

30 Years of AWON, 100 Editions of *The Star*!

By Walt Linne

Join us in celebrating the 30th anniversary (1991-2021) of the founding of the American WWII Orphans Network (AWON) and the 100th issue of AWON's newsletter, *The STAR*.

Over the years *The STAR* has brought AWON orphans together, carried the stories of our Fathers, educated the reader to a wealth of information, introduced friends from around the world and kept our Fathers' sacrifice alive.

Please enjoy this expanded 100th edition of *The Star*, and join us in celebrating thirty wonderful years of AWON!

During the next year we'll be revisiting some of *The Star*'s most heartwarming stories. We'll take a look back at the many lives AWON has transformed! Here's to many more years of AWON and *The Star* to come!

Let us recognize our wonderfully talented AWON *Star* Editors:

First Editor - AWON Founder Ann Bennett Mix
Newsletter Vol 1 1991 – Newsletter Vol 17 1999

2nd Star Editor - Doni Morrison Troglio
Newsletter Vol 18 1999 – Issue 46 2007

3rd Star Editor - Kathy Le Comte (granddaughter)
Issue 47 2007 – Issue 92 2019

4th Star Editor - Kristin Holmes (granddaughter)
Issue 93 2019 - current

The Star is publication of the American WWII Orphans Network (AWON), a non-profit 501(c)3, nonpolitical, public service organization, serving the children of U.S. servicemen killed in WWII. ISSN applied for, Copyright 2021 by the American WWII Orphans Network. All rights reserved.



Find AWON on the Web at

www.awon.org!

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President's Message

by Walt Linne

1991 – 2021!!!

Happy 30th AWON anniversary and an incredibly special thanks to our beloved founder Ann Bennett Mix. In addition, we are celebrating the 100th issue of *The STAR* newsletter. WOW!

The American WWII Orphans Network (AWON) is a nonprofit 501 (c) 3, nonpolitical public service organization serving the children of US Servicemen killed in or who died as a result of WWII. *The STAR* is a publication of the American WWII Orphans Network.

This 100th issue of *The Star* is a celebration of AWON's past 30 years, dedicated to all the wonderful members and especially to our First Founders and our volunteers who have gone "above and beyond the call of duty."

These volunteers who gave of their time, talent and treasure to help AWON meet its numerous goals - from staffing the Board of Directors to Regional Directors to Wreath Coordinators to National Conference Chairs to Special Projects Chairs to our Editors of *The Star* to the AWON Webmaster to the ListServ Mods to our AWON Facebook Coordinator to the MeWe Coordinator to our Orphan Authors to our Orphan Poets to the Presenters of AWON Moments and Father articles that help us realize we were not alone in this world and to our Fathers, who gave us the inspiration to "carry on" and preserve their sacrifice.

Although our mission remains the same, it is evolving. We must keep our membership active in reaching out to other orphans, educating the next generation, helping us keep our Fathers' sacrifice alive, and **especially** preparing AWON to hand our mission off to the next generation. Salute!

A BIG thanks to all our siblings for your continued support of AWON. Much love and good health. See you in New Orleans, 4-8 May 2022 at the National WWII Museum!!



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Ann Bennett Mix

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The Star is a quarterly publication of the American WWII Orphans Network (AWON), a nonprofit 501(c)3, nonpolitical public service organization serving the children of US Servicemen killed in WWII. The Star is published and mailed from Indianapolis, IN. ISSN 1941-370X (print), 1941-3769 (online) Copyright 2021 by the American WWII Orphans Network. All rights reserved. Issue 100 - 1M (2-21)

An Orphan's Story

By AWON Founder Ann Bennett Mix

My father, Sydney W. Bennett, was killed April 19, 1945, in Mongiorgio, Italy, while serving with the 10th Mt Div, 87th Mt Infantry. He died thirteen days before the Germans surrendered. The end of WWII came four months later with the surrender of Japan.

I was four and a half years old when my Dad died, and almost five when the war ended. My mother had talked to my brother and told him our father was killed, but no one talked to me, as they believed me too young to understand.

When the Victory came, I was still waiting in my child's heart for my Daddy to come back. We lived only half a block away from the Main Street of East Bakersfield, and I remember standing on the sidewalk with my mother and grandmother to view the Victory Parade.

We were standing in the same block that contained precious memories of my father: the pool hall where he liked to go off and play cards and drink beer with his buddies, the ice cream store where we spent our "bribe" money he gave us to go home when my brother and I would go looking for him, the gas station where he once found me sound asleep on the passenger side running board waiting to go with him if he drove away, and the Firestone Store where he worked selling tires and appliances.

I stood watching soldiers in uniform marching towards us in the parade, and looking for my Dad. The last time I saw him, he was dressed that way. I stared at every face but when they had all walked by and he wasn't there, I began to cry. I clung to my mother's leg and wailed so loud people were staring at us. "I want my Daddy," I cried.

My mother and grandmother leaned over me and I looked up into two faces I could not read. My mother said, "I don't know what to do with her." They took me by the hand and marched me home.

The feelings I felt that day - the outrage, the loss, the confusion, were buried but they never died.

Grief became chronic, hidden away in a hole deep in my being. The energy it took to keep it hidden tempered me into a seriously intense child and adult. The thread that tied me to my Father, to God, and to love, was snapped. It dangled inside me like a scanner, looking for someone or something to attach itself to, and make me whole again.

It wasn't until my late forties that I tried to open the short book that was my father's life and fill in the blanks. I began to ask questions, to search for records, and look for every clue I could find.

I suddenly realized there had to be others out there like me, who had lost their fathers in WWII. I wondered, how many were there? Do they feel the same things? How did their lives turn out? These questions led me on a hunt and a journey that changed my life.

When I found another American WWII Orphan by going on a local radio show and we met, I immediately knew I had to find others, and bring us all together. From that experience I knew no one would understand us as well as we would each other.

I founded the American WWII Orphans Network and dedicated myself to the search for other orphans. We began coming together for the first time. The results were miraculous, and healing. We began to learn from each other, and those dangling threads began to help us find a new way to live and be in a world that had forgotten us long ago. We were empowered to talk about our fathers and ourselves, and eventually began to share our stories with the world.

We all hope that when we send fathers and mothers to war in the future, all the children will be acknowledged, and helped to grow up. We hope that children who have lost their loved ones to war will never again be Lost in the Victory as the 183,000 American WWII Orphans were.

An Unexpected Surprise!

By Jerry Baker

Some time back in mid-2019 I got a call from my son Jerry II. He started asking a lot of questions about when, where, and how his grandfather, my father, PVT Ivory Carl Baker, was killed in WWII. We talked about the train wreck that took my father's life, and the town of St. Valery-en-Caux where the accident happened. I also mentioned all the hours I had spent trying to get information and pictures of what had happened.

It was about this time my son said, "Dad, you need to get your passport up to date. We're going to St. Valery in January 2020. We'll be there at the time and day of the wreck."

Talk about time standing still! It did for the next few months! But eventually, it happened. My son, grandson, and I arrived in Paris on January 15, 2020. We found a nice hotel near the Eiffel Tower and stayed the night. We needed to adjust to the big time difference.

We got up early on January 16th and made our way towards the Port of LeHavre where my father's

unit, the 553rd Motor Ambulance Company, and four other units had landed so long ago. We arrived at the Port late in the evening, much as they did. They were offloaded from the transport ship *Henry Gibbon*, and put on a train bound for St. Valery-en-Caux. From there they'd go to Camp Lucky Strike and wait for their equipment.

For them, the trip was quite long, and they arrived at 10:00 am the next day, January 17, 1945 - or they were meant to arrive. Their train crashed through a barricade at the end of the rail line, hurtled across the street, and smashed through the station on the other side. The wreck is mentioned in several books, one by a Dr. Richie, the other by Herman J. Obermayer. Both say the wreck was not an accident but was caused by someone. Most believe that the tragedy could have been avoided; the train was overloaded from understandable but misguided desperation to get the men where they needed to be.

For us, on January 17, 2020, we arrived at the station safely, near 10:00 am. A small plaque



Left: The Eiffel Tower, in all its glory

Right: the commemorative medal that Mayor Chavel gave to the Baker family

Bottom: Jerry Baker III and Jerry I on the plane headed off to France!



...Surprise, continued from previous page



Above: The memorial plaque in the train station

adorned the wall near the front door. A small pot of flowers was sitting near as well. We entered the station and found that no one could speak English! Somehow, they directed us to Mayor Dominique Chavel's office, which was fortunately located nearby. As soon as we walked in, they informed us that the ceremony would be at 11:00 am. We made our way back to the station, where a few people were already waiting.

The service was short, the small flower arrangement placed under the plaque by my grandson, Jerry III. A small prayer was said, and it was over. Afterwards, we returned to the Mayor's office where I presented them with a unit picture of Dad's unit with morning reports from the day of the crash. It contained all the names of the men who died, plus all that were injured. The 553rd Motor Ambulance Company only had 85 men, and of those 85, 33 were killed. 27 were injured, and the others were cleared to return to duty. All



Above: The Baker family with French dignitaries at the memorial ceremony for the train accident which claimed PVT Ivory Carl Baker's life in 1945.
Right: Three generations coming together to remember their fallen father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Below: before and after photos of the train station at St. Valery-en-Caux, pre-accident, and today



told, including the casualties from other units, 89 men were killed and 152 injured.

In return for our gift, the mayor of St. Valery-en-Caux presented us with a medallion from the City of St. Valery. (picture on page 4)

On January 18th, we left St. Valery and headed to the Normandy beaches. We spent a couple days there. What a beautiful, but sad place it is! I've never seen anyplace so well kept. Everything is maintained in perfect order.

We arrived home on the 21st of January, 2020. Being at the site where my father was killed has given me some peace of mind. It was a wonderful trip for an almost 80 year old. This is one trip I'll never forget - three generations there for that special day. I'm forever grateful to my son for all he did to get us there and back again.



AWON's 2021 Membership Drive!



RENEWAL WEEK

Save the Dates:

June 21 ~ 25, 2021

AWON Loyalists:

RENEW! ~

No Matter Your
Renewal Date!

AWON Volunteers Needed!

For a Couple of Hours on any day above!

Contact: awon@awon.org



www.awon.org

Write  for
Details!

Help keep the sacrifice of our Fathers
alive another thirty years and beyond!

Volunteer to make a few Membership
Renewal phone calls for AWON!

The main reason why AWON Members
let their membership lapse is simple -
they just forget to renew!

If you can make a few reminder phone
calls during our upcoming membership
drive June 21-25, 2021, please contact
the Membership Committee at:

awon@awon.org

You only need a couple hours to do your
part, and your efforts can make all the
difference for AWON's future!

One of AWON's biggest challenges
is keeping membership up to date.
If you aren't sure about your status
and think it may be time for you to
renew, please send an email to:

awon@awon.org.

In the subject line of your email,
please write "Membership Check".

If it is time for you to renew,
we'll include your membership
form in our reply!! It's so easy!

