



Views preserved site of plane crash

Facebook post leads to French invite

by Robbie Thomas



Robbie Thomas, riding in a half-track in a parade in Chateaudun, France, in August 2015.

In August 2015, my husband and I had the most wonderful and memorable trip to Chateaudun, France.

We were guests of the City of Chateaudun for five days. The purpose of the trip was to celebrate the liberation of Chateaudun 71 years ago and to unveil a stele - a granite plaque with the names of 13 airmen who were killed when two B-17s crashed over their city on March 28, 1944. My father, T/Sgt. Gerald H. Poppett, was one of those airmen.

The plane my father was on was *Passionate Witch* #42-32082. The crew flew 14 missions including bombing Regensburg, Germany, during "Big Week" of February 25, 1944, and participating in the first four bombing missions to Berlin in early March. The fourteenth mission was over Chateaudun, France, to bomb the airfield that the Germans had taken over from the French. The plane was hit by flak and crashed into a barracks building on the airfield. That was when my father and six other crew members were killed. The other plane *Kickapoo Joy Juice* #42-97200, went down in a field near the airfield; six crew members on that plane were killed.

The decision to go to France started when I joined the Facebook page for the 452nd Bombardment Group, my father's unit based

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NOTICE

In the January 2016 issue of *The Star*, the AWON Board of Directors indicated in two articles (*President's Message*, page 2, and *Urgent need for candidates for AWON board*, page 5) the critical need for nominees to replace six of the nine members of the Board of Directors who have decided not to run for re-election. Information for submitting nominations was included.

Unfortunately, there have been no responses to date.

The deadline for nominations is **May 1, 2016**.

Since the next issue of *The Star* will be published in June, this is the last opportunity for you to help AWON continue to be a vital organization.

Contact Nominating Committee Chair Billie Meeks at billiemEEKS@gmail.com or 413 Samantha Dr., Lewes, DE 19958



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www.awon.org

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Education focus of ABMC initiative

by Tim Nosal, ABMC Chief, External Affairs

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) has embarked on a program to develop resources and lesson ideas that integrate ABMC's cemeteries, memorials and the men and women honored at ABMC sites into classrooms across America.

Working with National History Day and the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, ABMC launched a new, free digital resource for teachers in November 2015 at www.ABMCeducation.org. This program started in 2014 and involved 18 teachers who were recruited from across America. This first of three programs has a focus on World War II in Northern Europe. Currently, the second program is underway which has a focus on World War II in the Mediterranean. Next year, the program will focus on the Pacific.

This website currently includes 21 lesson plans created by American teachers who visited several ABMC sites in Northern Europe in 2015. Prior to the trip, the teachers studied the history of the war, and each teacher researched the story behind an individual memorialized in an ABMC cemetery. Each teacher selected an American servicemember from their region who lost his life in Northern Europe. Through months of intense study and in-depth research, the teachers uncovered the story of their fallen hero while developing a broader understanding of the campaigns and battles in which they fought. The group then traveled through northern Europe, from the United Kingdom to France to the Netherlands and Belgium, to visit America's overseas cemeteries and to walk the battle-grounds where these men gave their lives.

Using this experience, the teachers designed a lesson plan specific to their teaching discipline. These lesson plans are hosted at www.ABMCeducation.org and are a free resource designed to increase student understanding of the level of sacrifices the United States made in World War II. Designed for middle school and high school classrooms, the lesson plans are multi-disciplinary and can be applied in history as well as art, math, science and English classrooms. Through the use of primary and secondary sources, videos, and hands-on activities, students are transported to the warfront and homefront. From role-playing difficult family decisions at home to designing new war memorials and exploring military tactics utilized in France, students will walk away with a vivid understanding of the high cost paid by all Americans during this war. Many of the primary sources found at www.ABMCeducation.org were provided to the teachers by family members.

This same process is underway to introduce students to the other theaters of World War II including the Mediterranean and the Pacific. For the World War II in the Pacific program, ABMC will be partnering with the National Cemeteries Administration. The Mediterranean materials will be ready in November 2016 and the Pacific materials will be released in November 2017.

Along with ABMC's new education program, the External Affairs team at ABMC strives to regularly update and improve the www.abmc.gov website and its Facebook page. By Memorial Day, ABMC hopes to be able to start adding photos to the individual profile page of the burial register. Once a system



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Welcome New Members

Laura Smail Sims, MD, dau of PFC George D. Smail, Army
June Rhoads, NJ, dau of CAPT George F. Rhoads, Army
Carroll Candace Kiene, TX, niece of 2LT Halmyth C. Reese, Army Air Force

(new members since the January issue of *The Star*)

AWON mourns passing of member, family

Brenda Scalf Burchfield, 74, of Knoxville, Tennessee, passed away February 3, 2016. She was the daughter of Pfc. Andrew J. and Ruth Jones Scalf, and was a retired elementary school teacher.

Brenda was an organizer for her father's 455th Anti-aircraft Artillery unit, including the erection of a monument on the airfield where they served in Watton, England. She is survived by her husband of 52 years, Dr. Sam Burchfield; two daughters, Christina (John) McSwain, and Dr. Brittany Burchfield; and four grandchildren.



Burchfield

Thaddeus "Thad" Baker, passed away at the age of 77 on April 14, 2015, in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was the brother of AWON member Jerry Baker and the son of Pvt. Ivory C. and Martha Webb Baker.



Baker

Thad was a Vietnam veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army for 22 years. He is survived by two sons, Ivory (Edna) Baker and Gregory (Denise) Baker; his brother, Jerry; two half-sisters, Deanna Dingus Kelley and Opal Kelley; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Steven G. Watson, 50, of Longwood, Florida, son of AWONer Stacy Crossen Roberts and Ken Roberts, passed away March 12, 2016. Steve was an excellent cook and enjoyed movies and music. He is survived by his parents; step-brother, Jeff (Tammy) Roberts; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.



Watson

...ABMC, from page 3

is in place to receive photos and start posting the photos systematically, ABMC will send a release to AWON which will also be posted on the ABMC website and Facebook page. Next year, ABMC hopes to start adding headstone GPS coordinates which will allow the user to see the exact location of a headstone on a map. Additionally, ABMC is continuing to add video content to the ABMC YouTube channel.

Should you have any questions about ABMC's education program, changes in the website, Facebook and YouTube postings, please contact the ABMC External Affairs Team at 703-696-5117 or by e-mail at info@abmc.gov.

Tim Nosal is a nephew of Pfc. Robert "Bobby" E. Nosal, 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, who was KIA on 4 March 1945. Pfc. Nosal was temporarily interred at the U.S. military cemetery at Foy, Belgium, and is permanently interred at Rock Island National Cemetery, Rock Island, Illinois.

Epinal florist offers service for all Mem Day wreaths

This Memorial Day is the first in which AWON (as well as all groups and individuals) must order Memorial Day wreaths through a local florist rather than through the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). The ABMC has a list of suggested florists on its website. One florist has contacted AWON stating that they are willing to help AWON with wreaths - at any European or North African American cemetery.

Pascal Hatton at La Comedie des Fleurs in Epinal, France, has created an AWON tab at his website. The web address is at the end of this article and the AWON tab is at the bottom of the web page. There are 12 floral options with prices listed. Ribbons are included.

Once a floral piece is selected, click on "Add to basket," then "View Basket," then "Continue Order." At this point enter your last name, first name and personal information.

Then there is a space called "Description." This is the place to enter the name of the cemetery. If you are ordering for your father's grave, give the cemetery name, soldier's name, and grave location (plot, row and grave number). If you are ordering for a specific date, such as Memorial Day or Veterans Day, also make a note of that under "Description." Description is the place to note all your wishes.

