

DeLand, Florida—USA



DNAS Museum News - FEBRUARY, 2020

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WWII HISTORY - Women's Army Corps

6888 Central Postal Directory Battalion

MOTTO: No Mail-Low Morale

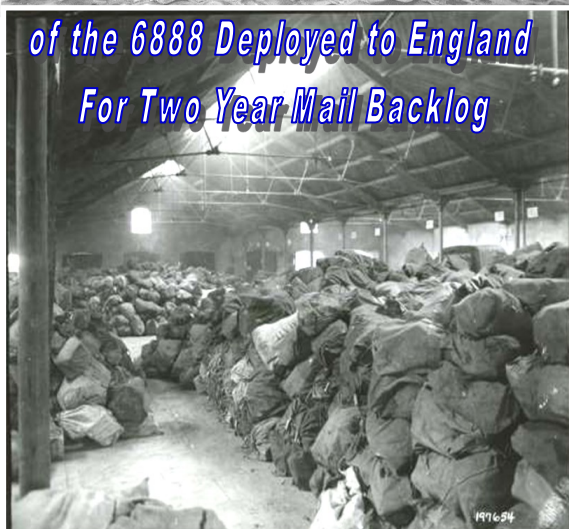


*800 African American Women
of the 6888 Deployed to England
For Two Year Mail Backlog*

**THE SIX TRIPPLE EIGHT WAS THE ONLY WWII
ALL FEMALE BATTALION DEPLOYED OVERSEAS**

Early in 1945 the 6888 Battalion was deployed to Birmingham, England to handle a two year back up of mail destined for homesick American troops. Millions of letters and packages were stacked in postal bags, piled high in warehouses. The women rolled up their sleeves, devised a system and began to work in shifts around the clock under difficult and cold conditions. Sorting through packages, many with spoiled food and letters with limited information, the Battalion processed an average of 65,000 pieces of mail per shift and cleared the backlog of mail in three months. The women provided essential support for the U.S. military in the European theater by

linking military service members to their loved ones back home. Inspired by their motto "No Mail—Low Morale" the women of the 6888 achieved unprecedented success in solving the military's postal problems.



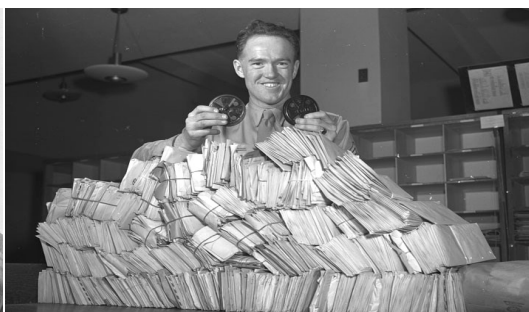


WWII V-MAIL

Improves Mail Delivery



During WWII when the backlog of mail reached a critical level of slow and erratic delivery to the troops and the home front, the military began encouraging all Americans to use V-mail. Letters were addressed and written on a special one-sided form, sent to Washington where they were opened and read by Army censors, then photographed onto a reel of 16 mm microfilm. The reels, each containing some 18,000 letters, were then flown overseas to receiving stations. There, each letter was printed onto a sheet of 4"x5" inch photographic paper, slipped into an envelope and bagged for delivery to the front.



During WWII the mail was a critical connection between families on the home front and the men and women who were deployed around the world. Many families sent letters and cards out every day in hopes they would reach their loved ones. The average soldier wrote six letters a week. Those letters took anywhere from 1-4 weeks to cross the ocean to the United States and many were never delivered but when they were, morale was lifted for all.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

MUSEUM OF ARTS & SCIENCES HISTORYCON 2020



Scott & Zach

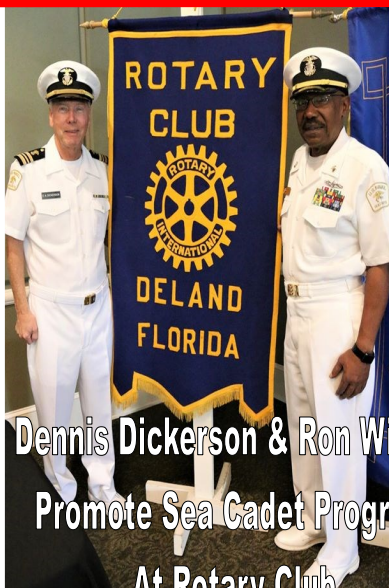
DNASM Volunteers participated in the MOAS 2020 *HISTORYCON* event in Daytona Beach to promote DNAS Museum. Our thanks to our Community Partner Zach Zacharias, MOAS Senior Curator of Education and History for coordinating the organizations participating.