To join AWON or renew
membership yourself visit:

<https://www.awon.org/about>

Remembering With Gratitude - Our American WWII Orphans Network AWON Chairmen and Presidents

AWON Founder Ann Bennett Mix

Lorin McCleary, 1995 - First Chairman

Walt Linne, 1996 - Chairman, 1997 - President

Jeff Ward, 1998 - President

Nicholas Etcheverry, 1999 - President

Gloria Zuccarella Layne, 2000-2001 - President

Patricia Gaffney, 2002-2006 - President

Judy Geis Hoffman, 2007-2009 - President

Edward "Ed" Peters III, 2010-2013 - President

Norm Burkey, 2014-2018 - President

Walter P. Linne, 2019 -2021 - President

AWON 2021 EOM Account Totals				
Treasurer	report as of 4/30/2021			
	General (Wreath)	Conference	Book Source	Money Market
JANUARY	\$19,006.27 (\$3,288.00)	\$374.50	\$325.97	\$48,069.26
FEBRUARY	\$19,927.32 (\$3,348.00)	\$369.50	\$320.97	\$48,051.63
MARCH	\$20,933.77 (\$3,605.00)	\$364.50	\$315.97	\$48,070.08
APRIL	\$23,412.77 (\$4,292.00)	\$359.50	\$337.96	\$48,070.47

Have you checked out the new European and Pacific Theater Maps Feature on www.AWON.org? This amazing new feature lets you view where many of our AWON fathers were killed, and as time progresses, we will be adding more fathers and loved ones till all AWON relatives are represented.

For the European Theater Map, please visit <https://www.awon.org/eto-maps>

For the Pacific theater map, please visit <https://www.awon.org/pto-maps>

AWON - A Brief History

Presented by the Editor of *The Star* 2007-2019, Kathy Le Comte

from *American WWII Orphans Network*, Turner Publishing Co.

The best ideas start with a need. In the case of AWON, the need was to find other people whose fathers were killed in or missing from World War II, and to explore how that loss affected their lives.

In early 1990, Ann Bennett Mix started looking for fellow World War II orphans in order to write a book about their experiences. With the help of a newspaper article and talk show appearance, she found a handful of orphans. By the end of the year, she'd found a dozen. After more articles in various publications, still more orphans were found. Ann finally had subjects for her book.

As hard as it was finding orphans, uncovering facts about them as a group was even more difficult. Few records existed about World War II orphans. Even their number - estimated at 183,000 - is based only on those who applied for benefits. But many organizations early on gave Ann support, encouragement, and information, including the No Greater Love organization, the National Archives, the American Battle Monuments Commission, Total Army Personnel Command, The American Legion, and others. The information she gathered was shared with her small band of orphans and eventually was the basis of her book, *Touchstones: A Guide to Records, Rights, and Resources for Families of American World War II Casualties*. "It seemed to happen all at once," Ann remembered. "One moment it wasn't there, the next moment it was."

In late 1991, Ann's group entered a new phase. In December she registered the name American WWII Orphans Network in the state of Washington, and later AWON was registered as a federal non-profit organization. That same month, Ann and a fellow orphan attended a No Greater Love treeplanting at Arlington National Cemetery for children of war dead.



There they handed out flyers about AWON. Ann also met Senator Bob Dole, who served in the same unit as her father, Sydney Worthington Bennett, and was wounded near where Ann's father was KIA. Later, Dole agreed to become an AWON national adviser.

After the No Greater Love event, AWON's star took off. Articles appeared in publications large and small around the country, helping orphans find their way to AWON. However, the sudden membership growth held up Ann's original book idea, as more attention needed to be given to the growing organization.

Both these problems were soon solved. Ann met Susan Johnson Hadler, another WWII orphan, who helped her co-author *Lost in the Victory: Reflections of American Orphans of World War II*. Then another orphan, Lorin McCleary, contacted Ann and suggested holding a member meeting in Washington, D.C. Twelve of those in attendance donated seed money to finance the organization's operations. They are known today as AWON's First Founders. (For a personal account of that fateful meeting, please see page 12.)

...AWON History, continued from previous page

With money, a governing body, and continued publicity, more orphans found their way to AWON. The first AWON National Conference was held in Seattle in 1995. Soon volunteers helped with the newsletter (*The Star*), developed an email server (the AWON ListServ), and eventually a website (www.awon.org). Subsequent efforts at outreach have focused on developing a social media presence for AWON as well, with AWON pages on Facebook and MeWe. To keep track of member data, AWON created the only database of fathers killed or missing in action from World War II, which continues to grow. AWON volunteers continue searching for orphan siblings yet to be found.

From its inception, AWON has opened the nation's eyes to a group that was largely unseen - World War II Orphans. Staff at the National Archives in St. Louis have a better understanding of what their work can mean to families seeking information. Visitors to our National WWII Memorial can visualize the human cost of war at the Wall of Freedom - the wall of gold stars was Ann's idea, given to the memorial's architect, Friedrich St. Florian. And at The National WWII Museum, AWON and the 183,000 American war orphans will be forever represented by a Victory Paver in the Colonel Battle Barksdale Parade Ground and Founder's Plaza (for more about how you can help with this effort, please see page 20-21).

World War II is now given a National Day of Remembrance, enacted by Congress and supported in part by AWON. AWON has a relationship with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command to help children of MIAs and bring the remains of the missing home at long last.

Most importantly, AWON continues to look for World War II Orphans and support members in the search to learn more about their fathers. "We have traveled far beyond those secret empty spaces so deep within our hearts," Ann has said. "We hope we can help others remember the depth of the sacrifice made in World War II, that included the widows and orphans."

For Our Annie - a Tribute to Ann Mix



*by Elaine Ricketson Danks,
originally shared in the 2000
AWON Conference Program*

*Each of us is here today because of you,
There are even more of us not present, but
cheering you silently from across the country.*

*From your love for your father and your
need to know him, you reached beyond
him to us, and in doing so you have changed
our lives.*

*For showing us how to break out of the cells of
silence that have held us alone and mute
in our loss,*

*For seeking out & sharing with us the resources
and knowledge from which we can gather
the thread to weave together our lost
father's stories,*

*For bringing us together:
To share and be enriched,
To speak and to be heard,
To listen and to understand,
To rejoice and be glad together.*

*For helping us reclaim not only our fathers,
but also our own identities:
Their sons and daughters.*

*For giving us your leadership, your courage,
your strength and your wisdom,*

*For this and for all that you are,
you have our love and unending gratitude.*

A 100th of Dual Significance

Shared by Ken Underwood, Written by Rik Peirson

AWON member Ken Underwood's daughter Naomi Alyson Underwood married Robert Vincent Armstrong in Austin, Texas, on Friday April 16th.

What a beautiful bride!



Below: 1LT Kenneth Harry Underwood, beloved father of Ken Underwood, grandfather of bride Naomi Underwood Armstrong

The occasion was set for this particular Friday to honor what would have been the 100th birthday of Ken's Father, 1LT Kenneth Harry Underwood, Naomi's Grandfather, who was KIA on 18 May 1944 making an emergency landing after four straight missions to Berlin.

He had been a P-38 pilot with the 55th Fighter Group, 38th Fighter Squadron.

At right, you'll find a portrait of the man being honored by the wedding:



...100th, continued from previous page



At one point at the reception ~ Ken fully explained the significance of the day ~ and got a standing ovation and rousing CHEERS when he held up the portrait of his dad.

In Ken's words: "I talked about how this was a special day with both my father's 100th birthday and his granddaughter's wedding. It got a rousing cheer from the 180 guests."

"In all my quests to know more about him, it was always to make sure he was Never Forgotten."

But wait, there's more! Ken's son (like his grandfather before him) is also a pilot.

The illustration at right by Matthew Emeny shows Ken's Father, 1LT K.H. Underwood flying his P-38 Lightning (713 'CG-H) with the 55th Fighter Group, 38th Fighter Squadron.

By his side is Ken's Son. Cpt. K.H. Underwood flying his F-15E Strike Eagle (88-1695 'SJ') of the 4th Fighter Wing of the 335th Fighter Squadron.



Ken Underwood is a very proud man these days!

Proud of his father lost in WWII; proud of his son, who's led some key raids you've seen on TV ~ and proud of his daughter, Naomi, and his new son-in-law, Bob ~ for providing such a sentimental 100th Birthday present ~ in addition to their day.

Wishing the happy couple many years of happiness ahead!



The History of AWON's First Founders

by AWON First Founder Lorin McCleary

My first inkling that there was an organization for people who had lost a father in WWII was in 1992 when I read an article in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* about a woman, Ann Mix, who had formed such an organization, the American WWII Orphans Network, in a not-too-distant city, Bellingham, Washington. While at that time I did not consider myself a war orphan as I had a mom and step-dad for virtually all my life, I clipped the article out intending to contact her at some point just to talk when I had a chance.

Well, time, as always, has a way of slipping away. So, perhaps 6 months later, I sent a letter to Ann and requested some information about her organization and told her what little I knew about my father at that time.

We began corresponding and exchanging telephone calls and it slowly began to dawn on me that I really wanted and needed to talk to others who had a similar wartime experience as I had. Ann, at that time, was running the organization solo, entirely on donations, and it was clear that some additional help and funding would be useful to this young organization. So I volunteered my help.

We put our heads together and began to formulate a plan to move AWON to a national organization with funding to be derived from a mix of membership dues and donations. In order to make this happen, however, we needed a lot of help and a budget to do the most basic things like create a letterhead for AWON, develop a membership form and an appeal letter and, most importantly, to confirm if others who also lost a father in WWII felt the same need for an organization as we did.

In order to legitimize our membership appeal, we felt we needed a board of directors of orphan members to help with all these start-up tasks. I proposed that if Ann would send me a list of 10 or 12 WWII orphans she knew from the “No Greater Love” memorial ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, or through other contacts, I would invite them to come to a meeting in Washington DC to talk about changing AWON into a national membership organization. I designed a simple logo, letterhead and letter of invitation for this AWON meeting, Ann sent me the names and addresses of people who might be willing to help with this task and I printed the letters on my desktop printer and mailed them out, not having any idea of the response we might get.

Here I was, a guy who they did not know, inviting them to come to Washington DC at their own expense to join us for a 3 day meeting. The year was 1994 and, very much to my surprise, every person who received my invitation letter agreed to come to the meeting in DC to discuss the details of how AWON could emerge as a national organization for WWII Orphans.

This also confirmed to me that others felt the same strength of commitment for such a WWII orphans organization as did Ann and I. These individuals who attended this meeting became the group known today as the First Founders.

This group of individuals, many of whom remain active in AWON to this day, all agreed to participate in the organizational tasks, offering their skills, abilities and time to make this happen. Each person present pledged to provide a \$500 donation so that AWON would have seed money

to develop and print a professional-looking logo letterhead (see page 33 for the story of AWON's logo) and a membership appeal letter to be mailed to all those WWII orphans Ann had located in the first three years of operations.