Once description is complete go to the next page to enter your credit card information to complete your order.

ABMC has a list of suggested florists, but La Comedie des Fleurs is the first to contact AWON and to have a tab on their website devoted to AWON. If other florists follow suit *The Star* will publish their information.

The website for La Comedie des Fleurs is <http://www.florist-american-cemetery.com/commande-fleurs-cimetieres-americains-epinal-fleurs-commemoration-guerre-vosges/?mod=ecommerce&type=rub&rid=22&langue=uk>

Man overcomes abuse to finally know father

Cropley story comes to a close

The Star was recently informed of the passing of AWONer George Cropley. Readers may remember George's story which was the feature article in the July 2014 issue. George's conservator, 1Lt. Peter Duston, USA (ret.) writes, in part:

Dear Kathy,

Remember your wonderful article about George Errold Cropley a couple of years ago? Well, I am sorry to share with you that George died in November after a brief series of medical problems. He didn't suffer and I was with him at the end. After all the years of wondering about his father, PFC Errold Hastey, 350th Infantry, KIA 14 May 1944 and buried in the Sicily Rome Cemetery, George finally met his father face to face.

George had a challenging life. He was born March 12, 1944, in Maine, to his unwed mother while his father was in the service. After his father was killed by a German sniper his mother couldn't face raising a child with disabilities alone. George went to live with his maternal grandparents in what turned out to be an abusive household. He eventually wound up in group homes, institutions and boarding homes where he was taken advantage of. George didn't have any stability until Duston entered his life in 1996.



George Cropley at his father's grave outside Rome, in 1999.

Immediately, Duston started righting all the wrongs. He asked George what he wanted from life. George said he wanted to travel and that he wanted to be buried next to his father - except he didn't know who his father was or where he was buried. After some investigating Duston found some of the answers. Duston also got George his own subsidized apartment where he learned to cook and take care of himself. He also

went on his first trip - to Florida to visit Disney World.

In 1998, Duston read the Sunday *Parade Magazine* article about AWON. AWON Founder Ann Mix not only told Duston where George's father was buried but informed him that George was entitled to a free passport in order to visit his father's overseas grave. The next year, Duston and George traveled to Italy to visit



Duston's Christmas flowers, placed at Hastey's grave, in memory of George.

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Are you a veteran? Did you decide not to serve?

Whether you are a veteran or decided not to serve in the military you have a story to tell. For example:

If you enlisted, why?

If you were drafted, did you consider obtaining a deferment?

Did your mother ask you not to serve?

AWON would like to hear from our members who served in the military. If you are interested in participating, please contact Diane Pollard at dahpollard@gmail.com, or Gerry Morenski at dbmanager@awondb.org. An article, reporting on our members who served in the United States military, may be published in *The Star*.



...Cropley, from page 6

George's father's grave outside Rome. George joined AWON and also became an honorary member of the 88th Division.

The visit to Italy, though, was bittersweet, as George lamented not knowing what kind of person his father was. But that changed once Duston and George got home to Maine.

George was showing the scrapbook of his trip to Rome to some of his friends in town when one man exclaimed that he knew George's father. Moreover, the man's wife grew up next door to George's father. No one ever made the connection previously because George's last name didn't match his father's. The couple invited George to dinner

and told him as much as they could. As Duston noted in the



Lt. Peter Duston, USA (ret.)

July 2014 article, it was amazing that George had to go all the way to Rome and back to discover the truth that was there all along in his small home town.

Ever since that trip to Rome George would have flowers placed at his father's grave several times a year, along with a framed sign that read, "Love from the son you never got to see." George passed away November 3, 2015. Duston had flowers placed on Haste's grave on November 11 and again at Christmas - in memory of George.

AWON is very sorry to learn of George Cropley's passing, but is thankful that Duston gave George safety, stability and, essentially, a family for the past 19 years.

Time running out to book cabin and register

Gangplank going up on AWON cruise

*by the Florida 2016 AWON
Conference Committee*

There's still time - but not much - to book your passage on the Royal Caribbean International (RCI) *Freedom of the Seas* to honor our fathers at the 12th AWON National Conference. The conference runs Sunday - Friday, October 30 - November 4, 2016. Contact Paula Podradchik at 561-498-5461 to reserve a stateroom. The deadline is August 1, 2016.

Nearly 80 AWON members, family and friends already are booked for six days of cruising, fellowship, and a few treasured AWON activities like Sharing Circles and the AWON Memorial Service. And there will be plenty of free time to enjoy on-board entertainment by *Freedom of the Seas*, and on-shore excursions. See the Conference Schedule on page 9.

After booking your cabin you can use your booking number to make airline reservations thru RCI at www.royalcaribbean.com or 844-278-9745. RCI also can arrange for a shuttle from Orlando International Airport (MCO) to *Freedom of the Seas* on October 30th and back on November 4th.

You can book a room at the Radisson Resort at the Port, before and/or after the cruise, by calling 321-868-6573. Mention AWON for a discounted rate. The hotel will provide complimentary shuttle service to and from the port, as well as complimentary parking. The hotel deadline is August 1, 2016.

If you want to drive to Port Canaveral, Florida, call

complete the AWON Conference Registration Form on page 12. If you are a veteran, please indicate so next to your name on the registration form. The registration deadline is August 1, 2016.

Don't forget to place a memorial ad for your father or a departed AWON member in the conference program book. Everyone who places an ad will receive a complimentary copy of the program book. See page 15 for the memorial ad form. The deadline is July 1, 2016.

The Florida 2016 AWON Conference Committee needs a few volunteers to help make the conference run smoothly. By volunteering you will not miss out on interaction with your fellow cruisers

or having a full cruise experience. The most pressing needs are: volunteers to host Hospitality HQ in three-hour blocks; a photographer; someone to bring a laptop for running the PowerPoint presentation, "Honor of Fathers;" a Blu-ray Disc player for a surprise movie premier; and assistants, as needed. If you can help, contact Sam Tannenbaum at samtan7713@gmail.com.

Don't forget to bring your passport, and prepare to have fun.



Park-N-Cruise at 321-454-2500 and mention AWON for a discounted rate of about \$32 plus tax for the duration of the cruise. The lot is about two miles from the port and provides complimentary shuttle service to and from the port. Parking at the port near Terminal 10 is \$120 plus tax for the duration of the cruise.

