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RETURNING TO NORMANDY

73 years later...

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"I have never forgotten those brave soldiers who died so that I could march in safety up that bluff. That memory is seared into my head to this day. It became the defining moment of my life's path and purpose. It mapped the challenges and opportunities I chose, and still seek, to carry out meaningful service to my country and to humanity. I hope that my life's endeavors have thus far adequately fulfilled that promise." Ash Rothlein, Normandy Veteran.

Now 93 years old, Ash Rothlein continues to give back. It was a promise he made to himself during the war. Shortly after his 20th birthday, he found himself on Omaha Beach and was greeted by a scene he never forgot. As he exited his landing craft the battle had already moved inland but the carnage, signifying an immense amount of sacrifice, was clearly visible. "Spread far and wide across the landscape were countless white wooden crosses, marking the spot where thousands before us had fallen," notes Rothlein.

This September, Rothlein made his way back to Normandy, over 73 years after he first landed. It was the culmination of years of preparation, both mentally and physically, to march through the sands of Omaha beach and up the path he walked so many years before. Steadied by family and friends, he rarely stopped, climbing the steep bluffs to reach the top where a crowd of visitors at the Normandy American Cemetery cheered his way as he ascended his destination. He was the only WWII veteran at the cemetery that day.

For many years, Ash has lived his promise, giving back in innumerable ways to those around him. Over the years, he has been a faithful friend and supporter of the Memorial, and it was his vision and determination that spearheaded the installation of *Homage* in 2014 for the 70th anniversary. Now, every June 6 at the Memorial, Ash places his own French Legion of Honor medal on *Homage* in tribute to all those who did not return. And each June 6, he has the crowd repeat after him, "We will never forget."

Keeping his promise, Ash continues to do more. In a more recent gift to the Foundation, Rothlein and his wife Liz, (who served for 25 years at the University of Miami and ►►



(Top) Ash Rothlein, Normandy Veteran

(Bottom) Ash Rothlein on the beaches of Normandy.



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Homage Statue at the National D-Day Memorial.

retired with a full professorship and 13 years as the Associate Dean of the School of Education), established an endowed scholarship fund the Memorial will use to provide scholarships to students each year. Through their vision for the future, students will have the opportunity to pursue their career goals while reflecting on the true spirit of a generation who worked together to save the world.

For Rothlein, the war was an unforgettable experience that shaped how he lives his life. For Liz and Ash Rothlein, pursuing one's education and living a life with meaning by giving back to those around you is one of the most profound ways to honor those who gave their all so that we might be free – a lesson we can all embrace.

Sadly, Liz Rothlein passed away in January 2017. The first set of four scholarships in her and Ash's honor will be awarded on June 6, 2018.

VETERANS DAY 2017

A "Can't Miss" Commemoration



Veterans stand in recognition during our 2016 ceremony.

For almost a century, the U.S. has set aside November 11th as a special day to honor those Americans who have served in uniform, the ones who have defended our rights and guaranteed our security through their valor, fidelity, and sacrifice. One day can hardly be enough to express our gratitude, but we will certainly take the opportunity this November 11th to pay tribute to our heroes.

Our annual ceremony begins promptly at 11:00 a.m. and features stirring words, patriotic music, and recognition of our veterans. This year we will also take the opportunity to pay tribute to an often-overlooked group: United States Marines in the European Theater in WWII.

When we think of the Marines in WWII, the Pacific Theater is usually the first to come to mind, and with good reason. Marines fought heroically there, in some of the war's most savage battles, achieving victory

wherever they landed. This is not to imply, however, that the USMC was absent from the European Theater. Faithful leathernecks served there in a variety of roles, aboard ships, guarding bases, and training some of the invading forces for Operation Overlord. Their numbers may have been comparatively small, but their impact on the war was immeasurable.

Thanks to your efforts, this Veterans Day a new plaque will be dedicated, recognizing the role of the Marines in the European Theater and the Normandy Invasion in particular. Our keynote speaker, Lt. General Robert R. "Rusty" Blackman, USMC (Ret), President and CEO of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, will assist us in paying tribute to veterans from all of the armed services while inspiring us to a greater appreciation for our freedom. In addition, the newest installment of Veterans Bricks will be dedicated.



Speaker LtGen Robert R. Blackman, USMC (Ret)

A special thank you to Fostek, Bank of the James, Bedford Area Welcome Center and Department of Tourism, and English Meadows for your generous support of this event.