It is likely that AWON would not exist in the form it does today without the AWON First Founders.

Thank you all so very much for thirty wonderful years!

American WWII Orphans Network

Ann Bennett Mix, Founder

The AWON First Founders:

Anne Moloney Black

Frank Burtnett

Clatie Cunningham III

Nicholas "Nick" Etcheverry

George "Clint" Frederick

Susan Johnson Hadler

John George Linne

Walter Paul Linne

Lorin David McCleary III

A. Eric Rosen

Mary Swaggerty Slowey

Samuel "Sam" Tannenbaum

Jeffrey Luckey Ward

AWON Sunshine!!

(Sung to the tune of "You Are My Sunshine")

Jane Nelson

*AWON's our family with loved ones dear
Brothers and sisters from far and near
We tell the stories of our Dad's glories
And share together memories here.*

Sandy Wical

*Seventy plus years have come and gone
And now we're ready to sing our song
To praise our fathers for this great country
We have waited oh so long*

Ruth Malone

*We've wept together, and we've shared pain
We've all been happy, and sad and blue
We're all connected, we love each other
And we know what we've been through*

Pat Armstrong

*We're AWON siblings, we stand together
Our daddies died when we were young
We hold our heads high, we are survivors
And our stories make us one*

Pat Albani

*AWON's our family we always longed for
Wanting our daddies home from the war
We care for each other, sister and brother
Sharing love and oh so much more*

Ginny Bugg

*Tho they are gone, they're not forgotten
We feel them looking down with love
We hope to join them and be together
At last forever in Heaven above!*

Victory is on the horizon!
Keep Social Distancing!!!!



We here at *The Star* want to remind all our readers to continue practicing social distancing. Even though a vaccine is now available, it is imperative for your health and safety to continue staying home if you have not yet received it. Hang in there! Stay safe, stay healthy, STAY HOME!!

Support AWON when you Shop!



When you shop through smile.amazon.com, the AmazonSmile Foundation donates .5% of the purchase price on all eligible products to AWON, at no extra cost! Just enter "AWON" as the organization you support.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Awon Wishes to Thank Our New and Returning Members From February, March, and April

Walt Linne
Penny LeGrand
Barb Kelly
Kristie Clark
Cary Zehner
Phillippe DeHand
Miriam Towey
Jackie Rackley
Larry Graber
Pat Albani
Dick Albani
Vincent Dalrymple
Linda Porter
Ken Underwood
Sam Tannenbaum
Carol Verbeek
Lynn Williams
James Barr-Finch
Brendan Barr
Bonnie Johnson
Gail Brown
Patricia Morrison

Sandra MacDuffee
Nancy Johnson
Jean Perillo
Gloria Layne
Chickie Berry
Gaylia Olson
Nadine Dowdy
Estelle Taylor
Nancy Lawson
Nick Mott
Janice Buterbaugh
Tommy Morris
Barbara Ferguson
Janie McPherson
Joseph Giordano
Nancy Kragh
Bill McElvain
Judith Jantz
Rusty Lerch
Peggy Meyers
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Rosemary Foster
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Mark Gutheil
Ann Black
Rosalie Francisco
Mary Alice Renner
Steven Telecky
Clydene Despain
Vanita Smith
Donna Pressley
Judy Hathaway
Norma Nicol Hamiton
Linda Chauvin

Lorin McCleary
Monica Fleisch
Marie Fowley
Andy Mannering
Angela Christian
Maryalyce Lupher
Berry Barr-Finch
Jane Nelson
Diana Clark
Bettie Lou Gilbert
LaVada Hancock
Betsy Belvin
John Lane
David Burkey
Robert Lombardo
Bill Rogers
Mickie Hansen
Sharon Harville
David O'Sullivan
Mark Gutheil

THANK YOU!!

Kilroy is...WHERE?

by AWON Webmaster Rik Peirson



We've all seen Kilroy, heard of Kilroy, and watched Kilroy become an icon of American perseverance in so many countries ravaged by World War II. But few know of Kilroy's full significance or origin.

It all started in the shipyards of Quincy, Massachusetts, where so many of the cruisers, destroyers and carriers were built for the U.S. Navy. As the story goes, the riveters (who were paid by the rivet) weren't always careful about how many rivets they claimed. They made a chalk mark on the bulkheads to show where their rivets left off and where the next riveter's work would begin. But as it happened, a few riveters cheated... erasing the mark of their predecessors and adding their own marks anew, much earlier down the line.

James J. Kilroy worked at Quincy as a quality inspector ~ adding his own more distinctive mark at the end of the most recent rivet lines, keeping everybody on the up and up and saving considerable money for the Navy. But many interior bulkheads were never painted in the rush to get these ships to sea, and into action.

As a result, many of Kilroy's quality control marks were seen not just by the seamen, but thousands of Army and Marines in transit, on their way overseas. It's how "Kilroy" became known for quality and persistence.

It soon went viral, 40's style! The symbol was soon being repeated, scrawled by American GIs to mark the territories where they'd fought, and often liberated. Kilroy turned up on landings, towns and cities as GIs went all across Europe and elsewhere.

The Kilroy symbol became synonymous with American quality and ingenuity - to the point where "Kilroy" became a legend.

Kilroy can now be found in not one, but TWO places on the World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington, DC. But you won't find either mark easily. Ask a docent where to find them.

After the war, James Kilroy served on the Boston City Council, and later in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He died in 1962 at the age of 60. His family stayed in Quincy. I talked to one of his sisters (several times) in the late 90s, as we were seeking permission to use the mark on the original AWON Website. It actually did find its way to the Website, and into the public domain.

Meanwhile, the Kilroy symbol lives on, somewhere on the new AWON Website (at www.awon.org), but only once among its many pages.

Find it, tell the Webmaster exactly where you found it (and be among the FIRST FIVE dues-current AWON Members who do) and win a prize. Board Members not eligible. You'll also be listed as the Winners in a later issue of *The Star*, where your fathers and loved ones will get an extra mention!

Go for it ~ happy hunting!

And we'll see you at the Kilroy in the Higgins Hotel May 4-8, 2022!!

The Star Guidelines for Submitting Material

We want to tell your story and your family's story. We accept submissions both electronically and via US mail. If you have an article or picture and aren't sure how to submit it, that's ok. Message *The Star* and we will work with you.

Please keep text reasonable in length. 500-1000 words or 1 page is a good guideline, but we publish longer pieces too. Preference is given to material written by, for, and about AWON members and families.

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

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

Make Sure the Next Generation Hears YOUR Family Story!!!!



The STAR needs your submissions today!

Don't let your family's stories go untold!!



As we enjoy AWON's Thirtieth year, we here at *The Star* want to urge every AWON member to share with us the story of your father's life, your family's loss, and your personal journey of self-discovery.

Please don't hesitate - contribute!

It's easy - our editors will do all the hard stuff, we just need to hear from YOU! Submit today!

The new MeWe ListServ



All AWON members in good standing are invited to participate in AWON's Facebook page, and test out our brand new MeWe page! To find out more about MeWe (it's just like Facebook, but with better privacy protections) and receive an invitation to join AWON's MeWe Page contact Lorin McCleary at ldmccleary@gmail.com.

Membership



This is a

- ☐ New Membership
☐ Renewal
☐ Family Membership
☐ Database Registration Only

About You:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Home Phone _____
 Mobilephone _____
 E-Mail _____
 If you're renewing, skip to the Dues Section
 Your Relationship to Serviceman _____
 Your Date of Birth _____
 How did you hear about AWON _____

About your WWII Service Member:

Last Name _____
 First Name _____ M.I. _____
 Birthdate _____
 Hometown & State _____
 Military Unit _____
 Rank _____ Service Number _____
 Date of Death _____ Place _____
 Burial Location _____
 Wife's Maiden Name _____
 Additional information on your WWII Service Member's
 Military Service, Death, or Burial. _____

Please send your check:

Payable to AWON, include it with this form and send it to:

AWON Treasurer
5745 Lee Road
Indianapolis, Indiana 46216



Membership Types:

☐ **Orphan Member:** Any son or daughter of a member of the US Armed Forces, Coast Guard, or Merchant Marine who was killed, remains missing in action, or who died in the line of duty, or who later died of wounds or injuries sustained during WWII.

☐ **Family Member:** Other relations who are not a son or daughter.

☐ **Supporting Member:** Other individuals with an interest in WWII, who wish to support us and participate in our outreach activities and programs.

Membership Dues:

Basic Orphan Member Dues are \$25 a year – starting when we receive your check. This includes your AWON Membership Card, a Web Tribute for your father, a physical or E-version of our quarterly newsletter, **The Star**, a personal account on the AWON online List-serv, and an account on the AWON Facebook Page.

Family Member Dues are \$25 a year – including a printed Star – OR \$10 a year for Membership with an E-Star.

Supporting Member Dues are \$25 a year – including either version of **The Star**.

Membership Dues Levels:

Please circle your Dues Level below:

	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
Orphan	\$25	\$48	\$70
Family (Printed Star Version)	\$25	\$48	\$70
Family (E-Star Version)	\$10	\$20	\$30
Supporting	\$25	\$48	\$70
Gold Star (Increased Donation)	\$100	\$192	\$280

Donation Considerations:

Memorial Day Wreath Fund \$ _____
 General Operations & Outreach \$ _____
 Total Dues & Donations Enclosed \$ _____

Submittable
 Online >>>



AWON (American WWII Orphans Network) is a humanitarian, non-profit, nonpolitical service organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the US Federal Tax Code. (EINB #91-1538912) Membership is not required to be entered into the Database. For more information, the AWON Website is at www.awon.org.

Help Wanted!!

An AWON membership chairperson
and volunteers to assist!

Part of AWON'S mission is to find
the other 100,000+ war orphans out
there. We need your help!

In AWON's database we have over
5,000 names but not all these people
are active dues paying members.
We need help to reach out to those
members who have lapsed, and to find
more of our long lost orphan siblings
who do not know us yet.

Can you help? Please message
Barry Barr-Finch:

barrfinch1@gmail.com

or Judi Kramer:

ladybug5@juno.com

for more information about how
you can get involved!!

AWON Director Email Addresses

Barry Barr-Finch	barrfinch1@gmail.com
Paul Bremer	bremergolf@aol.com
Barbara George	blgeorge@aol.com
Judi Kramer	ladybug5@juno.com
Gloria Layne	glayne731@gmail.com
Walt Linne	wlinne@iupui.edu
Lorin McCleary	ldmcleary@gmail.com
Ann Mix	annmix@gmail.com
Rik Peirson	rik@dayone.com
Robert Meek	rhmeekjr@gmail.com

Wreaths Across America 2020 Update!



*AWON member Cathy Becker Light kindly
shared this photo, of the WAA wreath laid
upon the grave of her father, LT Lavern H. Becker,
in Lake Orion, Michigan, Dec. 19, 2021.
Becker was killed over China December 7, 1944.*

With the participation of AWON in addition
to many other individuals and organizations
nationwide, Wreaths Across America was able to
lay an amazing 1.7 MILLION wreaths on veteran's
graves in 2020!