After you have made your travel arrangements, please

**The latest conference information is posted at
www.awon.org. Click on the conference logo,
pictured on this page.**

AWON 2016 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

on the *Freedom of the Seas*

Day 1 Sunday October 30, 2016 – Port Canaveral, FL

Noon - 2:00 PM	Boarding	Departure at 4:00 PM
2 :00 PM – 4:00 PM	Registration	Conference Center, Deck 2
5:30 PM	Dinner in the AWON area	Romeo & Juliet, Deck 3 *
Nighttime	Entertainment	Arcadia Theatre, Decks 3 & 4

Day 2 Monday October 31, 2016 – Coco Bay, Bahamas

7:00 AM	Arrival in Coco Bay	Departure at 5:00 PM
5:30 PM	Dinner in the AWON area	Romeo & Juliet, Deck 3 *
After Dinner	Captain's Welcome Aboard Party	Royal Promenade, Deck 5
Nighttime	Entertainment	Arcadia Theatre, Decks 3 & 4

Day 3 Tuesday November 1, 2016 – at Sea

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	War Orphans Sharing Session	Conference Center, Deck 2 Room A
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Family Sharing Session	Conference Center, Deck 2 Room B
Lunch on your own		
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	The Siblings of AWON Panel	Conference Center, Deck 2
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	History of Florida in World War II	Conference Center, Deck 2
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Surprise Movie Premiere	Conference Center, Deck 2
5:30 PM	Dinner in the AWON area	Romeo & Juliet, Deck 3 *
Nighttime	Entertainment	Arcadia Theatre, Decks 3 & 4

Day 4 Wednesday November 2, 2016 – Cozumel, Mexico

7:00 AM	Arrival in Cozumel	Departure at 4:00 PM
5:30 PM	Dinner in the AWON area	Romeo & Juliet, Deck 3 *
Nighttime	Entertainment	Arcadia Theatre, Decks 3 & 4

Day 5 Thursday November 3, 2016 – at Sea

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	AWON Memorial Service	Conference Center, Deck 2
Lunch on your own		
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM	AWON Business Meeting	Conference Center, Deck 2
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Awards Ceremony, Missing Man Ceremony and Cocktail Party	On Air Club, Deck 3
5:30 PM	Dinner in the AWON area	Romeo & Juliet, Deck 3 *
Nighttime	Entertainment	Arcadia Theatre, Decks 3 & 4

Day 6 Friday November 4, 2016 – Port Canaveral, Florida

6:00 AM	Arrival at Port Canaveral
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* Subject to Change

AWON finances adapt to end-of-cycle issues

by AWON Board of Directors

At the 2014 AWON National Conference in Seattle, AWON members offered opinions on three topics pertaining to AWON: communications, conferences, and finances. Comments were published in the October 2014 issue of *The Star*.

The AWON Board of Directors discussed the viewpoints in greater detail at their in-person board meeting in Boston in March 2015. The results of the board discussion are being published in *The Star* in a three-part series. The first part, Communications, was published in the October 2015 issue. Conferences was covered in the January 2016 issue. The final topic, Finances, appears here.

There were many comments and suggestions pertaining to AWON Finances. In order to manage the process, the board subcommittee arranged them into several broad categories:

1. Dues - Several boards of directors have elected to keep dues to a minimum in order to attract as many members as possible. This is especially critical as most members are living on retirement incomes. Individuals always have the option of contributing more and we have updated our membership/renewal form to allow the option of contributions to the General Fund and to the Wreath Fund. Originally, all dues were payable on the same date, but as AWON grew new and reinstated members' renewal due dates were set for one year after joining or renewing. The AWON treasurer and database manager are volunteers, and they prefer the current

process since it spreads the work required by them over the year rather than bunching it up at the beginning of the year.

2. Pay For Services - As has been reported, as members age and retire, AWON has had to and will continue to need to outsource services that previously were done by member volunteers. For example, we now pay for someone to prepare IRS filings since no member with the tax software and skill to prepare it is available.

Also, AWON has found it necessary to pay a stipend to the editor of *The Star* who also assists with database, conference and other board issues. We will discuss if she would be interested in taking on some expanded issues that likely will need to be outsourced. The database manager will not accept a stipend. The board will give this further consideration.

3. Archives - The board has taken on the task of establishing an archive for AWON materials. The Board is considering what AWON materials should be archived. Finding a company to assist us and, just as importantly, finding an appropriate repository, are high priorities. The initial list has 19 items, several of which are rather complex (e.g. books authored by AWON members).

4. Donations - It appears AWON has sufficient funds to accomplish the archives task, although the cost could be in the thousands of dollars. After that project and any other wind-up projects are completed and paid for and AWON decides to close down, if there are funds remaining AWON must consider

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what to do with leftover funds. AWON now makes annual contributions to the West Point organization that sponsors our ListServ, and to the American Legion that provides free office space.

Some wondered about donations of funds and air miles to assist needy members to attend conventions. Several years ago the board decided that they did not have time for oversight of such a project. One of our members in the past donated funds for this purpose and oversaw the project. However, sadly, he is no longer with us. If someone wants to volunteer, the board will give it consideration.

5. Communications - AWON has a line item in the budget for donations but, frankly, AWON has not advertised that it is available for donations to pay dues of other members. The board will remedy that.

Regional Coordinators have budgeted funds available to cover their out-of-pocket expenses. The board will remind them that these funds are available.

REMINDERS

- **Tell AWON when you head to or from your winter home**
- **Tell AWON when you move or change your email**
- **Make all checks payable to AWON**
- **Print clearly**

There was a suggestion that AWON have legacy members. The sub-committee could not determine what was meant, but it is certainly open to a more detailed explanation.

AWON has no financial secrets. The board publishes financial information in *The Star* through the minutes and through the annual financial report to members. The board is open to further suggestions.

Star of The Star

A volunteer who makes AWON work

Rusty Lerch

**Coordinator of AWON table at
Mid-Atlantic Air Museum's
World War II Weekend
in Reading, PA**

**Thanks for years of making
the public and "new"
orphans aware of AWON.**

There are more than 115 AWON volunteers who donate their time and money to activities like updating the AWON website, coordinating overseas wreaths, arranging regional gatherings, mailing AWON materials and much more. Many members have been doing these jobs for years and would be happy for some help or for someone else to take over.

Contact a board member to volunteer.



2016 AWON National Conference Registration Form
Cruisin' in Freedom, Honoring Our Fathers
Florida Cruise • October 30 - November 4, 2016
Freedom of the Seas departs Port Canaveral, Florida at 4 p.m., October 30, 2016
and returns 6 a.m., November 4, 2016

Please return registration by August 1, 2016

Member Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Is this your first AWON Conference? (circle one) yes no

Do you want registration information listed in the conference roster? yes no

Do you have special needs? (If so, please indicate below) yes no

Registration Fee

(Please select fee, t-shirt style and size, included with fee.

Note: women's sizes only up to 3XL.)

Active Member ☐ \$75 T-shirt Style: M or W Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

First Guest ☐ \$50 T-shirt Style: M or W Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

Second Guest ☐ \$50 T-shirt Style: M or W Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

Third Guest ☐ \$50 T-shirt Style: M or W Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

Fourth Guest ☐ \$50 T-shirt Style: M or W Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL

Total registration fee enclosed: \$ _____

Name Tag Information (please print clearly)

Name (include maiden name) and state of residence: _____

Relationship to serviceman (son, daughter, nephew, etc.) _____

Name of spouse/partner attending: _____

Other guests attending (designate if veteran): _____

Serviceman's name: _____ Branch of Service _____

rank first middle last

KIA or MIA (circle one) Date KIA/MIA _____ Place KIA/MIA _____

Mail registration form with check or money order payable to **AWON** to:

2016 AWON National Conference
5745 Lee Road
Indianapolis, IN 46216



AWON BOOKSTORE

Price List / Order Form



BOOKS

Authors in **bold** are orphan or family members • Items marked with an asterisk (*) include P&H

____ *K.I.A.: An Orphan's Search for His Father Through the Fog of War*
by **Patrick Audinet** **NEW!!** **\$10.00***
All proceeds from Audinet book benefit AWON

____ *The Beauty of What Remains: Family Lost, Family Found*
by **Susan Johnson Hadler** **NEW!!** **\$15.00***

____ *In Search of A pilot: Hanford "Rusty" J. Rustand*
by **Marilynn Rustand Lieurance** \$7.00*

____ *My Father: More than a Picture, a Beer Bottle and a Flag*
by **Jerry W. Pinkerton** \$12.00*

____ *The Measure of a Man: My Father, the Marine Corps, and Saipan*
by **Kathleen Broome Williams** \$28.00*

____ *The Lost Submarine: A True Story of Love and War*
by **Nancy Kenney** \$16.00

____ *"Daddy's Gone to War": The Second World War in the
Lives of America's Children*
by William M. Tuttle Jr., PhD \$30.00

