than anticipated. The transports carrying them also had to collect numerous POWs from recently liberated Japanese camps, many of whom suffered from malnutrition and illness.



U.S. soldiers recently liberated from Japanese POW camps

The time to get home depended a lot on the circumstances. *USS Lake Champlain*, a brand new *Essex*-class carrier that arrived too late for the war, could cross the Atlantic and take 3,300 troops home a little under 4 days and 8 hours. Meanwhile, troops going home from Australia or India would sometimes spend months on slower vessels.



Hangar of the *USS Wasp* during the operation

There was enormous pressure on the operation to bring home as many men as possible by Christmas 1945. Therefore, a sub-operation, *Operation Santa Claus*, was dedicated to the purpose. Due to storms at sea and an overabundance of soldiers eligible for return home, however, Santa Claus could only return a

fraction in time and still not quite home but at least to American soil.

The nation's transportation network was overloaded, trains heading west from the East Coast were on average 6 hours behind schedule and trains heading east from the West Coast were twice that late.

The *USS Saratoga* transported home a total of 29,204 servicemen during Operation Magic Carpet, more than any other ship.

Many freshly discharged men found themselves stuck in separation centers but faced an outpouring of love and friendliness from the locals. Many townsfolk took in freshly arrived troops and invited them to Christmas dinner in their homes. Still others gave their train tickets to soldiers and still others organized quick parties at local train stations for men on layover.

A Los Angeles taxi driver took six soldiers all the way to Chicago; another took another carload of men



The crowded flight deck of the *USS Saratoga*.



to Manhattan, the Bronx, Pittsburgh, Long Island, Buffalo and New Hampshire. Neither of the drivers accepted a fare beyond the cost of gas.

All in all, though, the Christmas deadline proved untenable. The last 29 troop transports, carrying some 200,000 men from the China-India-Burma theater, arrived to America in April 1946, bringing *Operation Magic Carpet* to an end, though an additional 127,000 soldiers still took until September to return home and finally lay down the burden of war.

Don't forget to watch, "***National Memorial Day Concert***", Live on PBS from the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol! **SUNDAY**, May 30, from 8 pm to 9:30 pm ET.



*May the significance of
Memorial Day always
bring emotional tears.*



God Bless America