Despite Covid 19 requiring some concessions
to be made in the name of safety, adding some
last-minute stress to what should be a thoroughly
reverent and peaceful event, these challenges
were overcome. A record 2,557 locations took
part in the wreathlaying during 2020. And just
like every year, WAA volunteers spoke the name
of the fallen hero aloud as they laid the wreath
upon their resting place.

Once again, Wreaths Across America completed
their mission: to Remember the fallen, Honor
those who serve and their families, and Teach the
next generation the value of freedom. Thanks to
WAA for honoring America's fallen heroes!

AWON Board Members 1994-2021

Since the founding of AWON by Ann Bennett Mix the organization has been governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The First Board of Directors was established in 1994 and the orphan members were:

Ann Bennett Mix – Executive Director
Lorin David McCleary III – Chairman
Susan Johnson Hadler – Director of Services
Frank Burtnett – Director of Ceremonies
Anne Moloney Black – Director of Public Service
Clint Frederick – Director of Finances

Since the time of our First Board of Directors, a nine-member Board of Directors was established to include positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

To date the following orphans have served on the Board of Directors:

Barry Barr-Finch
Phyllis “Chickie” Shields Berry
Terry Boettcher
Paul Bremer
Shawnee Brittan
Norm Burkey
Constance Castellanos Caldwell
Bill Chiodo
Roger Connor
Elaine Ricketson Danks
DeRonda “Rondy” Elliott
Nicholas Etcheverry
Jack O’Dell Forgy
Mike Forgy (Grandson)
Patricia Gaffney-Ansel Kindig
Barb George
Diana Tate Glasgow
Susan Johnson Hadler
Norma Nicol Hamilton
Judy Hathaway
Bonnie Crane Blackford Hellums
George “Pete” Higgins Jr
Judy Geis Hoffman
Ellen Jones
Judi Hollis Kramer
Patricia Kelley Lahey
Jack Langston
Gloria Zuccarella Layne
Kathy Le Comte (Granddaughter)

Walter P. Linne
Phyllis Epstein Louis
Sandy Chichilla MacDuffee
Maggie Malone
Joan Murray Marlow
Robert H Meek Jr
Billie Meeks
Lorin McCleary
Gerry Conway Morenski
Bonnie Oates
Ann Whelan O’Connor
Rik Peirson
Ed Peters
Jerry Pinkerton
Diane Pollard
Jeanne Brooks Rhinehart
Kay Martin Sandhoff
Gary Shields
Mike Stoddard
Samuel Victor Tannenbaum
Donita Morrison Troglio
Susanne Blommen Turpin
Sandra Lane Walker
Jeffrey Luckey Ward
Patty Nash Wheeler
Betty Palonen Volkan

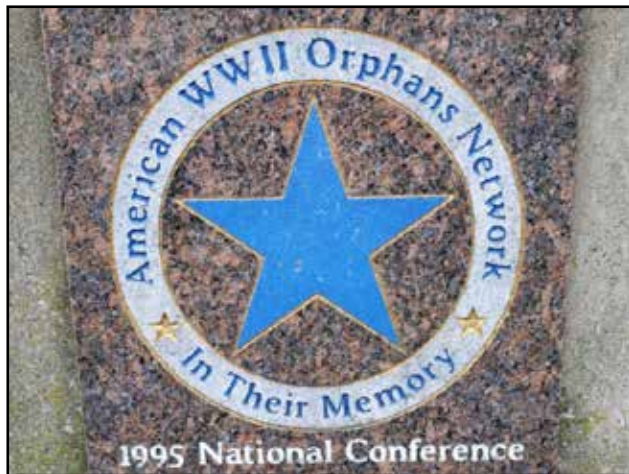
JOB WELL DONE!

AWON Memorial Fund Raiser

National WWII Museum Victory Paver

Over the years AWON has dedicated a memorial or plaque at most of our national conference sites to commemorate our organization and our Fathers.

The first AWON Memorial was established on the waterfront in Bremerton, Washington at our first national conference in 1995. Subsequent memorials have been in the form of AWON plaques presented to the host conference site as a memorial to our visit and to our Fathers.



Of course, the dedication of the National WWII Memorial in Washington DC was celebrated by AWON, along with the nation, at our 2004 National Conference.

AWON raised several thousand dollars for the memorial that honored all WWII veterans.

And AWON was involved in the design process, ensuring that the Gold Stars be added to the National WWII Memorial to commemorate our Dads and all who died in the war.



In keeping with AWON tradition, a commemorative Victory Paver has been purchased at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, in honor of our 30th anniversary. The cost is \$3,000.00.

This Victory Paver {18" X 12"} will be installed in the heart of the National WWII Museum campus on the Colonel Battle Barksdale Parade Ground and Founders Plaza, commemorating the selfless sacrifice of our Fathers and guaranteeing that AWON's commemorative Victory Paver honoring our Fathers will be appreciated by hundreds of thousands of Museum guests every year.



The commemorative Victory Paver will be located in the Founder's Plaza pictured at left, the largest gathering area at the National WWII Museum.

The size of the Victory Paver is illustrated at the bottom right of this page - 18" x 12", the largest size available.

To donate:

**American Orphans Network
Victory Paver
5745 Lee Road
Indianapolis, IN 46216**

Any donations above \$3,000.00 will roll over to the AWON Wreath Fund. Thank you!

AWON's commemorative
Victory Paver at the National WWII
Museum will contain the lettering
featured below:

AWON
AMERICAN WWII
ORPHANS NETWORK
183,000 CHILDREN
LEFT FATHERLESS
"IN THEIR MEMORY"



AWON's Memorial Day Through the Years

The laying of Memorial Day Wreaths is a very important part of the legacy of AWON. Though we were unable to enjoy our wreath layings in 2020 due to the coronavirus, here are some of these beautiful arrangements through the years. With many thanks to our Coordinators, the Achten-Villers family, the ABMC and all its wonderful employees, and those who have generously donated to fund this amazing project through the years!



Left: AWON Wreath and Banner Coordinator Gail Eisenhower laid this beautiful wreath at Ardennes American Cemetery in 2009 in honor of AWON fathers buried there.

Right: This wreath was laid at Brittany American Cemetery in its first year, 2006, thanks to AWON Wreath and Banner Coordinator Brian Hope.





In 2010, the stunning wreath at left was laid at Cambridge American Cemetery in the United Kingdom, under the supervision of Wreath and Banner Coordinator Jean Brooks Rhinehart.



To the left you'll see the AWON Wreath presented in 2016 at Epinal American Cemetery. Epinal W&B Coordinators have included Paula Baker, Lil Holloway, David Colinan, Cal Boardman, Sharon Connor, Jean Rhinehart, and Rik Peirson.



Bill Chiodo and Barbara Croke Catterall have both served as AWON Wreath and Banner Coordinators for Florence American Cemetery, including in 2006 when this wreath (left) was presented there.



AWON presented this wreath (left) at Henri-Chappelle American Cemetery in 2010. Rik Peirson serves as the Wreath and Banner Coordinator there.

To enjoy ALL AWON's wreath pictures and read more about the overseas cemeteries, please click the Connected "W" symbol below to take you to our extended online content:



Millie Cavanaugh and Paul Bremer have both served as Wreath and Banner Coordinators for Lorraine American Cemetery, including when the wreath at right was laid by Walt Linne and Barbara Kelly in 2019.



Sandy MacDuffee, Roger Connor, Donna O'Brien, Mary Nguyen, & Jim Boese have all served as Wreath and Banner Coordinators for Luxembourg, including in 2015 when this wreath (at right) was presented.



Patty Radcliffe Temte has been the Wreath and Banner Coordinator since 2004 (including 2015, when this gorgeous wreath at left was presented) but has passed the baton to Ruthie Joyce! And many thanks to Manila American Cemetery's staff and the Lim family, pictured below, whose support is invaluable!





Left: This lovely wreath was presented in 2018 on behalf of AWON at Netherlands American Cemetery. Gerry Morenski served as Wreath and Banner Coordinator for fifteen years before handing the reins to Gloria Zuccarella Layne. With special thanks to Joost Claasens and Gijs Coppus for gifting us with photos of the wreathlaying ceremonies over the years!



AWONers Lynn Taylor, Sharon Connor, Charlene Czajkowski, and Rondy Elliot have served as Wreath and Banner Coordinators for Normandy American Cemetery. The lovely arrangement at left is from 2013.

With thanks to AWON "Ambassador" JeanMarc Lesueur for his friendship!!

At right, you'll see AWON's wreath presented at the Carthage American Cemetery in North Africa in 2012.

AWON Members Diane Sagen and Judge Bonnie Hellums have served as Wreath and Banner Coordinators there.



This sunny wreath at right was laid at the Rhone American Cemetery in 2008.

Vic Muller served as Wreath and Banner Coordinator at Rhone since 2006 - even though his own brother, Joe, was buried at Margraten. He said it was simply something that needed to be done.

Tragically, we lost Vic this past year. He will be missed.



Thank you so much for all you have done for AWON, Vic. Rest in peace.



Left: The AWON Wreath from Sicily American Cemetery, 2011. Robert Meek, Jr. has served as Wreath and Banner Coordinator at Sicily since 2004.

Right: Vanita Rae Smith and Alix Bonneyman Prejean showing off AWON's 2014 wreath at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. Susan Chadd and Alix Prejean have both served as Wreath and Banner Coordinators at the Punchbowl.



While Suresnes American Cemetery is primarily a WWI cemetery, 24 unknown American WWII soldiers lie in rest there as well. AWON honors these men, someone's father, son, brother, with Memorial Day wreaths, like the wreath at left, from 2017.

Tom Roy, Sharon Crowley Connor, and now the Wreath and Banner Coordinator Collective have functioned as Coordinators.



Of course no retrospective of AWON wreaths would be complete without a big Thank You to Bernard and Re'gine Achten-Villers, who started it all, and their daughter Marie, who helps keep this Memorial Day tradition going at Henri-Chappelle yearly!



A message of profound gratitude from AWON's Wreath and Banner Committee:

With deep thanks to the ABMC (the American Battle Monuments Commission) for maintaining the graves or markers of our fathers and loved ones with such dignity, consistency, and caring, it is the continuing mission of the AWON Wreath and Banner program (now in Year Nineteen!) ~ to remember AWON men BY NAME on each Memorial Day ~ at the one place on the planet where they are best remembered.

Thanks also to the many dozens of sons and daughters of our 16 American overseas cemeteries who annually donate toward their own Wreath and Banner remembrance.

With our very deepest appreciation to the Volunteer Stateside Coordinators of AWON, and to our dedicated overseas "ambassadors," facilitators, helpers, and presenters ~ for the many hours they all spend every year on the preparations that make this remembrance happen at all 16 overseas American cemeteries of World War II that hold the memory of our fallen around the world.