____ *In My Father's Words: Letters From A World War
II Soldier*
by **Bill McElvain** \$16.00

____ *Farebersville 1944*
by **Jeff Wignall** \$18.95

____ *A Soldier's Daughter*
by **Lois Brown Klein** \$17.00

____ *The Ordinary Infantrymen: Heroes Then, Heroes Again*
by **Imogene Woods** and Twelve WWII Infantrymen \$15.00

____ *Full Fathom Five: A Daughter's Search*
by **Mary Lee Coe Fowler** \$29.95

____ *Love Always, Ben*
by **Huey Tyra**, nephew **REDUCED!** **\$2.00**

____ *Sporty Course (bomber pilots)*
by Col. Jack Swayze \$10.00

____ *The Hotton Report (about The Battle for Hotton)*
by Robert McDonald \$13.95

____ *World War II: A Legacy of Letters - One Soldier's Journey*
by **Clinton Frederick** \$26.95

____ *An 8th Air Force Combat Diary*
by John A. Clark \$49.95

____ *When I See a "Forty and Eight" ... I Remember World War Two*
by Lt. Col. Jacques Adnet USAF (ret.) **REDUCED!** \$5.00

____ *In Their Memory: American WWII Orphans Network*
by Turner Publishing Company
Standard Book was \$49.95 **REDUCED!** **\$10.00**
Leatherbound Book was \$79.95 **REDUCED!** **\$25.00**

____ *The Fighting Tigers: The Untold Story Behind the Names on
the Quachita Baptist University WWII Memorial*
by William Downes \$24.95

____ *The War Journey of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause*
by Maj. Damon "Rocky" Gause, foreward by
Damon L. Gause \$21.95

____ *No Greater Sacrifice, No Greater Love: A Son's Journey to
Normandy*
by **Walter Ford Carter** **REDUCED!** \$18.00

____ *D-Day + 60 Years: A Small Piece of Airborne History*
by Jerome J. McLaughlin \$25.00

____ *They Also Served: Women's Stories from the World War II Era*
by Jeanie Sutton Lambright
NEW PRICE!! hardcover \$20.00 softcover \$10.00

____ *Finding Billy*
by **Diana Thompson Dale**, niece \$16.95

____ *Father Found: Life and Death as a Prisoner of the Japanese
in World War II*
by **Duane Heisinger** \$13.95

____ *Shobun: A Forgotten War Crime in the Pacific*
by **Michael J. Goodwin** \$19.95



AWON BOOKSTORE

Price List / Order Form



CD / DVD

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

____ *Letters of Love and War* (CD for Mac or PC)
by 1LT John and Betty Peirson \$19.44

____ *AWON 2004 Conference & WWII Memorial Dedication*
REDUCED! was \$5.00 \$ 3.00*

____ *We Speak Their Names: A Tribute to Our Fathers*
produced by Patrick Tierney and **Terry Boettcher**
REDUCED! was \$15.00 \$ 3.00*

____ *AWON 2000 Conference: Journeys - Finding Our Fathers*
by Justin Taylan was \$15.00 \$ 5.00*

____ *Sleep My Sons: The Story of the Arisan Maru*
by **Shawnee Brittan** **REDUCED!** was \$30.00 \$20.00*

AWON Logo Products

Close Out on the following AWON merchandise:

____ Sweatshirt \$45.00
only two left: one white 2XL, one blue 2XL
____ Golf shirt ____ white ____ blue \$35.00
only three left: one white XL, two blue XL
____ 20th Anniversary Logo T-shirt (navy) \$20.00
only three left: blue 2XL

____ Hat \$15.00
____ Scarf (royal blue fleece) \$15.00
____ **AWON 20th Anniversary Totebag** **REDUCED!*** \$5.00
* small, P&H included
____ Tote bag (large) \$20.00
____ **20th Anniversary Garden Flags** \$15.00
without holder

AWON Gold Star crystal pendant (no chain included):

____ Gold Star crystal pendant 1 1/8" (28mm) \$10.00
____ Gold Star crystal pendant 1 1/2" (40mm) \$20.00

____ *AWON lapel pin \$10.00
____ Gold Star earrings \$20.00
____ *AWON button (2 1/4 inch) \$3.00
____ *AWON lanyard and name tag/ticket holder
(4" x 6") blue with white lettering \$6.00

____ *AWON note cards w/envelopes (pkg. of 20) \$20.00
____ *AWON bookmarks
(circle amount: 1/\$1.00, 5/\$3.00, 10/\$5.00)

____ *AWON auto magnet \$6.00
____ *AWON holiday ornament \$10.00

The Star NEWSLETTERS

____ * Individual issues \$2.00 includes P&H
____ * All archived issues: \$35.00 includes P&H
____ * Special! Most recent five issues: \$7.50 includes P&H

Ordering Information

Postage and handling: \$8 for each item. Items marked with an asterisk (*) include P&H. For multiple purchases:
Up to \$40: \$10 P&H \$40-\$60: \$12 P&H Over \$60: \$15 P&H Washington State residents add 7.8% sales tax.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Send check or money order to:

AWON Bookstore

5745 Lee Road

Indianapolis, IN 46216

email: bookstore@awon.org

For more information and color photos go to: www.awon.org/bookstore/bookstore.html

Photos wanted for *Faces of Margraten,* *Fields of Honor*

Photos are being sought for servicemen interred or memorialized at three American Military Cemeteries in Europe: Margraten, Henri-Chapelle or Ardennes.

The Faces of Margraten initiative displays personal photos of American servicemen at their gravesites or memorial wall during May. The Stichting Verenigde Adoptanten Amerikaanse Oorlogsgraven (Foundation United Adopters American War Graves, or the "Foundation") seeks to give a face to the 8,301 soldiers buried and the 1,722 names listed on the Walls of the Missing at Margraten.

In May 2015, the first year of the project, *Faces of Margraten* displayed 3,300 photos. Since then more than 450 additional photos have been added. It is expected that this year more than 10,000 photos of soldiers will be on display. The photo tribute runs May 1-5, 2016.

Anyone with photos of someone buried or remembered at Margraten is invited to submit information online at <http://www.thefacesofmargraten.com/index.php/en-US/submit-photo/foxcontact>.

The Foundation estimates 25,000 people visited *The Faces of Margraten* in 2015.

In addition, photos for Margraten, Henri-Chapelle and Ardennes will be stored for future generations in the Fields of Honor database. The database is at:
www.fieldsofhonor-database.com.

2016 AWON National Conference Florida Cruise *Cruisin' in Freedom,* *Honoring Our Fathers* Conference Program Book Memorial Ad Form

If you would like to place a memorial ad in the conference program book, complete the form below and include a photo(s) or email an image. **Forms and payment are due by July 1. Please do not send originals.** Identify the subject of the photo on the back. If you email a photo, please send a high-resolution jpg.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone/Email: _____

Select one: (8½ x 11 page)

\$100 ____ full page

\$50 ____ 1/2 page \$25 ____ 1/4 page

\$10 ____ "Lest We Forget" line (100 character limit)

(example: *Barry & Tom in memory of Brenda Scalf-Burchfield, daughter of PFC Andrew Scalf KIA 2/27/45*)

**Everyone placing an ad
will receive a program book,
whether or not they
attend the conference.**

Message (enclose separate sheet if necessary):

Make check payable to **AWON**
and mail form, photos and payment to:
Kathy Le Comte
1004 Williams Blvd.
Springfield, IL 62704
email: johnkath5@comcast.net

...Thomas, from front page

at Deopham Green, England. I thought I would find it interesting and, perhaps, find more information about him and his missions. I posted the picture of him and his crew standing in front of *Passionate Witch* on the Facebook page and identified the airmen as he had written all their names on the back of the picture.