Visitors Viewed
Museum History Video



Dan Friend, DeLand Historic Trust &
Harold Bradeen DNASM



Dennis Dickerson & Ron Wilson
Promote Sea Cadet Program
At Rotary-Club



Harold at 12th Annual
EMS/MILITARY EXPO

DNASM Volunteers also participated in the University High School's 12th Annual EMS/Military Expo which gives students the opportunity to meet first responders and military experts for information on potential career options.

Nearly 50 federal, state, and local agencies participated with 3,500 students attending from University High School along with students from other area high schools (DeLand, Deltona, Mainland, New Smyrna Beach, Pine Ridge, and Spruce Creek). University High is the only high school in the nation to host an event that provides students with a unique opportunity.



**Seeking Students Age 10-
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visit www.seacadets.org, or
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B24 LIBERATOR VISITS DeLAND AIRPORT

WWII MEMORIES SHARED



WWII Veteran Gene Storz



The City of DeLand Municipal Airport Staff recently hosted the Collings Foundation Wings Of Freedom Tour at the Leigh Matusick Airport Management Center for a public display of a WWII B24 Liberator Bomber and a P-51 Mustang. DNASM Volunteer, Gene Storz, 96 years young, got the thrill of a lifetime when the crew asked him to come on board for a tour of the B24. Gene was a Navy 2nd Class Aircraft Ground Crew Chief who worked on the B24. He recalled the great motivation to make sure the daily

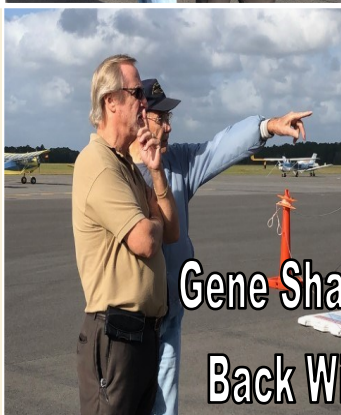
maintenance was correct the first time because as Crew Chief, he was required to join the flight crew on the next training run to ensure everything was working properly. DNASM Historian Harold Bradeen was also able to tour the vintage aircraft. The Wings of Freedom Tour is traveling throughout the country offering tours and flights to the public. Visit www.collingsfoundation.org



Gene Offered Some "Tips" On Proper Maintenance



Harold Bradeen Navigates Cat Walk



Gene Shares Memories of the Back Window He Sat Near



Gene & Harold With Crew

WWII History - B-24 Liberator Pilot Rescue

Painting Donation Leads To Discovery Of Pilot's POW Story



Recently, Don Shinnamon contacted the DNAS Museum to advise that he had a painting he wanted to donate for display. The painting was a large framed, signed and numbered print of a B-24 called "*No Empty Beds Tonight*". Don, who has a vast collection of military memorabilia, is a museum supporter who has donated other plane models and books in the past.

Just before he was scheduled to bring the painting to the museum, he hosted a visit from friends, including Ms. Robbie Rickey. Ms. Rickey noticed the B-24 painting and shared with Don that her father was a WWII Airforce B-24 Pilot who was shot down over Romania and held in the Bucharest POW Camp.



She shared several newspaper articles about her father, Lt. Ralph R. Rickey, who was stationed in southern Italy. His B-24 was engaged in a raid on the Ploesti oil fields in Romania. Known as *Operation Tidal Wave*, the Ploesti Raid occurred on August 1, 1943, and because it marked the second highest loss suffered by the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) in a single

operation, it was nicknamed Black Sunday. Lt. Rickey was the Co-Pilot of the B-24 that was encircled by hostile aircraft and shot down in that raid. Other aircraft in the area reported seeing the plane falling to the ground and the crew bailing out with parachutes. Lt. Rickey, who was listed as missing and thought to be lost, was among the crew captured and held in the Bucharest POW Camp for months. He did not receive adequate medical care during his confinement and later told his daughter that a French refugee woman and her 14 year old daughter were the only ones who brought any comfort to the injured men being held. She would bring tea and cookies, straighten bedsheets and standby their beds when their condition was bad. They would listen for her footsteps down the hospital corridor.