~ Co-Chairs Jeanne Rhinehart and Rik Peirson

American WWII Orphans Network Awards

STAR and FORGY DSA Recipients

The celebration of the 30th anniversary of AWON is due primarily to the many orphan volunteers who have run the organization since its founding by Ann Bennett Mix. Over the years AWON has presented special awards for “service above and beyond the call of duty” for contributing to the success of AWON. The award has been given to both orphan members and “civilians”. The first special award was called the STAR award, and the recipients included:

Tom Brokaw – The Greatest Generation Book	Carmella LaSpada – No Greater Love Director
Ann Bennett Mix – Founder Tribute	Gary Shields – AWON Accountant
Gloria Zuccarella Layne – President 2000	L/C Johnie E. Webb – Senior POW/MIA Accounting Command
Chickie Shields Berry - WWII Memorial \$30,000 raised in AWON's name.	Bonnie Crane Hellum – AWON Board/ Conference Mistress of Ceremony
Thomas Roger Evert Petri – Congressman, National Advisor	Ellen Jones – First Inquiry Coordinator
Jack Forgy – Special Presenter	Terry Boettcher – AWON Board Member
Vamik Volkan – Special Advisor	Rondy Elliott – AWON Board Member
Rik Peirson – AWON Webmaster	Judy Geis Hoffman – 2006 Conference Co-Chair
Doni Morrison Troglio – The STAR Editor/ Database Manger	Barbara Francis Kelly – AWON Conference Treasurer
Senator Bob Dole – Keynote Speaker 2004 National Conference	Patty Radcliff Temte – 2006 Conference Co-Chair
Rep Nancy Kaptur – Introduced WWII Memorial Legislature	

...continued on next page

When our beloved orphan sibling Colonel Jack O'Dell Forgy, son of Lieutenant Colonel Percy O'Dell Forgy, passed away, the top AWON award was renamed the Forgy Distinguished Service Award in his honor for his service as an AWON Board member, Presenter, and our Historian. Jack devoted countless hours of service to AWON, passing on a wealth of information to hundreds of members, often informing us of facts regarding our dads' military lives and the circumstances of their deaths that we would otherwise never have known. Thank you for everything, Jack. Recipients included:

Doni Morrison Troglio – Board Member/Star Editor/Database Manager
Walter P. Linne – First Founder/AWON Pres/HQ's Coordinator/Bookstore Mgr
Chickie Shields Berry – National WWII Museum Fund Raiser
Lorin David McCleary III – First Founder and First AWON Board Chairman
Barbara Francis Kelly – AWON Accounts Mgr/Conference Cochair/Bookstore Mgr
Kathy Le Comte (granddaughter) – Star Editor, Board Member
Gerry Morenski -Board Member, Database Manager

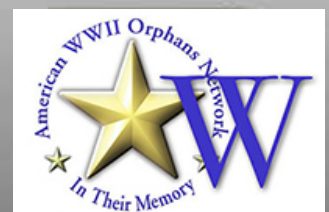
Please turn to page 32 to read a beautiful tribute to Jack from the Dec. 2008 edition of *The Star*

Call for Tributes!

Add a Tribute to the AWON Website! This could be one of the most long-lasting and satisfying ways to remember your Father, Grandfather, Brother, or Uncle. Just be a current AWON Member!

Here's How: 1. Have a look at our website's **TRIBUTE** section at www.awon.org (click "Our Fathers") to see what others have done; 2. Check the web page on "How to prepare a Father Tribute" – (at www.awon.org/check5.html); then 3. Scan (or have a Kinko's scan) your best picture of your loved one in uniform; 4. Collect your thoughts, memories, and service record of your loved one; 5. Send your JPG-formatted image and between 500 and 1,100 words to our Tribute Stager, Nancy Sue Johnson. Her E-Mail address is . . . janceysue@gmail.com. If you need her snailmail address, just call Nancy Sue at 406/529-2315.

Don't let another day go by. AWON is honored to help you honor your Father or loved one! . . . a Tribute page is yours for the asking.



Forgy Remembered as 'Oracle'

by Sam Tannenbaum, presented at AWON's Tucson Conference, printed in Issue 51 of *The Star*

Like Diogenes with his lantern, our Jack-O-Lantern sought the truth about our fathers.

As a soldier, Colonel Jack O. Forgy served 32 years, including two tours in Vietnam. We surely thank him for his service. As a researcher, Jack helped World War II war orphans focus on the kaleidoscope of daddy data. We thank and revere him for that as well.

To me, Jack was a life transformer. In the year 2000, I asked him for help to locate a second lieutenant who had signed a Veterans Administration document in 1945. Jack suggested a website. I found 'Uncle' Robby, who later gave me three photographs of his 'BFF' - best friend forever: my father, Private Henry Irving Tannenbaum, at age ten in a one-piece bathing suit; at age 16 in knickers; and at age 27 at Robby and Muriel's wedding with a fedora and a cane. These life cycle pictures helped me get to know and eventually love my dad. With apologies to the Mills Brothers, my father was no longer a paper dad but a real live guy. Jack changed the lives of over 350 war orphans.

'Happy Jack' - his email handle - had a great sense of humor. At Branson, Missouri, at my fifth AWON conference, Jack said, "Sam, by now you should know how to find your father." When he told his tales of cats playing with his air hoses and riding his tractor while tethered to his oxygen tank, we all laughed out loud while silently crying.

When asked why he did what he did, this gifted writer wrote, "For the little boy who remembers his father and loved him without reservations, there will be questions. 'How did he die? Why couldn't they find him? Was he brave?' For the little girl born postmortem, her questions were, 'What was he like? Why did he leave me behind? Would he be proud of me now?'"

Jack spent months arranging the AWON tour of the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1998. He mentored us all through the process of obtaining our fathers' medals. This scholar generously traveled hundreds of miles and spent thousands of hours at the National Archives. He was our source of wisdom: our Oracle of Adelphi, Maryland. He taught us

the difference between medical reports and clinical reports. Jack helped us obtain Morning and After Action Reports, Individual Deceased Personnel Files, Surgeon General Tapes, even some classified documents, and my personal favorite, Chaplain Reports. They showed that Chaplains quickly cared for our dad's remains with dignified ceremonies. Interestingly, Jack's cousin, Chaplain Howell Forgy, coined the phrase "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition", at Pearl Harbor.

Jack was a *Family Guy* quite unlike the TV character. He shared with us his grandmother's poem:

*There's a Gold Star in my Window
And an ache in my heart,
There's a lonely tender feeling
Making pent-up teardrops start
My brave son is in Normandy:
He rests beneath her soil:
He gave his life for his country:
For you, for me; for all.*

To his wife Crystal, his sons, John and Michael, and his sister Pamela: thank you for sharing Jack with us, his AWON family. Jack, like his father Lieutenant Colonel Percy O'Dell Forgy, has left a legacy that must not be forgotten.



The Story Behind the AWON Logo

by Lorin McCleary



Like many AWON events this story has an interesting and unanticipated tie-in to events of World War II. The First Founders meeting - see page 12 for more about the First Founders - had just taken place in Washington D.C., over Veteran's Day weekend, 1994. One of the tasks we took on was to move AWON from a donation based organization to a membership-based organization with annual dues.

Our founder, Ann Mix, had been working very hard and almost single-handedly since 1991, with a meager budget, to reach out to more World War II orphans. We recognized the need to produce a mailing to the World War II orphans that Ann had located up to that point, and invite them to join AWON as members.

To do this, we needed a logo and a letterhead for the first membership letter, which we would have commercially printed using some of the funds donated by the First Founders.

When I returned home from the First Founders meeting, I started working on a logo design. I had used a simple computer-printed star as a logo I sent to the participants in the First Founders meeting, so that seemed like a logical place to start.

A beautiful, bright gold star seemed better and more expressive of our members' backgrounds. I was concerned about possible confusion with the Gold Star Mothers and their logo, so our AWON logo needed to be more than just a star. Our organization's name, American World War II Orphans Network, is too long to produce a compact logo design. It would need to be set in an arc or circle surrounding the star.

However, the name did not completely encircle the star, nor did it really fully express the nature of our organization as a good logo should.

Enter Frank Burtnett, First Founder and also the individual who coordinated the local arrangements for the initial First Founders meeting in Washington, D.C. In each of Frank's email correspondence, he ended his signature with the phrase, "In Their Memory".

The light bulb clicked on, and as I placed Frank's words on the lower part of the circle around the star, in the right size type, it was a perfect fit, and a perfect expression of the nature of AWON. With a computer-generated rough draft of the new AWON logo, I headed to the printer.

But the story doesn't end here. Harvey, the local printer and a well-known character in my town, was immediately interested in our project. When you think about it, there are many shapes, designs, and proportions for stars. Which one should we use for our logo?

Harvey had a suggestion. He said to me, much to my surprise, "My brother was killed at Anzio, and I think I may have the gold star flag that my mother hung in the window after she got the news. I'll see if I can find it and bring it in so we can take a look." He found it and brought it in, and I could see immediately that the star on the small flag was the perfect proportion for the AWON logo. The star on Harvey's mother's gold star flag is the one we used as the model for our AWON logo.

After the issue of the star shape and proportion was resolved, we worked out the remaining technical details. We decided to produce the star in foil-embossed gold, and the type would be blue - process blue for any printers and designers reading this.

The rest is, as they say, history. The AWON star logo was born, and lives on, now, thirty years later!



Celebrating AWON's Orphan Authors

Through the years, AWON has been blessed by the words of many talented people, sharing their most personal emotions and insights regarding the experience of losing their fathers. In this, AWON's Thirtieth Year, join with us now in celebrating their works, and thanking them for their openness and generosity in opening the window to let the rest of us have a look inside their lives and hearts.