Shortly after that, I was contacted by Julie Blichmann. Her uncle, Carl H. Blichmann, was on the same plane and is standing next to my father in the picture. She had been contacted by Pascal Bulois and Stephanie Bourdon Lopez of the Bulois Association in France. They were searching for any relatives of the airmen who gave their lives that day in March 1944. Julie put me in touch with Stephanie.

After many discussions with Stephanie via Facebook messaging about celebration plans for the 71st anniversary of their liberation, and many more discussions with my husband, Jim, I was interested in the trip but had not made a final decision. Stephanie gave me the phone number of Tony Snipas of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who had gone to Chateaudun in 1999 with his father who was with the 7th Armored Division. After talking with Tony and hearing about what a wonderful experience he had, I decided I would regret it if I did not go. I contacted Julie and told her we had made the decision to go to France. She and her husband had been wavering on whether or not to make the trip, but after I exchanged

a few emails with her, she told me they also wanted to go. Jim made our plane reservations and we spent the next couple months looking forward to going to France.

On August 12, 2015, we left home for our very exciting adventure. We flew to Washington, D.C., and from there boarded another plane for France. We arrived in Paris about noon on August 13, 2015 and were met by Stephanie who took us to our hotel to freshen up and rest for a short time. Later, she picked us up and took us to her home for a lovely dinner with her husband and two children.

The next day, August 14, we were picked up at our hotel and taken to Camp Kellerman which is an old base and barracks in the city of Chateaudun. We met Pascal for the first time – a very pleasant and caring man. Camp Kellerman was our headquarters for meetings, having meals and visiting with the French people who participated.

We had a lovely lunch and visit there and then Stephanie took us to Chartres where she and her friend gave us a tour of the city and Notre Dame Cathedral.

On Saturday, August 15, Jim and I were picked up at our hotel in a World War II general's car with a chauffeur and a military escort, and taken into the town of Chateaudun where we met Alice, who works in the office of the mayor of Chateaudun, and Guillaume, our English translator. They took us on a short tour of Chateaudun. In particular we found the castle, which has been there since the 10th century, most interesting.



Crew photo of the Passionate Witch. Robbie's father, T/Sgt. Gerald H. Poplett, is in the back row, middle.

After our tour, we were driven to a shopping center parking lot where there were many other World War II American vehicles, tanks, half-tracks, ambulances, motorcycles, jeeps and even a General Patton vehicle – with kitchen and bed in the back. By this time Julie and her husband, Ted Fore, had arrived as did Rick and Terri Moore. Rick's cousin was also on the *Passionate Witch* that day. Coincidentally, Rick had come across a picture of his cousin, Fremont Granade, and a Purple Heart medal and started searching for more information. He was also put in touch with Stephanie and he and Terri decided to make the trip to France.

We had a quick lunch and after lunch, the vehicles caravaned along the route General Patton's troops took when they came into the city to liberate the French. Jim and I rode in the general's car again. It was a most fascinating and enjoyable experience. Toward the end of the journey we stopped at a roadside marker to have a ceremony and lay flowers in memory of a Frenchman and an American soldier who were scouts looking for the enemy when they were killed at that spot by the Germans. Then, we went back to the camp for dinner and a visit with our new friends, both American and French.

Sunday, August 16, we went to the airfield, Canopee, where we were given a tour of the museum of aircraft. Then we went to the crash site where the *Passionate Witch* crashed into a barracks on that airfield. The French people have never cleared out the

rubble. Instead, they put a metal corrugated enclosure around it and left everything there. It was a most moving experience for me. I know it is 71 years later, but I cried for the lost men and the father I never knew. I was comforted by Jim and Stephanie and Pascal. I was standing in the place where he died over 71 years ago when I was only one year old. A place I had only known by name, a place on a map, and a place I never dreamed I would ever visit.



Standing in front of the enclosure of the *Passionate Witch*'s crash site are, from left: Julie Blichmann, Ted Fore, Terri Moore, Rick Moore, Jim Thomas, Stephanie Bourdon Lopez, Robbie Thomas and Pascal Bulois.

After spending some time there, we moved on to visit the crash site of *Kickapoo Joy Juice*. That plane crashed in a field that has been planted and farmed for all these 71 years, and you could still see an indentation in the earth where the plane crashed. It had been an emotional day. I was so touched by the fact that the French people still care and honor the Americans who

helped in liberating them from the Nazis. It has been 71 years and many of them were not even born, but they carry on the stories and the tradition of honoring those Americans who cared enough to liberate them.

Back at Camp Kellerman, there were swing bands and a New Orleans-style Jazz band playing music while people visited exhibits of pictures of the planes, crew members and other memorabilia. I was approached by a young woman who asked if I was an American. Her name was Svetlana and she wanted to know my story so we chatted for a while.

...continued on page 18

...Thomas, from page 17

Once again, I am so amazed at the young people and their interest in Americans who sacrificed for them.

On Sunday evening, the American families were all invited to the town hall as guests of Mayor Alain Vinot of Chateaudun for a champagne and dinner reception. It was one of those receptions where servers come to you to refill your glass and bring you hors d'oeuvres so you don't have to walk over and get anything yourself. It was a lovely evening and I think all of us felt like royalty. They also gave all the Americans gifts of French wine and various other things from France.

Monday, August 17, was the day for the unveiling of the stele and a reception (more wine and food), followed by a parade. I had the honor of unveiling the stele, along Mayor Venot. The stele was covered with a 1944 (48 star) American flag. It was a moving moment to unveil the plaque while everyone stood with the mayor, facing the plaque. The honor guard placed flowers and they played the American and French national anthems.

After the unveiling, there was yet another celebration with wine and lots of food for everyone, including a lot of town people who had come out to see the ceremony. A man who was 14 years old at the time of the crash also told his story: he was walking to the home of a family member when he saw the plane go down. He started to cry when he told the story, then his wife started to

cry, and then I cried, too. He hugged me and said "your papa." I am still overwhelmed at how much the French people still care and remember.

Then it was time for the parade. Jim and I decide to ride in the half-track this time. He likes to sit in the back with the guns. I rode in the front seat, but with the top pulled back I could stand up and see everyone. Pascal was the driver. It was a very moving and (once again) overwhelming experience

of people lining the parade route waving American and French flags and waving to us. Some people were leaning out of windows to wave to us.

The parade went from Camp Kellerman to the Chateaudun town square where the vehicles were parked for people of the town to view. After an hour or so, we drove the parade route back to Camp Kellerman where we spent our last night with our new friends eating, drinking French wine and laughing. It had



Robbie, in front of the stele.

been a beautiful day.

On Tuesday, August 18, we had to leave for home. Stephanie drove four of us (Rick and Terri Moore were on the same flight back to the United States) to the airport in Paris. She cried when we went to check in - and I cried, too. I will miss my new friends and I will forever remember the kindness and caring of the French people. I made many new friends on this adventure of a lifetime and keep in touch with them today. I think of them every day and remember what a wonderful trip it was and thank them for honoring my father and the other airmen.