Months later, Lt. Rickey's mother, Mrs. Claudia L. Rickey and wife Odessa, received word from the U.S. 15th Air Force headquarters in Italy that 1,126 of the more than 3,000 American airmen shot down over Romania and interned had been liberated and evacuated to Italian soil in a fleet of 38 Flying Fortresses. Lt. Rickey was among those rescued. He was awarded the Purple Heart, Presidential Citation and the Air Medal with one oak-leaf cluster. Lt. Rickey and his three brothers Irvin, Roy and Roger, Oklahoma City, all volunteered for military service on September 16, 1940. Lt. Irvin Rickey was also held in another German POW Camp during WWII.

Based on this story, Don asked if we would mind if he gave the B-24 picture to Robbie Rickey instead. We agreed she should have it to pass on the history of the Rickey family.

WWII History - DeLand NAS Veteran Katherine Burlin



Katherine Burlin

DeLand NAS 1944

The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum is honored to stay in touch with Katherine Burlin of Fort Belvoir, Virginia, one of our members who was stationed in DeLand, Florida during WWII. Her recollections will become a permanent part of our history displays now and for future generations.

Recollections In Her Own Words

"In 1944, I was a 21 year-old graduate of a two-year college working for a major aircraft company in Wichita, Kansas. While on a trip to Denver, I called an old friend who was serving as a nurse at Fitzsimmons Army Hospital to see if she could have dinner with me. It turned out she had duty that night, so she invited me to the hospital instead. Our walk through the halls completely altered the direction of my life. I came face to face with the reality of war. I was deeply affected by the patients in treatment there – severely injured and wounded servicemen, many who were missing limbs. On the train back to Kansas, I decided I had to do something more than my administrative job at the aircraft company. I would join the Navy! In April of

1944, I enlisted in the WAVES and began my service as Apprentice Seaman Katherine Nolan from Hutchinson, Kansas.



**Bob & Kay
Burlin**

Boot camp was at Hunter College in New York City for six weeks, followed by a month at Yeoman School. I was assigned to DeLand Naval Air Station in Florida where I worked for the Captain, Exec and WAVES Administrative Officer, who doubled as the Public Affairs Officer. I was associated with great people who worked very hard and were outstanding leaders. They were also thoughtful and fair to all on our base. I made lifelong friends, and was very proud that I was able to make my small contribution to our Nation's goals of Victory and Peace. The hardest part of my job was writing the letters of condolence to the families of our personnel who died in air accidents. Sometimes I would also brief the escort who was taking his friend home. And sometimes he was my friend too.



After victory was achieved in 1945, the Navy began demobilizing. I received my discharge and moved to New York City to take to the skies as a flight attendant for a major airline. Inspired by my World War II experience, I also began volunteering with the Red Cross which became a large part of my life for the next six decades. Managing blood drives and handling emergency cases with Services to Military Families, later known as Armed Forces Emergency

Services.

While on a flight to Washington in 1949, I met my future husband, Robert B. Burlin, a Major in the USA Army Corp of Engineers! While I was initially reluctant to marry into a crowd so determined to "Beat Navy", I welcomed the opportunity to once again be part of the military community. I enjoyed the life of an Army wife, with its joys – and its challenges and sadness. We raised 3 great daughters, moved 10 times, and weathered several hardship tours and deployments over the next 20 years of Bob's active duty service. A member of the West Point Class of Jan'43 and veteran of the China/Burma/India Theater during World War II, Bob always said that Arlington Cemetery was his permanent address. In March of 1991, he was laid to rest near his parents and next to our infant daughter on Grant Avenue.

As I approach my 95th birthday, I am grateful to live in a military retirement community surrounded by those who continue to exemplify the devotion to country and value of service that I learned 75 years ago as a young Yeoman. Sadly, the veterans of my generation are passing swiftly. I have attended countless funerals of dear friends here at Arlington in the past few years. Each visit to this special place floods me with memories and reminds me of the deep bonds of those who serve together in the defense of our Nation. The playing of the Navy Hymn always brings me to tears."