WAR ORPHAN and FAMILY AUTHORS

1. Patrick Audinet
KIA: An Orphan's Search for the Father Through the Fog of War
2. Kay Brigham
For Those Who Love, Time Is Not
Christopher Columbus, His Life and Discovery in the light of His Prophecies
3. Bruce Brodowski
The Dad I Never Knew: A War Orphan's Search for Inner Healing
4. Walter Ford Carter
No Greater Sacrifice, No Greater Love: A Son's Journey to Normandy
5. Thomas Childers (nephew)
Wings of Morning: The Story of the Last Bomber Shot Down Over Germany in WWII
6. Daniel F. Crough (brother)
A War Hero's Story
7. Diana Thompson Dale (niece)
Finding Billy – An Internet Odyssey
8. John Darnton
Almost a Family
9. Rondy Elliot– Collected and Edited
Unmistakable Beams of Light: Cosmic Stories from Members of the American WWII Orphans Network
10. Robert B. Ellis
See Naples and Die
11. Joseph T. Finnigan
Feisty: Chronicles & Confessions of an Old PR Warhorse

12. Mary Lee Cole Fowler

Full Fathom Five

13. Robert Fowler

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

14. Clinton Frederick

World War II, A Legacy of Letters – One Soldier's Journey

15. Damon L. Gause (forward by) –

The War Journal of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause

16. Michael J. Goodwin

Shobun – A Forgotten War Crime in the Pacific

17. Susan Johnson Hadler

The Beauty of What Remains: Family Lost, Family Found
Lost In The Victory – co-authored with Ann Bennett Mix

18. Virginia Hallman (AWON Mother)

More Than a War Hero

19. Richard Carlson Haney

When Is Daddy Coming Home: An American Family during World War II

20. Duane Heisinger

Father Found – A Journey of Discovery

21. BJ Halverson Henry

Freedom Reigns

22. Nancy Kenney

The Lost Submarine: A True Story of Love and War

23. Lois Brown Klein

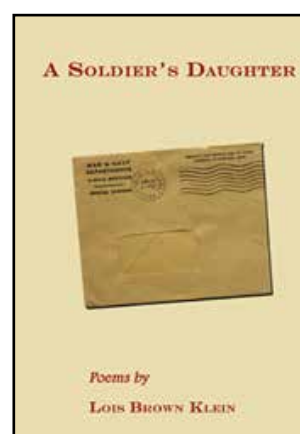
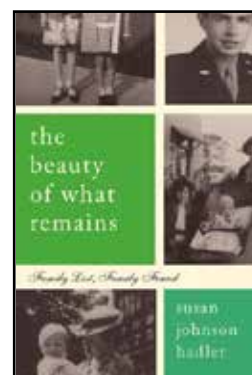
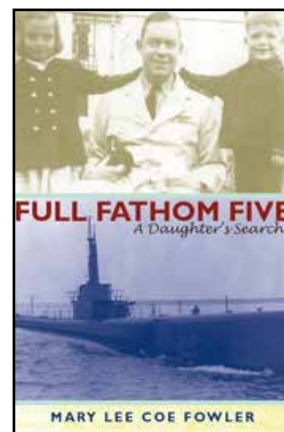
A Soldier's Daughter

24. Wendy Crisp Lestina

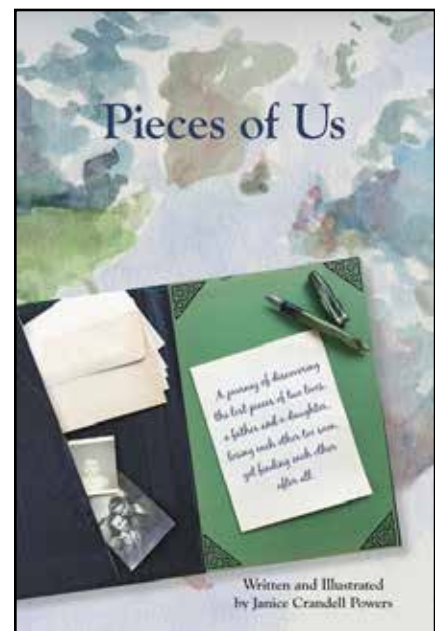
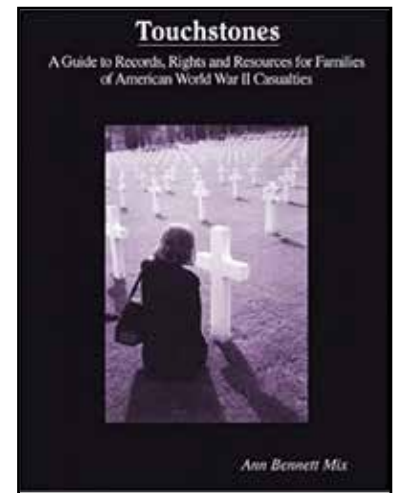
A Bit of Earth

25. Marilynn Rustand Lieurance

In Search of a Pilot: Hanford "Rusty" Rustand



26. Ben McClelland
Soldier's Son – A memoir in which a son imagines and resurrects the life of his deceased soldier father
27. Bill McElvain
In My Father's Words: Letters From A World War II Soldier
28. William C. McGuire II
After the Liberators: A Father's Last Mission, A Son's Lifelong Journey
29. Jerome J. McLaughlin (nephew)
D-Day + 60 Years
30. Ann Bennett Mix, Founder
Touchstones – A guide to records, rights, and resources for the next of kin of American World War II casualties
Lost in the Victory: Reflections of America's Orphans of WWII –
co-authored with Susan Johnson Hadler
31. Anthony Moore
Father, Son & Healing Ghosts
32. Conrad John Netting IV
Delayed Legacy: A Son's Amazing Search for the Full Story of His Father's Death after D-Day
33. Jerry W. Pinkerton
My Father: More than a Picture, a Beer Bottle and a Flag
34. Janice Crandall Powers –
Pieces of Us
35. Damon Rarey -
Laughter and Tears – The art of Captain George Rarey
36. Thomas G Ratliff
I Can Hear The Guns Now – A WWII story of love and sacrifice.
Now I Know – A War Orphan's Journey of Discovery
37. Reda Reynolds
Collateral Damage A World War II Orphan: Lost and Found
38. Laura Small Sims
A Daughter's Quest
39. Samuel Victor Tannenbaum
Thinking Inside The Book



40. Sharon Estill Taylor

Phantom Son: A Mother's Story of Surrender

Phantom Father: A Daughter's Quest for Elegy

41. Sandra Bonilla Thompson

*Love, Honor and Cherish: The True World War II Story of a Screaming Eagle
and a Courageous Woman*

42. Turner Publishing Company

In Their Memory: American WWII Orphans Network

43. Huey Tyra (nephew)

Love Always, Ben

44. Sandra Walker

Little Merchants: The Golden Era of Youth Delivering Newspapers

45. Jeff Wignall

Farebersville 1944

46. Billy Winters

Heroes: Voices of History

47. Kathleen Broome Williams

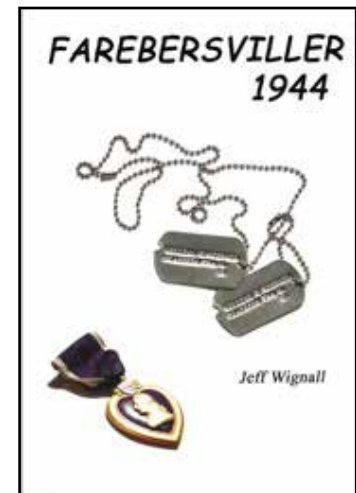
The Measure of a Man: My Father, the Marine Corps and Saipan

48. Imogene Woods and Twelve WWII Infantrymen

The Ordinary Infantrymen: Heroes Then, Heroes Again

49. Raymond Wood (brother)

Or Go Down In Flames: A Navigator's Death over Schweinfurt



CD/FILMS/SLIDES/SONGS

Terry Boettcher and Patrick Tierney – Slides, Producers

We Speak Their Names: A Tribute to Our Fathers

Shawnee Brittan – Film, Producer

Sleep My Sons – The story of the Arisan Maru

The War in Europe

Mark LaPointe (grandson), Song Writer

Leather and Strings featuring Somewhere in Germany

Rik Peirson, CD Producer

Letters of Love and War by 1LT John and Betty Peirson



Ondine Rarey (granddaughter) and Luigi Falorni (Film Producer) - *Fools and Heroes* – A film about two grand-fathers, both artists, one a WWII fighter pilot, the other a conscientious objector.

AWON Poets - Orphans & Family Members

Taps

*Day is done
From the lake
From the hill
From the sky
Rest in peace
Soldier brave
God is nigh.*

Pat Cervennak Albani
DAD

Don Allee
*Did You Ever Know Your Dad
Francis L. Beaver (Grandfather)
In Fond Memory of Louie*

Sydney W. Bennett (Father of Ann Mix)
Untitled

J.C. Christopher (Grandfather)
Daddy

Roger Connor
Hamm, I Am

Danial F. Crough
*PEACE
WAR*

Elaine Ricketson Danks
*A Fallen Hero Comes This Way
How they must have loved us...
For Our Annie (reprinted on pg. 9)
Songs of Our Fathers
Richard DeLuca
Tinian 1994*

Patricia Gaffney-Ansel
Travelers

Daniel Galloway
8/11/45

Vicky Gresik
*For Dad
To My father*

Susan Hadler
*God My Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Goesdorf, Luxembourg, 1997
Gold Star Mothers
O My Proud Country
Our Fathers
Standing Tall*

Chari L. House
*In Remembrance of My Father's 79th Birthday
Silent Love*

Brenda Thomas Kightlinger
*M.I.A. and FOUND
My Dad
The Boy Next Door
The Gift
1940s Britain Kids View WWII*

Lois Brown Klein
*A Family Minus One
Braille
Until Today I've Never Said...
Without*

Jack F. Langham
Don't Cheer "Voice from The Arizona"

Diane Miller Lassiter
We Are One

Walter Linne
In Memory of Our Dad

William C McGuire II
*JOHN JOHN
The Mission*

...continued from previous page

You Have Been A Mystery
by Ann Bennett Mix, 2006

Joyce Freeman McKee
So Brave and Young

Ann Bennett Mix
You Have Been a Mystery
You Were A Soldier Too
Standing At The Alamo

Margaret Orozcon Montrey
The Brave American

Maria Pesce
To My Dad

Donna Pile
Father's Day
Inexpressible Sorrow

Roberta Ryan Roddy
Waiting

Brian Schwall
Honor Silent

Carole Ruthberg Silverman
My Dad was a WWII Hero

Mary Swaggerty Slowey
What is an Amphibian Engineer

Shirley Ricker Theis
I Awoke Early That Day

Rosalie Patten Welsh
Missing in Action in WWII

Allan Wexler
Brooklyn/Luzon 1945

Lynn Mann Williams
My Dad Returns from War

You have been a mystery -
A riddle we have tried to solve.
You have been a photo -
we have tried to bring to life.
You have been a memory -
we have tried never to forget.
You have been a hero -
who laid down his life for his friends.

The story of your life ended too soon.
The book was closed before all the words were written.
But, before your sad good-bye you left a message -
a last hello!
We are that greeting you left behind in the world.
Our eyes, our hands, our skin, our lips - speak.
And here today, we say, "Hello" to the world for you.

You say:
"Remember me!"
"Live for me!"
"Live happy the lives you have been given - in liberty."

Untitled
by Donna Pile Allen, 1996

Unexpressable sorrow,
Inexplicable loss,
This empty tie that binds us to each other...
We know, but yet we don't,
what others take for granted.
We share with each other
what we cannot have,
and maybe never did --
Strong arms that instead of holding us,
held guns,
Now cradled by white marble arms in
faraway lands.
Days of honor like today --
The ultimate gift on Father's Day...
We give what we could not receive --
a lap to crawl into,
a squealing toss in the air,
a walk on a firefly-lit summer night,
storytimes of never-never lands,
ears that hear and hearts that understand,
All they would have gladly given us,
if only they could,
We now give because of them.