Decorated soldiers share a bond

General 'salutes' WWII private

by Ben Weber

Al Navarrette was enjoying the company of friends at the annual banquet of his beloved 35th Division Association when the general approached unexpectedly. He sat down next to Al and began speaking. Al was astonished. Here he was, a lowly Pfc., talking with Maj. Gen. Michael Navrkal, commanding general of the 35th Infantry Division. Later, Al commented proudly, "Wow!"

The two veterans spoke quietly to each other as people nearby watched but could not hear. The World War II combat veteran and the general were probably talking "Army talk." One could see their deep respect and love as they clasped hands and looked each other in the eye.

Today, Al Navarrette is being laid to rest at Fort Bliss National Cemetery, El Paso, Texas. He was 91 years old.

Al was 20 when he went ashore at Omaha Beach in July 1944. A specially-trained rifleman, he was chief scout of L Company, 320th Regiment, fighting with the 35th Division through the hedgerows of Normandy. His duty was high risk: locate the enemy, determine its strength, and guide the company into battle. He fought all across



Al Navarrette and Maj. Gen. Michael Navrkal

France, through the Battle of the Bulge, and into Holland and Germany. He suffered a severe head wound from enemy artillery fire, but recovered and returned to battle. He survived the brutal war. He was highly decorated for his combat service, receiving the Bronze Star for valor, Purple Heart and the French Legion of Honor, among numerous other awards.

Al returned to El Paso, married his sweetheart, Alta, and together they raised eight daughters and one son. In his later years, Al often spoke to civic groups about his experiences in World War II. He challenged younger generations to find alternatives to war and work for peace because war caused unthink-

able death and destruction.

Gen. Navrkal is a soldiers' general, having earned the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, and many other medals and awards. But one can see it in his face, too. He knows as commander of the 35th Division he represents all of its fighting men and women, from the service members of today to the warriors of the past. The private knew at once the character of the general.

Safely rest, Al Navarrette.

Editor's note: Al was a past president of the 35th Division Association and is a member of its Hall of Fame. Al passed away in January.

2015 AWON FINANCIAL REPORT

	Actual '12	Actual '13	Actual '14	Actual '15	Budget '16
Budgeted Operating Income:					
Membership Dues	\$23,862	\$16,110	\$15,790	\$13,460	\$12,500
Bookstore Income (net)	0	2,000	0	1,500	0
Interest	0	0	0	0	550
	23,862	18,110	15,790	14,960	13,050
Non-Budgeted Operating Income:					
Conference Net Income	0	5,000	0	2,748	0
Donations	165	680	825	805	700
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	17	
	165	5,680	825	3,569	700
TOTAL OPER. INCOME	24,027	23,790	6,615	18,529	13,750
Designated Purpose Income:					
Cromarty Margraten Fund	0	1,560	0		
Margraten Bench Fund			9,148	2,850	
Wreath Income	1,507	1,539	1,000	2,051	1,500
TOTAL DESIG. INCOME	1,507	3,099	10,148	4,901	1,500
TOTAL INCOME	25,534	26,889	26,763	23,430	15,250
Operating Expenses:					
Newsletter	8,118	6,605	5,301	5,089	6,000
Newsletter Editor					3,600
Telephone	465	440	0	0	0
America Online	395	423	456	301	60
Postage and Shipping	147	25	0	106	100
Insurance & State Fees	500	550	637	540	700

Above is AWON's summary financial report for the past four years (2012-2015) and the approved budget for 2016. The summary report includes income from all sources, and expenses by category. Beginning in 2015 a financial report is published to provide financial information to the membership. Following are some comments and explanations:

Membership dues collection increased in 2012 after the board approved offering multi-year dues payment options. As expected, later years' dues renewals have decreased. Additionally, overall membership has been trending downward slightly every year.

AWON Bookstore income and AWON National Conference net income are received in the year following the conference. Conference registration fees were lowered in 2012 to a level to cover convention costs.

With the adoption of the current Wreath Program, the wreath coordinator transferred the remaining wreath funds to the line item Wreath Income in the AWON General Fund. The balance remaining in the Cromarty Margraten Fund will be added to Wreath Income for Margraten.

Newsletter costs have decreased due to more e-Star subscriptions and culling of addresses that once received a free issue yearly. Beginning in 2016 the AWON Board determined to contract with *The Star* editor so that AWON could continue to use her expertise.

AWON pays the expenses of the Founder when she attends AWON national conferences. Board members receive reimbursement of expenses to attend an in-person board meeting during the year between conferences, as required by AWON bylaws.

AWON donates to westpoint.org and the American Legion for providing to AWON at no cost its ListServ and Indianapolis office space and services, respectively.

2015 AWON FINANCIAL REPORT

	Actual '12	Actual '13	Actual '14	Actual '15	Budget '16
New AWON brochures	1,578	0			
Regional AWON Coordinators	0	0	70	0	250
Database Manager	2,767	3,334	2,344	3,709	3,000
Database Supplies	152	269	219	107	250
WP Listserv Donation	350	350	500	500	500
Website	900	900	723	900	1,000
Conference Expense (Founder)	1,014	0	0	0	1,000
American Legion Donation	500	500	500	500	500
Arlington Wreath	478	315	0	0	500
Archive Expenses	386	68	2,663	85	350
Supplies-Indy Office	21	91	0	0	100
Membership Outreach & Care	294	412	37	183	500
Board Meeting Off-year	0	4,549	0	6,732	0
Treas. Expenses & Tax Return		0	50	522	700
Conf. Advances & Expenses	2,208	2,902	0	2,000	
Misc	126	0	12	0	0
BOD Election	1,171		721		800
Database Webpage Design		0	3,825	3,420	0
Info Packets & Postage	59	0	0	0	150
	21,629	21,731	18,058	24,694	20,060
Designated Purpose Expenses:					
Cromarty Margraten Fund			0	1,135	
Margraten Bench			5,185	6,813	
Wreath Expenses					1,500
TOTAL EXPENSES	21,629	21,731	23,243	32,641	21,560
INCOME OVER (UNDER) EXPENSES					
	\$3,905	\$5,158	\$3,520	(\$9,211)	(\$6,310)

The AWON Board continues to investigate options for the future archiving of AWON hard copy and digital records. Expenses in 2014 were for the board's archive project leader to meet with other archivists in pursuit of this goal. The 2015 board meeting was held in Boston so that the Board could meet with a potential provider of some archives services.

The AWON member who previously donated the preparation of AWON's non-profit tax return has retired, so beginning in 2015 AWON now pays an outside individual to prepare the return.

AWON's election process has been streamlined, with the most recent changes being in 2014 to save printing and mailing costs. There will be another election in 2016.

In 2014 the board authorized a project to upgrade AWON's database in order to store Father Tributes text and images from the AWON website. The upgrade was completed in 2015.

At the end of 2015 AWON had cash and certificates of deposit totaling \$77,582, of which \$11,786 was designated for the Wreath program.

AWON currently enjoys sufficient financial resources to operate, thanks to the generosity of the membership; however, the AWON Board wishes to remind members about AWON's future financial needs. AWON has reached the point where many services previously provided by volunteers of necessity require outsourcing. This includes but is not be limited to AWON's tax return, database management, and the newsletter editor. Additionally, costs will continue in order to maintain the AWON database, and there may be significant costs associated with archiving AWON's records at a repository to be accessible in the future by researchers. All of these issues may require more financial resources than the current decreasing annual membership and attendant dues, both multi-year and annual, can sustain.