REGINE'S STORY

Be Inspired October 26

On October 26th at noon, join the National D-Day Memorial to hear an inspiring story of endurance and heroism in war-torn Belgium. At a special Lunchbox Lecture at the Bedford Area Welcome Center, Regine Nozyce Archer will share her unique WWII experiences, a saga of survival which will keep you on the edge of your seat. Born in 1924 in Krakow, Poland, Regine's family moved to Liege, Belgium when she was a young girl, little knowing that by 1940 they would be caught up in a great global conflict. Forced to hide her Jewish heritage from the Nazi occupiers, Regine and her sister took refuge in a Belgian convent, where only the Mother Superior knew the truth about the refugees. When the war returned to Belgium in 1944, she became a nurse for wounded soldiers and civilians, and eventually an interpreter for the U.S. Army—where she met her future husband. This poignant story will leave you amazed and profoundly moved—and will serve as a reminder of why D-Day was so important, of what it

meant to those awaiting liberation. The program is free and open to the public, and guests are invited to bring a lunch with them.



Regine Nozyce Archer

VETERAN BRICK CAMPAIGN



Orders are currently being taken for veterans' bricks to be part of the 2018 Memorial Day dedication. The inscribed bricks are a permanent tribute to the men and women who have served. These lasting tributes are not limited to service in World War II and can encompass any service period. Placed prominently on the Memorial grounds, they will be viewed by thousands of visitors each year. The placement of each brick is not only an investment in the legacy of a loved one but also an investment in the future of the Memorial. Proceeds from the brick campaign will assist the Foundation in maintaining the Memorial for many years to come. At a cost of \$250 each, the bricks are an affordable way to give permanent veteran recognition at the National D-Day Memorial. The deadline for Memorial Day dedication is February 2nd, call our office today at (800) 351-DDAY or visit our website for more information www.dday.org.

OVERLORD SOCIETY

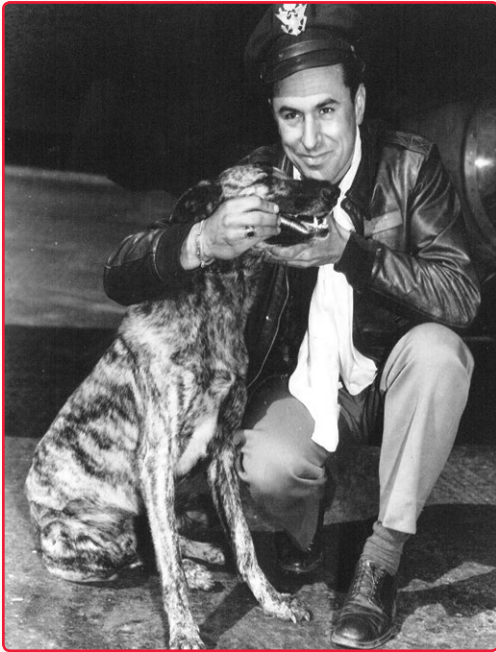
If you find the National D-Day Memorial and the story it tells meaningful, please consider becoming a member of the Overlord Society. The Overlord Society serves as the membership program for the Memorial and by joining, you can show your support for the Memorial's mission; recognizing the valor, fidelity, and sacrifice of the Allied forces who stormed the beaches of Normandy on D-Day.

There are many levels available to choose from and include benefits such as admission and tours, a discount at the Memorial store, exclusive member items, and discounted special event tickets depending on your chosen level.

We are grateful for all our members, and we hope you will consider joining the Overlord Society. You can make a significant impact on the research, educational initiatives, and other work being accomplished at the National D-Day Memorial. Please visit www.dday.org for more information or call (800) 351-DDAY.

ARTIFACT HIGHLIGHT

The Tale of Robert Payne and Thunderbolt



Robert Payne with his beloved dog, Thunderbolt, in England.

While we exist to pay tribute to the people whose valor, fidelity, and sacrifice achieved victory in World War II, it's interesting to stop and consider the role of canines in the war. The Second World War abounded with accounts of heroic dogs contributing to the Allied cause; some trained war dogs, and others beloved pets of those who served. The National D-Day Memorial recently received the donation of records and photographs related to Thunderbolt, a forgotten icon of the European War, a dog with a poignant story we now get to share.

One day in England, Robert Payne, an American pilot from Massachusetts, stopped outside of a pub to offer a few scraps of food to a stray dog lurking around. From that point on the two became inseparable. Payne named the “brindled mongrel” Thunderbolt, after the escort fighters that guarded his squadron on flights. Soon Thunderbolt was even flying on training missions with his master, but when Payne flew into combat he left the dog behind. On those days Thunderbolt would lie down near the runway and patiently await Payne’s return.