Travelers By Patricia Gaffney Ansel

"All roads lead to where we are"
Words from a song that
Bring to mind the journeys that unite us
As family
Bound by love for our fathers and
Our desire to honor them
 To know them
We took the literal straight and winding roads
To be together
Our journeys, figurative in nature
Carry us over long roads
That pass through mountains, plains, and jungles
Oceans, villages, and skies
 And time
Travelers and seekers we are
In search of understanding
and completion
and peace for our souls
In the circle that unites us
 And heals us
We embrace
Brothers and sisters
 In their memory.

8-11-45

by Daniel Galloway

honor guard
fired its
somber anthem
in unisoned volley

bright sun
flashed on
an american flag
draped over a coffin
to be furled
and presented
 with ceremony
to a widow

and this child
 carried past
 an open casket
collected memories
that are the only
physical images
that I have
of my father

*A Sampling of
AWON Orphan
Poetry from
100 issues
of "The Star"*

AWON is a Circle
by Darlene Mott

AWON is but a circle
Each life part of a chain
Each link is joined by sacrifice
We feel each other's pain

To turn and reach our hand in love,
To touch another's life,
Will cause the circle to be whole
Strengthened, with less strife.

The Gift by Brenda Kightlinger

My father was only able to buy me one gift
I cannot feel it with my hand
but it touches the spirit of people everywhere
I cannot see it,
but I envision it every time Old Glory is unfurled.
I cannot listen to it,
but it rings throughout the land.
I cannot smell it, but it is always a privilege to
breathe deeply of its invigoration.
It has no flavor,
but the slightest taste leaves all wanting more.
I've always been willing to share this gift, just
as others have been willing to keep it safe.
It is precious to me, this gift of freedom.

Waiting By Roberta Ryan Roddy

The year was nineteen-forty-four
War raged on across the sea.
His last mission then no more,
Homeward bound he hoped to be.
He flew away into the sky,
With the bombers and their load.
The fighter plane equipped to fly,
Off into the clouds he rode.
His bride and baby girl wait.
A calendar on the wall,
With a circled April date,
Marks when to expect a call.
The year is two-thousand-four,
and the grown daughter still waits,
To meet her father and more,
Since he couldn't make that date.
She knows that a day
 awaits,
When she will fly where
 he flew,
To meet him at heaven's
 gates,
A father she never
 knew.



remembering them with love

waiting
waiting
for the key to turn the house to fill.
taste of salt
sweet scars
where the branch was struck.

today a wreath to lay beneath the stars
you were gone before touch, before memory.

I'll arrive early
stand in the wind
and wait

susan hadler
november 10, 2005

A Family Minus One by Lois Klein

Wrapped in cotton batting,
each of us drifted through
our four small rooms,
our separate dreams and sorrows,
Like pupae, frail and faltering,
eyes squeezed shut,
to the world which had stolen our husband-father-soldier
and never returned him.
Afraid to say the only things
we needed to say,
our pale bodies shared a space,
our hearts sealed in silence.

WAR and PEACE

by Daniel F. Crough

WAR

A figure stops and by the door waits
The coming of the mailman up the stairs
A trembling hand outstretches, hesitates:
News. Good or bad? Each day suspense and prayers.
Across the seas lie fields untilled and bare.
No more the furrows of the plow, but trenches.
That gash and scar the sweet earth's features fair;
And darkness, death, its smell, & rain that drenches
Up near the front, where mist and smoke conceal--
The men who fall like leaves upon the ground.
A whistling noise, a flash, then -- not a sound.
There will be letters now of men who fell;
A trembling hand will clench, for war is hell.

PEACE

When men lay down the instruments of war,
And hills no more resound the sounds of strife,
And birds soar over trees that bloom once more
In forests which again contain wild life;
When banners cease to scream the news account
Of battles won and lost, and softly speak
Of nation courting nation to surmount
Some ancient fear and gain the good men seek --
Then each man tends his business as he should
And concentrates on friendship and his need
Of relaxation, home, and brotherhood,
And living in accordance with his creed.
The world must ever strive for love and peace.
Let war and struggles, as in heaven, cease.

The Reservoir of Sadness

by Roger Connor, from Issue 71 of The Star
published January of 2014

For a very long time I have had within me what I call The Reservoir of Sadness. Most of the time, this Reservoir, this lake of melancholy, is just below my awareness. Only a thin veneer separates it from the surface of my life, the part other people see. It is always there, in good times and bad, a nearly physical presence.

I have always believed - known is probably the more accurate term - that the Reservoir is somehow connected to my father. Long before AWON, long before I learned so much about his life and death, mixed up with thoughts of my father was always this quiet sadness, this yearning for something I never knew or can't remember.

Other thoughts sometimes tap into the Reservoir. All involve a scene or sound or memory that touches me: patriotic music, World War II songs, the Missing Man Table at AWON conferences, a song that reminds me of a long-ago romance.

No matter what my mood - light, reflective, contented, or whatever - if I see or hear or think of something which penetrates the thin layer, I am suddenly aware of the Reservoir. When it comes to the surface, tears sometimes come with it - warm tears, sweet and cathartic, as well as sad.

I do not understand the Reservoir, but it is such a part of me that I cannot imagine being without it. I would not get rid of it if I could. We are partners, me and the Reservoir of Sadness. My father is a silent partner.

The Reservoir of Sadness - the mysterious, watchful presence that seems to link my conscious self with the tangled, turbulent, submerged part of my psyche that never rests. I sometimes wonder, is it trying to tell me something, and I just don't get it? Could it be as frustrated with my dullness as I am mystified by its longevity, its persistent intrusions?

I don't know the answer and I don't think I ever will. Not this side of the Great Divide, anyway.

AMERICAN WWII ORPHANS NETWORK NATIONAL CONFERENCE HISTORY

1995: "Sea You In Seattle" - Seattle, Washington

1996: "A Time to Remember" - Washington, D.C.

1998: "A Book Not Closed - Lost in the Victory" - St. Louis, Missouri

2000 - "As Time Goes By" - San Diego, California

2002 - "Finding Our Fathers" - Branson, Missouri

2004 - "In Their Memory"...Dedication of the WWII Memorial - Washington, D.C.

2006 - "Lone Star Conference" - San Antonio, Texas

2008 - "Healing Ourselves" - Tucson, Arizona

2010 - "The Joy of AWON" - Annapolis, Maryland

2012 - "Celebrating 20 Years" - Indianapolis, Indiana

2014 - "I'll Be Seasing You" - Seattle, Washington

2016 - "Cruisin' In Freedom - Honoring our Fathers" - Freedom of the Sea, Florida

2018 - "Honor Their Legacy - Honoring Our Legacy"...Gala Gathering - Arlington, Virginia

2020 - "Honor and Remember" (postponed due to Covid - 19) - New Orleans, Louisiana

2022 - "Celebrating 30 Years - Honor and Remember" - New Orleans, Louisiana

(please see page 44 for more information about AWON's upcoming

"Celebrating 30 Years - Honor and Remember" Conference!)



National Conference

Washington, D.C. • May 28-31, 2004



National Conference

San Antonio, Texas • May 26-29, 2006



National Conference

Tucson, Arizona • November 7-11, 2008



National Conference

Annapolis, Maryland • November 12-14, 2010



National Conference

Indianapolis, Indiana • October 19-21, 2012



National Conference

Seattle, Washington • September 4-7, 2014



National Conference

Orlando, Florida • Oct. 30-Nov. 4, 2016



GALA Gathering—2018

Washington, D.C.

Coming May 4-8, 2022, to the Higgins Hotel at the National WWII Museum Complex in New Orleans, Louisiana - AWON's "Celebrating 30 Years - Honor and Remember" conference.

Stay tuned for Issue 101 of *The Star* for more detail about this special, once in a lifetime event and how to register to be a part of it all!



Star of **The Star**

Celebrating those who make AWON work!

SURPRISE! IT'S YOU!!

As we look back on 30 years of AWON and 100 editions of *The Star*, one thing is very clear - we wouldn't be where we are today without the tireless efforts of hundreds of volunteers, who have given freely of themselves to keep this organization going into the future. Each and every one of you is an invaluable part of keeping Our Fathers' memory alive and honored.

Thank you from the very bottom of all of our hearts.



Please consider **The e-Star**!!

Over the last year many readers have noticed late delivery of their print version of **The Star** due to Covid-19. But there's a solution to this problem that saves AWON money as well - **The e-Star**!

Not only is it convenient and FAST (you will receive your newsletter the DAY of publication, rather than waiting for the USPS to deliver it), but you will enjoy full color photos and links to additional extended content easily accessible with just a click at www.awon.org - no more having to type in long URL addresses into your computer's address bar!

And if you're worried **The e-Star** will be harder to read than the paper version, DON'T be! We here at **The Star** have been making every effort to produce content that is easier to read in every format, including electronically. Bigger type when possible, larger spaces between paragraphs, fewer stories continued onto other pages - all to help AWON members better navigate **The e-Star** on their phones, tablets, and computer screens.

To make the change, send a message to: star@awon.org and we'll fix you up!

To see what **The e-Star** has to offer, please check out the AWON webpage here: <https://www.awon.org/the-current-issue2>

The AWON Tradition of the Missing Man Table

The Missing Man table has been an integral part of AWON national conferences since 2004. So much so that it doesn't feel right to talk about AWON's 30th anniversary without mentioning it! So here, from the January 2019 edition of *The Star*, is a reprinted version of Roger Connor's presentation of the Missing Man Table from the September 2018 Gala Gathering in Arlington, Virginia.

Have your glass within reach, as you'll need it later. Please stand, if you are able. Let us now turn our attention to the table in front of the dais. The Missing Man Table represents all our fathers. We are here because of the Missing Men. AWON exists because of the Missing Men.

The items on the table are symbolic:

- The White Tablecloth calls to mind the purity of our fathers' call to duty;*
- The Red Rose symbolizes our fathers' shed blood, and reminds us that Freedom is not Free;*
- A Slice of Lemon recalls our fathers' bitter fate;*
- A Pinch of Salt symbolizes our tears as we remember;*
- The Candle represents our hope for an end to war;*
- An Inverted Glass means our fathers cannot toast with us this evening;*
- An Empty Chair shows how our fathers are not here with us.*

In a moment, we will observe one minute of silence while we reflect upon our Fathers' lives and their supreme sacrifice. That minute may seem like a long time. If so think of the hours, the years, the decades that our fathers never had. And the long years and lifetimes that we did not have them. And how our world would

be different if they and their comrades had not stood in the breach when our nation was threatened.

They died that we might live in freedom. Many of us have lived more than three times as long as they did. Their lives were cut short, but their shadows are with us still. Their lifeblood, shed in a thousand battles, runs in our veins even today.

The inverted glass and the empty chair suggest that our Fathers cannot be with us this evening; but they are with us in a very special sense. They and we are united in spirit -- across time and mountains and oceans we are bound together in this place, at this moment. Even across that most mysterious of all boundaries between earthly life and death, all our fathers, and all of us, are together here tonight.

One minute of silence please.

*They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not condemn them, nor the years condemn.*

*At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.*

Let's raise our glasses now in a silent salute to our fathers.