AWON Connections

Pictures and Stories of Members
Gathering Around the Country



Several AWON ladies with New York ties met for lunch at Bryant Park Grille In New York City in January. Pictured, from left, are Betty Palonen Volkan, Joan Marlowe, Millie McConnell Cavanaugh, Patricia Gaffney-Kindig and Maggie Malone. *Patricia*

jury that prevented him from attending, and new AWON member Arlys Bullock Aarnes was anxious to join us, but was unable to come because of the unexpected death of a friend. We hope to meet her next time. *Sharon*

Texas gathering set for April 8

Jerry and Judy Pinkerton, and Jerry and Patti Temte, will host a lunch gathering at Texas Land & Cattle in Richardson, Texas, Saturday, April 9, beginning at 11:30 a.m. Joining the group will be two members of the Vietnam War Orphans organization SDIT (Sons and Daughters in Touch). If you can come, too, please email Patti Temte or Jerry Pinkerton at patriciatemte@gmail.com or jerry.pinkerton@sbcglobal.net.



On December 12, AWON's SoCal Regional Group had another intimate and delightful lunchtime gathering in San Diego at the Point Loma Cafe. Seated, from left, are Bob Porter, Linda Hallack Porter and Rita Niro Blair. Standing, from left, are Barbara Torrey Smith, Sharon Crowley Connor and Dale Guernsey Roybal. Not pictured is Bob Porter. Roger McKee Connor sustained an in-

***Thanks for letting
us know!***

Our members are great at finding
"new" WWII orphans. When
you find a new orphan,



please let AWON
know so we can
send them an
information packet
or note them
and their father
in our database.

An address, email
or source of your
information also would be helpful.

***Thanks for being an
AWON sleuth!***

New POW/MIA agency reaches FOC status

By Lt. Col. Eric Bjorklund, DPAA

In the year since being established as a Defense Agency on Jan. 1, 2015, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) reached “full operational capability” or “FOC” on Jan. 8, 2016. This declaration signifies the completion of the reorganization of the Department of Defense’s legacy past conflict accounting organizations into a single, unified defense agency.

During the reorganization efforts of 2015, the DoD never ceased its efforts to account for missing personnel from past conflicts and provide information to the families of our missing, but the full establishment of DPAA as a defense agency now enables the mission to be done more effectively and efficiently.

“I’m very excited about achieving FOC status as it postures the [Defense] Department’s accounting community in a better position to fulfill our noble and important mission,” DPAA Director, retired Army Lt. Gen. Michael Linnington, said. “Now is the time to sharpen our focus, increase our efforts, and maximize all aspects of our accounting efforts to better provide answers to the families of our missing.”

Over the last year, DPAA has steadily attained many milestones that have led to FOC.

The Secretary of Defense approved the name and establishment of the agency on Jan. 29, 2015. The next day the interim director held a small ceremony declaring that DPAA had achieved “initial operational capability,” or “IOC.”

Since then, the agency consolidated many administrative functions and developed a new organizational structure. DPAA is now anchored around two regional, multi-

disciplinary teams that enable collaboration among researchers, planners, operators, scientists, and a host of other professionals. One region is focused on Asia and the Pacific while the other is Europe-focused.

“This new regional, multi-disciplinary approach will ensure improvement in operations, as team members are not only focused on their specific region, but are also working together in the same location,” said Army Col. Chris Forbes, director of the Europe-Mediterranean regional directorate. “We are now able to work face-to-face, making it easy to interact and conference as needed.”

Another key decision for the new POW/MIA accounting agency was the Deputy Secretary of Defense’s April 2015 decision to clarify the DoD’s policy on disinterring American Unknowns from cemeteries around the world. This decision addressed multiple family concerns about the difficulty of gaining approval to disinter their loved one’s remains, for the purpose of individual identification. The immediate result of this decision was the disinterment of the Unknowns associated with the sinking of the *USS Oklahoma* at Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7, 1941.

Establishing unity of purpose under a single agency director for the accounting community was one of the drivers for the Secretary of Defense and Congress’s decision to reorganize. With the appointment of Linnington as the first DPAA Director and subsequent arrival of his two deputies, Army Brig. Gen. Mark Spindler and Mrs. Fern Sumpter Winbush, this critical objective was met. “I’m proud of all the hard work our team members have put into this reorganization,” Lin-



...continued on page 24

nington said. "Their dedication and passion for their work made the past year undeniably successful."

While the reorganization tasks are complete and the agency is operating at full strength, there is still much work to do. The merging of different organizational cultures from the various legacy organizations will take some time to cultivate.

"Each of the three separate organizations naturally had their individual ways of approaching the accounting task," said Army Lt. Col. Eric Bjorklund, consolidation team leader. "But there was never any dispute about the importance in accomplishing this mission. Now as one team, we can focus on the same priorities and perform the mission better than ever."

Some of the key recommendations for the new agency to implement will take more years to fully integrate. For example, the case management system that will improve efficiency to workflows and communicate case information to the families of the missing has begun development, but is expected to take several months to become fully functional.

Another key initiative that is now under development, and is expected to grow significantly in the coming years is the agency's strategic partnerships with external organizations (public and private) to augment and assist current capacities in all areas of our accounting mission. The Strategic Partnership office was established last summer and is implementing several partnership programs for 2016.

"Our goal is to have many additional professional organizations helping us with the recovery process," Dr. Tom Holland, director of Strategic Partnerships, said. "We greatly appreciate their expertise, resources and enthusiasm for bringing home the remains of our missing war heroes."

As DPAA starts 2016 as fully operational, there is great optimism that the agency is better positioned to fulfill its mission to provide the fullest possible accounting for

AWON Board Business 8 December 2015

2016 Conference Report: Conference Co-Chair **Sam Tannenbaum** gave a summary of the progress of the 2016 Conference. A total of 76 members are now registered with 40 cabins reserved. The registration fee is \$75 for members and \$50 for guests. An article with more information and a registration form will be included in the next issue of *The Star* and a full report will be sent to the board of directors.

Financial Report: The November 2015 Financial Report was approved as submitted. As of November 30, 2015 AWON has \$77,900 cash on hand, including \$12,200 that is restricted. Year-to-date income is 88% of what was budgeted, and operating expenses are 79% of what was budgeted. AWON deposited \$2,000 into the Conference Fund as seed money.

Lapsed Members: A letter to lapsed members and a quarterly email will be sent in early January 2016.

AWON Archives Project: **Norma Nicol Hamilton** provided information about Eloquent Sys-

our missing personnel to their families and the nation.

Remaining 2016 Family Update Meetings

April 16	Austin, TX
May 14	Boston, MA
June	Washington, D.C.
Aug. 11-12	Washington, D.C.
Sept. 10	Green Bay, WI
Nov. 19	Reno, NV

Visit <http://www.dpaa.mil/Home.aspx>
for more information

tems, a software company that maintains archival materials online. A conference call was set up with **Ed Peters**, **Norm Burkey**, and Norma with Eloquent IT specialist Lawrence Brisco. After much discussion it was decided their system would not be a good match for AWON. Norma will contact Brisco to let him know the board's decision. Norma will continue to search for other digital archiving companies like the Boston company, HistoryIT, which AWON already has met with. Gerry Morenski will contact the National WWII Registry to inquire about their database and archiving process, with thoughts to AWON's archival materials.

Orphan Stories: **Diane Pollard** gave an update on the orphan military service stories project.

Facebook: **Mike Forgy** continues to work on the AWON Facebook page.

SDIT: **Jerry Pinkerton** talks about his efforts to reach out to the Vietnam orphans group, Sons and Daughters in Touch, and will follow up when the group returns from a tour of Vietnam. Norm will try to contact the Korean War orphans group one last time.