One day the plane did not return. Payne’s B-17 was shot down over Germany, and he became a prisoner of war. Thunderbolt, however, couldn’t understand this. He merely kept waiting. Soon he became

a legend in England for faithfully standing sentinel at the airfield week after week. Only when a friend of Payne took over his care was the loyal canine lured away.

Eventually, with that other soldier, Thunderbolt crossed the Channel a couple of days after D-Day and was nearly lost when an enemy shell blew him out of the landing craft. He swam ashore and rejoined his new master, only to be wounded later in the Battle of the Bulge (where he received treatment at an aid station from a dog-loving army medic). Sometime in 1945 Thunderbolt was separated from his caretaker, and next appeared at an air base looking for Robert Payne—or at least that’s what the air-crews firmly believed.

Payne was eventually liberated from the POW camp at the end of the war and flown home, unaware of his dog’s adventures. When he discovered Thunderbolt was alive and had been taken back to his old air base in England, Payne made repeated efforts to have him shipped to the U.S.. Finally, a sympathetic Red Cross official arranged passage for Thunderbolt aboard the *Queen Mary*. The dog and an overjoyed Payne were eventually reunited. Thunderbolt lived the rest of his life on Payne’s farm.

The story of Thunderbolt’s faithfulness and his epic adventure became well known after the war and was the subject of numerous newspaper articles and at least one comic book. While largely forgotten today, the donation of Payne’s papers and artifacts (including photos, items from the POW camp, and the aforementioned comic book) assures that this touching story of man’s best friend in wartime will be preserved. Thanks to you and your continued support, Thunderbolt’s story will be told for years to come.



A page from the 1946 issue of “Picture News” comic book, featuring the amazing story of Thunderbolt.

PARTNERING ABROAD TO ENSURE THEIR LEGACY



President April Cheek-Messier meets with Scott Desjardins, Superintendent of the American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer.

The president of the Foundation recently traveled to the U.K. and to Normandy, France to represent the National D-Day Memorial. In a series of meetings and tours to see first-hand elements of the invasion and she reinforced the many relationships forged there over the years. “There were several highlights to my trip,” stated April Cheek-Messier, president of the Foundation, “including meeting the new superintendent at the Normandy American Cemetery. With the help of my host French family, we sprinkled soil from the Memorial on the graves of all of those from Bedford killed on D-Day and paid homage to the 9,387 killed and buried in Colleville-sur-Mer.”



April Cheek-Messier, president of the Foundation, sprinkles soil from Bedford on the grave of Elmere P. Wright. The grandson of Philippe Josse, president of the Omaha Beach Bedford Association helps place the rose, a powerful reminder of the importance of passing their legacy on to the next generation.

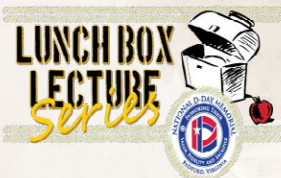
FLAMES OF MEMORY

It's never too early to purchase your Luminary for this year's Flames of Memory event! Over the years, the Memorial has worked diligently to place 4,413 luminaries (the number of Allied fatalities on June 6, 1944) throughout the Memorial grounds. These luminaries can be purchased in honor or memory of anyone, D-Day veteran or not, and will be placed at the Memorial from December 8th through December 10th. It truly is a sight to behold as evening falls over the horizon at the Memorial.

The cost for each luminary is \$20 or \$100 for 6; all gifts are tax-deductible and all proceeds benefit the National D-Day Memorial. A printed program will be distributed throughout the weekend with the names of those luminaries purchased in honor or memory of specific men and women who have served. To purchase a luminary please contact our office at (800) 351-DDAY.



FIRST LUNCHBOX LECTURE OF 2018: JANUARY 25TH



This January 25th at noon at the Bedford Welcome Center, join us to explore the untold story of Operation Neptune, the naval landing component of Overlord. James Ransom, NDDMF board member and retired naval captain, will speak on the crucial role of the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard in making the invasion a narrow success. Other Lunchbox Lectures are in the works and will be announced soon – stay tuned!

POW/MIA DAY 2017

Since 1941 over 82,000 American men and women have been classified as Missing in Action. On September 16th, the National D-Day Memorial along with a large number of faithful supporters, members, and volunteers paid tribute to these heroes in a special commemoration, honoring them and proclaiming that they are missing, but never forgotten.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Michael Dolski of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, who is also a noted scholar on the history of D-Day. DPAA is the agency of the military tasked with giving names to the remains of Americans who lie in unknown graves across the globe and bringing them home. He described the goals of the DPAA and the methods used, including the use of DNA samples matched to survivors of those missing.