And finally, in gratitude for their lives, and in anticipation of our meeting them again, when there will be no more parting, let's toast each other, "In Their Memory!"

AWON Connections

Pictures and Stories of Members Gathering Around the Country

Hey! Our AWON Connections are BACK!!

YES! We have AWON Connections again! Covid-19 can't keep us down forever!

Do YOU want to take part in an AWON meetup, but aren't sure where to start? The best way is by taking part in a regional group.

AWON has about 50 hardworking regional coordinators. A Local Regional Coordinator, or LRC, is a source of first contact for new members, reaching out to welcome them to AWON. They will also ask if new members wish to be contacted for future gatherings.

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

If you haven't ever been contacted by your LRC, it may be your area lacks one. That could be YOU!

AWON does not have LRCs in all areas, and in many of the larger states, distance is a factor. It's just too far for people to travel, no matter how badly they would like to meet their AWON siblings. Having more people willing to organize gatherings and help keep our membership database current is of paramount importance to keeping AWON going another thirty years!

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

And if you're an LRC and haven't been in touch for a while, please reach out to Barry as well.

Even if you'd prefer not to continue in your coordinator role, AWON leadership would appreciate being updated on that decision so we can find another volunteer to pick up the mantle!



The Indiana Gold Star Families Memorial Monument was dedicated in Indianapolis on Saturday, May 1, 2021. In attendance were Brigitt and Phil Caito, Barbara Kelly and Walt Linne. Brigitt was a member of the Memorial Monument Committee and was presented an Honor and Remembrance flag that bore her Father's name, Col. Robert V. Reno, KIA - 1 April, 1945.



Donna and Jack Allen met up with Darlene and Nick Mott at Olive Garden in Springfield, Ohio. Donna called it a "perfectly wonderful dinner and visit" and Darlene added, "Time went so quickly - but thankful for every minute we had together!!"



The AWON Quilt

By Judi Hollis Kramer

As a quilter, I have seen many "memory" quilts made for families or for special occasions. Back in 1998, I started to think that AWON should have one - a special quilt upon which the children of the men killed in World War II could sign their names. The idea took root, and by 1999 I started to put one together.

I used blue and yellow (gold) cotton fabric for the colors and put a white strip in each block that could be used to sign our fathers name. But over the course of time, as more and more names have been added, we've begun to use the yellow fabric for orphans to sign their father's names too. So far over 290 of our fallen fathers' names have been written upon the quilt.

I first took the top of the quilt, which ended up to measure 66" x 74", to Branson, MO for AWON's 2002 conference. Our members present signed the quilt. I took it to local gatherings to get more signatures. Those unable to attend one of these events were asked to send me an email with the information they wanted on the quilt. I would put that information on it for them.

Once the quilt was complete, it was machine quilted in a star pattern by Material Girls, in Bremerton, WA.

It was completed and formally presented to AWON at the 2004 conference in Washington D.C., in conjunction with the WWII Memorial dedication. It has been displayed at all conferences since completion. When the quilt travels to conferences, it is never checked in luggage. It is always carried on board to ensure it's never lost or harmed in any way, for it is irreplaceable.

Pictures and a description have been given to the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, where our 2022 conference will be held. They've expressed interest in having it for display someday!



Above: This stunning quilt was made for AWON by Judi Hollis Kramer, daughter of 1st Lt. Romain Hollis.



Above: A close up of the fallen Fathers' names, written on cream and yellow cloth

Below: The quilt's signature block recalls its maker



AWON Influential in Memorial Design

Edited by Kathy Le Comte, from Issue 86 of **The Star**, published November 2017

The National World War II Memorial in Washington, D. C. would not look the way it does without the influence of AWON Founder Ann Bennett Mix. Let's start at the beginning.

In 1987, World War II veteran Roger Durbin approached Ohio Rep. Marcy Kaptur, to ask if a World War II memorial could be constructed. Kaptur introduced the World War II Memorial Act in the House of Representatives in late 1987, but the bill wasn't voted on. It wasn't until 1993 and the fourth reintroduction of Kaptur's bill before it was approved by Congress and signed by President Bill Clinton.

A Memorial Advisory Board (MAB) was created in 1994 to advise the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) in selecting a site, designing the memorial, and raising money. The federal government provided about \$16 million dollars while \$197 million was raised by individuals, veteran's groups, and corporations.

The first meeting of the ABMC and the MAB was held in 1995, chaired by Ambassador F. Haydn Williams. A nationwide design competition was held and drew 400 submissions from architects across the country. Friedrich St. Florian's initial design was selected in 1997. Over the next four years, St. Florian's design was altered during the review and approval process required of proposed memorials in Washington, D. C.

Enter Ann Mix and AWON.

In order to have an influence on the design of the memorial, in 1999 Mix relocated from Washington State to Virginia in order to attend and testify at memorial planning meetings. In 2001 her efforts started to pay off, with an invitation for Mix and then AWON Board President Patricia Gaffney-Ansel (now Gaffney-Kindig) to the White House to witness the signing by President George W. Bush of the bill to expedite the construction of

the National World War II Memorial.

After the signing ceremony, Mix had an opportunity to talk to St. Florian. Wanting more recognition of those who died, she suggested including the names of the missing and the dead, or an audio loop of the names. At this time St. Florian's design featured a centotaph, or empty tomb, to represent the dead. The centotaph concept had its detractors, including Mix. As an alternative, she suggested a wall of gold stars, as gold stars were symbolic during the war, and afterwards, of a person who had died in the war. St. Florian liked the idea, and in 2002, the centotaph was replaced with the Freedom Wall. Each of the 4048 gold stars on the Freedom Wall represents 100 Americans who died in the war.

With the design "set in stone" AWON then turned to fundraising. Through the stewardship of Chickie Shields Barry, AWON raised nearly \$50,000 for the Memorial through member donations. AWON's significant efforts and contributions towards the National World War II Memorial resulted in an invitation to the dedication ceremony Veterans Day weekend 2004, with AWON members seated in a special section reserved for veterans. Mix was seated on the dais with VIPs Kaptur, Clinton, Bush, St. Florian, newscaster Tom Brokaw, actor Tom Hanks, and other dignitaries who had a role in making the memorial possible.

AWON held its 2004 National Conference in Washington, D.C., co-chaired by Walt Linne and Penny LeGrand, concurrent with the dedication. The conference had the highest attendance of any conference in AWON's history. Special guest speakers included Sen. Bob Dole, national chairman of the Memorial campaign.

Truly a stellar achievement in the thirty years of AWON!



IN MEMORIAM:

George E. Hazel
August 25, 1937 -
May 26, 2019

George Hazel, who passed away unexpectedly at his home in Bonita Springs, Florida, was with AWON to remember his father, 1LT Richard Lane Hazel.

George served his country in the 5th Armored Division. After his discharge he went on to work in HVAC, as an adjunct professor at Southern Maine Community College, and even in retirement ran his own landscaping company.

He was survived by his wife of 61 years, Mildred, three children, seven grandchildren, two sisters, his brother, and many nieces and nephews.

Jean Reid, who passed away peacefully at the age of 90, was with AWON to remember her father, PVT Charles O. Frinks.

Jean was known for her spirit, bringing great cheer and fun wherever she went. Her family remembers with great fondness her energy, her joy, and her extreme Scrabble abilities.

She was preceded in death by her husband Col. Raymond T. Reid, her daughter Barbara, and brother David, but is survived by three children, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren, and many friends.



IN MEMORIAM:

Jean E. Reid
October 26, 2020



IN MEMORIAM:

Rita N. Blair
June 8, 1944 -
January 3, 2021

Rita Blair passed away from complications of Covid-19. She was with AWON, along with her sister, Antonetta Bell, to honor her fallen father, Pasquale Niro.

Rita was known for her independence, once driving cross country to start a new job in San Diego. She was active with the San Diego Symphony, volunteered at the visitor's center, and in San Diego's Parkinson's Foundation, where she was a member of the "Tremble Clef" choir.

She is survived by her sister, two daughters, a grandson, and many other loving relatives.

Joyce Kovalsky, of Orland Park, Illinois, was with AWON to celebrate the life of her father, 2LT Richard Mark Mullins.

Joyce was preceded in death by her husband Bernie and brother Kevin, and survived by her brother Ken and his wife Sharon, in addition to her children Christine (John) Ellis and Edward Van Witzenberg, step-children Arnie and Steve Kovalsky, beloved grandchildren Lillian and Jack.

Her spirit, light, and energy will be missed by all who knew her.



IN MEMORIAM:

Joyce Kovalsky
September 22, 1944 -
April 5, 2021





AWON BOOKSTORE

Price List / Order Form

Books

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

Items marked with (*) include P&H

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By Janice Crandell Powers	\$20.00*
_____ <i>A Daughter's Quest: Retracing My Father's Footsteps During World War II</i>	
By Laura Smail Sims	\$16.95
_____ <i>The Gun Club: U.S.S. Duncan at Cape Esperance</i>	
By Robert Fowler	\$15.99
_____ <i>Collateral Damage, A World War II Orphan: Lost and Found</i>	
By Reda Reynolds	\$9.00
_____ <i>Feisty: Chronicles & Confessions of an Old PR Warhorse</i>	
By Joe Finnigan	\$12.99
_____ <i>A Bit of Earth</i>	
By Wendy Crisp Lestina	\$13.95
_____ <i>K.I.A.: An Orphan's Search for His Father Through the Fog of War</i>	
By Patrick Audinet	\$10.00*
_____ <i>All proceeds from Audinet book benefit AWON</i>	
_____ <i>The Beauty of What Remains: Family Lost, Family Found</i>	
By Susan Johnson Hadler	\$15.00*
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By Marilyn Rustand Lieurance	\$7.00*
_____ <i>My Father: More than a Picture, a Beer Bottle and a Flag</i>	
By Jerry W. Pinkerton	\$12.00*
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By Nancy Kenney	\$16.00
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By Bill McElvain	\$16.00
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By Imogene Woods and Twelve WWII Infantrymen	\$15.00
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_____ <i>An 8th Airforce Combat Diary</i>	
By John A. Clark	\$49.95
_____ <i>When I See a "Forty and Eight"... I Remember World War II</i>	
By Lt. Col. Jacques Adnet USAF (ret.)	Reduced! \$5.00!
_____ <i>In Their Memory: American WWII Orphan's Network</i>	
By Turner Publishing Company	
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_____ <i>The Fighting Tigers: The Untold Story Behind the Names on The Quachita Baptist University WWII Memorial</i>	
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_____ <i>The War Journey of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause</i>	
Forward by Damon L. Gause	\$21.95
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AWON BOOKSTORE

Price List / Order Form

CD/DVD



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

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

By 1LT John and Betty Peirson \$19.44

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___ *We Speak Their Names: A Tribute to Our Fathers* (VHS)
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___ *AWON 2000 Conference Journeys - Finding Our Fathers* (VHS)

by Justin Taylan was \$15.00 \$3.00*

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AWON Mission

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

AWON Directory

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