Stipends: After discussion, the board approved offering a stipend to **Kathy Le Comte** for her work as editor of *The Star*.

2016 AWON Election: A final count of current board directors intending to run for election revealed that six of the nine directors will not run again. The President's Message in the January issue of *The Star* will encourage members to run in the upcoming board election.

Next meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the AWON Board of Directors is January 19, 2016.

Bonnie Oates, Secretary

This is a condensed version of the minutes. For the complete minutes, visit awon.org.

AWON Board Business 19 January 2016

2016 Conference Report: Conference co-chair **Paul Bremer** gave an update on the progress of the 2016 AWON National Conference Florida cruise. Currently 80 people have booked with the travel agent. The January issue of *The Star* will have a registration form for members to complete and submit. There also will be details about hotel reservations and parking reservations. **Ed Peters** will bring photos of fathers to cover a Wall of Honor. Discussion will continue at the February Board meeting concerning the future of the pictures.

Financial Report: As of December 31, 2015 cash on hand was \$77,600, including \$12,200 that is restricted. Year-to-date income is \$18,900 and expenses are \$22,700. The board will study the 2016 budget and vote on it at the February meeting.

Misc Discussion: The board discussed previous action items including the Korean War group, Gold Star families, Facebook and group subcommittees. The board also devoted much thought and discussion to the effect the two-year term for board members has versus a staggered term process which avoided the situation of all board directors leaving the board at the same time. No action was taken.

2016 AWON Election: **Norm Burkey** will give information concerning the nominations for the board this coming year in the January issue of *The Star*.

Archival Project: Board members will make a list of items for archiving prior to the February meeting.

Next meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the AWON Board of Directors is February 23, 2015.

Bonnie Oates, Secretary

This is a condensed version of the minutes. For the complete minutes, visit awon.org.

Minutes continue on page 26

Guidelines for Submitting Material for Publication

- Topics considered for publication in *The Star* include, but are not limited to, unit reunions, visiting battle or crash sites, cemeteries, ceremonies, seeking or finding families and veterans, poetry, etc.

- Email copy-ready articles and photos to the editor in Word, WordPerfect, RTE, formats, or in the body of an email. High resolution jpeg, bitmap, gif or tiff images are preferred. Text and photos also can be mailed. Photos returned upon request.

- Please keep text to one page (500 to 1,000 words),

- Preference is given to material written by and about AWON members.

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

Kathy Le Comte, Editor
1004 Williams Blvd.
Springfield, IL 62704
(217) 787-6512
johnkath5@comcast.net

**Deadline for the
July Issue
is June 1**

...Minutes, from page 25

AWON Board Business 23 February 2016

2016 Conference Report: Conference Co-chair **Sam Tannenbaum** gave an update on the conference. There are 80 people booked for the cruise, including 49 orphans. There is still a need for volunteers for various jobs, including a photographer to share pictures, and volunteers to host the hospitality room and Sharing Circles.

Financial Report: The January financial report was approved as submitted. The budget for 2016 was approved as submitted.

Gold Star Families: There was no response from Tony Cordero from Sons and Daughters in Touch (SDIT), the Vietnam orphans group, on his thoughts on a collaboration of Gold Star Families. However, after contacting a representative of the Korean group, they are interested in discussion of Gold Star Families. A meeting with representatives of the SDIT group will take place when they return from Vietnam.

AWON Archives Project: **Norma Nicol Hamilton** gave an update report of the archives project. Ken Knapp of Reflex Technologies in Burbank, California, was contacted. He primarily deals in digitizing film and works totally with imaging media. After much discussion it was agreed that this company does not fit AWON's needs for this project. Norma will continue to look for other providers. Discussion followed as to items needing to be archived.

Director Terms: After discussion about the length of term for a director on the board, **Norm Burkey** will send by email some terms for the board to consider.

2016 AWON Election: After much discussion about the election and lack of response so far for candidates, the board is considering converting the board into a Board of Directors Member Emeritus at the conclusion of the election.

Next meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the AWON Board of Directors is March 15, 2015.

Bonnie Oates, Secretary

This is a condensed version of the minutes. For the complete minutes, visit awon.org.

American WWII Orphans Network

Application, Registration & Renewal Form

- ☐ I would like to become a member
☐ Register my father/family member and me only
☐ Renew my membership

Information about You

(please print clearly)

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____ (home, work, cell)
E-mail _____

Do you prefer to receive *The Star* electronically? Y N
(Checking Y means you will not receive a copy in the mail. You will receive an email notification to read your copy online.)

Renewing members may skip to Dues Options

Relationship to Serviceman _____
Your Date of Birth _____
Where did you hear about AWON? _____

Information about WWII Serviceman

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

Name _____
Last First M.I.
Birth Date _____
Date of Death _____
Place of Death _____
Where Buried _____
Military Unit _____
Service Number _____

Additional details about serviceman's death or service: (rank, medals, etc. Add additional sheet, if necessary.)

Home Town and State _____
Wife's Maiden Name _____

Names and addresses of your siblings with same father, and/or additional family members:

(Please include information on another sheet, if necessary.)

Membership Levels

Any child of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, Coast Guard or Merchant Marine, who was killed, remains missing in action, or who died in the line of duty or later died of wounds or injuries sustained during World War II, is eligible to join as an **Orphan Member**. Any direct relative is eligible to join as a **Family Member**. Any individual, including friends of those killed in World War II, those who wish to participate in AWON activities, or organizations with an interest in and compatible with AWON's purposes and goals, are eligible to join as an **Associate Member**.

Check Your Membership Category:

☐ Orphan ☐ Family ☐ Associate

Dues and Donation Options

Basic annual membership dues are \$25. Sponsor, Gold Star and Multi-year memberships also are available. Circle your option and total below:

	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
Basic	\$25	\$70	\$110
Sponsor	\$50	\$140	\$220
Gold Star	\$100	\$280	\$440

Would you like to include a donation for:

AWON Memorial Day Wreath Fund? \$ _____

AWON General Fund? \$ _____

Total Dues and Donations Enclosed: \$ _____

AWON is a humanitarian, nonprofit, nonpolitical, public service organization under Section 501(c)3 of the U.S. Federal Tax code (EINB #91-1538912). Membership is not required to register in our database.

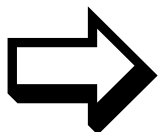
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2848 Woodside St. #401
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The Star

"Breaking Down the Wall of Silence"

AWON Headquarters
5745 Lee Road
Indianapolis, IN 46216
www.awon.org



AWON Mission

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

AWON Directory

Address Corrections

Gerry Morenski dbmanager@awondb.org

Archives

Ann Whelan O'Connor awolaojr@earthlink.net

Norma Nicol Hamilton rlhnnh@comcast.net

Bookstore

Walt Linne bookstore@awon.org

Dues

Jerry Pinkerton jerry.pinkerton@sbcglobal.net

First Inquiry Coordinators

Patty Temte AWON@awon.org

Janice Ott Buterbaugh janicebuterbaugh@gmail.com

ListServ

Judy Hathaway judy0305@yahoo.com

Judy Geis Hoffman jghoffman@satx.rr.com

Memorial Day Wreath Project

Sharon Connor sharonconnor@gmail.com

Regional Gatherings Project

Barry Barr-Finch barrfinch1@gmail.com

The Star

Kathy Le Comte johnkath5@comcast.net

Washington, D.C. Liaison

Lee Mathis jlee123@verizon.net

Website

Rik Peirson rikp@dayone.com