We Will Share More Recollections From Katherine In The Future

Educational Tours for Adults & Youth

Another Busy Month For Public Tours



**Chris Stubbs
Visits Team**

The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Volunteers continue to donate their time to lead tours of the museum complex for youth and adults. Tour Guides are needed Wednesday through Saturday from Noon—4pm and Sunday 1pm-4pm. Individuals and couples are encouraged to apply and a tour script is available. DNASM was recently featured in a General Aviation News article "[*A Hidden Treasure At KDED*](https://www.generalaviationnews.com)"-[*generalaviationnews.com*](https://www.generalaviationnews.com).



**Ray & Claudia Parker
Veterans Museum &
Education Center
Daytona Beach**



Volunteers Needed

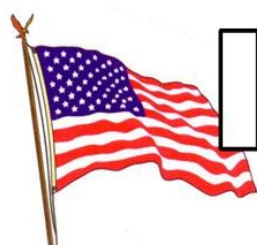


**Bill Taylor
Donates Jacket**



**Harold Bradeen
Leads Tour Volunteers**

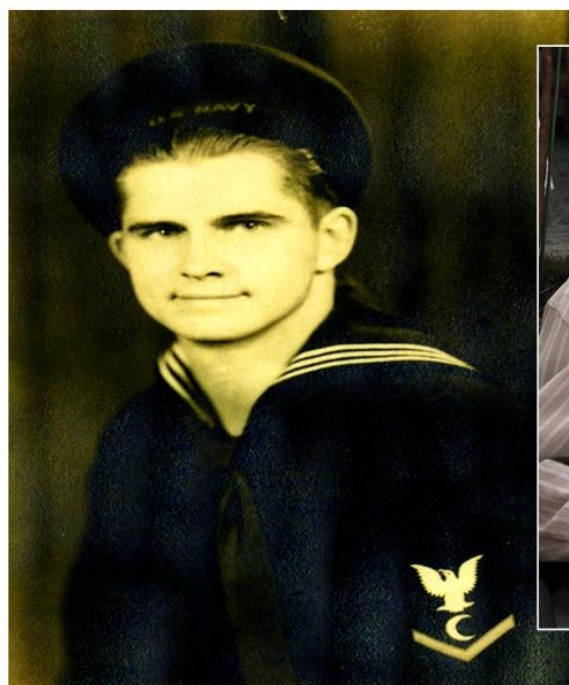




IN MEMORY

VIRGIL LINDER

DeLAND NAS WWII VETERAN
1942- 1944



The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Volunteers are saddened to learn that Virgil Linder passed away on 1/21/20 at the age of 98. Virgil joined the Navy in February, 1942, after Pearl Harbor, and trained as a Navy Cook. He arrived for an 18-month stay in DeLand to help set up the Naval Air Station for training personnel. Virgil met his wife Ruth in DeLand where they raised their family. They were married for 75 years. He was a local Barber until he retired.

Virgil was a great source of information regarding the history of the DeLand, Florida NAS. It was our honor to know him and he will be greatly missed. Sadly, just a few weeks ago, Virgil and Ruth's son Donald Linder also passed away suddenly. Our thoughts are with Ruth and Vernon and the Linder family.



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Time For Spring Cleaning
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Please, No Large Furniture, Mattresses, Clothing or Books

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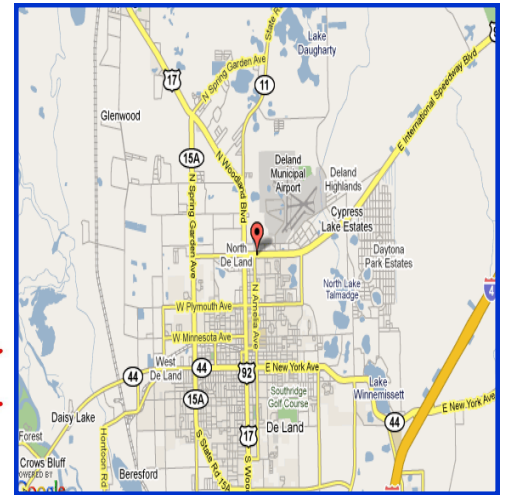
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www.delandnavalairmuseum.org
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Wednesday through Saturday,
Sunday 1pm-4pm (If Volunteers
Are Available)**

**Call to Schedule Group Tours for
Adults & Youth Groups**

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