Rolling Thunder honoring those missing, but not forgotten at the "Missing Man Table".

In a particularly poignant moment, Dr. Dolski met with the family of Sgt. Charles Scott of Lynchburg, a Korean War casualty whose body was unidentified until 2013, when the work of the DPAA restored his name to his remains. Sgt. Scott's 98-year-old mother was able to see her son laid to rest before her own death a couple of years later. Dolski had been instrumental in the process of bringing him home, but the family never had the opportunity to thank him in person, until the POW/MIA event at the Memorial.

In addition, Russell Scott of Richmond (no relation to Charles) addressed the appreciative crowd, telling of his own experiences as a prisoner of war during WWII. Lt. Scott's plane was shot down over Italy, and he spent a harrowing year confined in German POW camps. His compelling story had the rapt attention of all in attendance.

With suitably moving music by Rick Dellinger, a "Missing Man Table" ceremony by our friends from Rolling Thunder, and the presentation of the colors by the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, it was indeed a moving commemoration. We look forward to a day when all of the missing will be accounted for, and all of our heroes receive the honor they deserve.

MEMORIAL NOW PART OF PURPLE HEART TRAIL



Visitors to the National D-Day Memorial will now be greeted by a sign designating the Memorial as part of Bedford's Purple Heart Community and the nationwide Purple Heart Trail.

Clifton "Buck" Krantz, with Lynchburg's Chapter 1607 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, presented the Purple Heart Community sign to National D-Day Memorial Foundation, President April Cheek-Messier, at the Memorial site this past July.

The nation's oldest military medal, the Purple Heart was first created by General Washington in 1782 and was known as the Badge of Military Merit. The combat decoration is awarded to members of the Armed Forces who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in combat.

The Purple Heart Trail, established by the Order in 1992, originates at George Washington's Mt. Vernon. The Trail is a symbolic and honorary system of roads, highways, bridges, communities, and monuments. The locations are marked in tribute to Purple Heart recipients, to remind travelers of the sacrifices paid for the freedoms we enjoy. There are currently designations in 45 states and Guam. The next time you visit the Memorial, be sure to look for this new addition.

REACHING THE WORLD

One Internet Connection at a Time

It's only a small room; approximately ten by twelve feet. But don't let the size fool you. Its reach is deceptively large—the whole world, in fact.

It's the Virtual Studio of the National D-Day Memorial. The place where, through digital wizardry and your substantial support, we can reach any classroom anywhere with an internet connection. While we are, of course, the National D-Day Memorial, it stands to reason that only a small percentage of students in America live close enough to have the chance to visit. But, thanks to our donors, we have the opportunity to offer high-quality programs to any schools who request it. And as the word is getting out, demand is certainly rising.

For the 2017-2018 school year, in partnership with FieldTripZoom and Streamable Learning, we will offer live stream programs on such diverse subjects as the Comanche Code Talkers in WWII, Pearl Harbor, and of course D-Day, as well as live interviews with WWII veterans. Schools and home-schoolers alike can sign up to experience these events. As some individual schools request their own programs, we also have the capability to meet their needs.

We have an important story to tell, and students need to understand why the compelling lessons of World War II should be learned. Our state-of-the-art virtual programs broaden our ability to do just that. We can't thank you enough for the incredible opportunity to reach across America, from right here in our own studio.

3RD ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC



A magnificent mountain backdrop and crisp fall morning set the scene as more than 100 golfers headed out on the historic Omni Homestead Cascades Course for

the third annual National D-Day Memorial Golf Classic September 25th in Hot Springs, Virginia.

The award-winning Bath County High School Marching Band played the National Anthem as guest golfer Capt. Jerry Yellin, who flew the final combat mission of World War II, raised the American flag to open the event. National D-Day Memorial Foundation President April Cheek-Messier recognized WWII veteran Bobbie Johnson and WWII and Korean War veteran Dan Villarial during the opening ceremony. Former Virginia Tech football coaching

legend Frank Beamer joined us as a guest golfer for the second consecutive year. Former #1 LPGA ranked golfer Donna Andrews also graced this year's event. Andrews and PGA great J.C. Snead presented a well-attended golf demonstration at the Old Course Driving Range following Sunday's practice round.

Guests mingled in The Homestead's exquisite Grand Ballroom Foyer during a Sunday evening welcome reception where Yellin signed copies of "Of War and Weddings" and his recently published book "The Last Fighter Pilot." Guests also took their chances on wonderful raffle items.

The foundation would like to recognize and thank our event sponsors; Fostek, English Meadows, Bank of the James, Areva, Bison Printing, Bankers Insurance, Black Dog Salvage, Craft Collision Centers & Auto Glass, Ameriprise Financial - Brooks Financial Group, Glave & Holmes Architects, and H&R Pest Control.

VICTORY GARDEN: A GROWING SUCCESS

During WWII, with some sixteen million men and women in uniform, sacrifices were required on the American home front. Shortages of pre-war staples like coffee, a confusing system of ration stamps and gasoline coupons, and the absence of little luxuries like bicycle tires and nylon hose were just a few of the realities faced by those at home. One way millions of Americans supported the war effort (and stretched their own food budgets) was through Victory Gardens – backyard patches where peas, squash, and strawberries could supplement strained menus. ▶▶

For years, the National D-Day Memorial has grown our own Victory Garden here on site, as a living classroom to talk about science, nutrition, and the impact of the war on the dining room table. Lovingly tended by folks from the Virginia Cooperative Extension and local Master Gardeners, the Victory Garden attracted numerous visitors last spring and summer. Best of all, students from Bedford Elementary School for the past two years have strolled up the hill for special STEM-based activities which allowing each class to plant its own beds, learn about rationing during the war, and gain a fuller appreciation for what WWII meant for children their age in the 1940s.

The Victory Garden was named for Bedford's Stevens Family, a family who sent three men to WWII service, including Ray Stevens, who died on Omaha Beach, and his twin brother Roy, who survived to serve as a volunteer at the Memorial for years. And thanks to your generosity, today's youth and tomorrow's leaders are learning important lessons about tenacity and sacrifice. Of course, the Victory Garden is now dormant for the winter, but next spring, don't miss the chance to experience a little piece of history growing at your feet!

MEMORIAL PROVIDES RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

The Education staff from the National D-Day Memorial logged a lot of miles this past summer, but all for a good cause. Thanks largely in part to our generous donors, the Education staff had the opportunity to meet, greet, and educate hundreds of Virginia school teachers, presenting ways to incorporate our programs into their curriculum and helping inspire the next generation of history buffs.

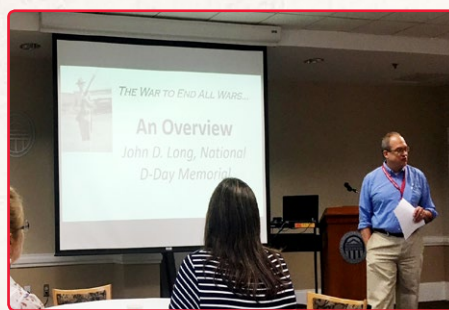
Sponsored by the Virginia WWI and WWII Commemoration Commission, eight Teacher Symposia were held across the state; and the National D-Day Memorial participated in six of them, in Wytheville, Richmond, Farmville, Winchester, Fredericksburg, and hosting one in Bedford. Education Director John Long presented overviews of the history of both World Wars to aid teachers in crafting their lesson plans, while Associate Director Maggie Mitchell spoke in break-out sessions on what we can offer classrooms and ways to connect students to the war that indelibly shaped the

world they know today.

Since those meetings, several teachers have contacted us for information

on field trips on-site or distance-

learning programs for the 2017-2018 school year. All told, some 300 teachers were reached by this initiative, and the dividends will be paid for years to come. Each teacher will have dozens of students per year, and over a career may impact thousands of young minds. By reaching these teachers with the message of valor, fidelity, and sacrifice, we've reached the future.



Education Director John Long discusses WWI during symposium in Farmville, VA.

LEAVING YOUR LEGACY

As a donor to the National D-Day Memorial Foundation, you are making it possible to preserve the lessons and legacy of D-Day. Each day students, veterans, family members, and visitors learn about the valor, fidelity, and sacrifice of D-Day and WWII veterans because of you. You have made this a priority because of your giving. Your continued support through a legacy gift will ensure we never forget the incredible courage and sacrifice of our veterans. **You can leave a legacy that will ensure their stories live on.**

A charitable gift in your estate plan is a great way to create a lasting legacy. There are a number of legacy giving options that may be ideal for you. These include giving through your estate, charitable gift annuities, trusts, life insurance gifts, and real estate, just to name a few. Please consider leaving your legacy – our future generations will benefit from your generosity today. Our Director of Development, Brandon Gregory, would be happy to talk with you about your legacy giving options. Please feel free to give him a call at (540) 586-3329 or email at bgregory@dday.org. If you have already planned to leave a gift in your estate, we'd love to hear about it!



THE NATIONAL D-DAY MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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