

## **Patriotic Newsletter 2003**

Presented by  
Alice Keith Collier & Don Short

### **"4TH OF JULY"**

Have you ever wondered what happened to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence?

Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before they died.

Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army; another had two sons captured.

Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War.

They signed and they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

What kind of men were they?

Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated, but they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his Ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags.

Thomas McKeam was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward.

Vandals or soldiers looted the properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Ruttledge, and Middleton.

At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson, Jr., noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire.

The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt.

Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months.

John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished. Some of us take these liberties so much for granted, but we shouldn't.

So, take a few minutes while enjoying your 4th of July holiday and silently thank these patriots. It's not much to ask for the price they paid.

**Remember: freedom is never free!**

I hope you will show your support by sending this to as many people as you can, please. It's time we get the word out that patriotism is NOT a sin, and the Fourth of July has more to it than beer, picnics, and baseball games.

P.S. Fly your flags for the troops in Iraq, Afganistan an other places still in harms way. Regards,  
RD, MCPO,USN, Ret.

Submitted by Jerry Hatfield

We in the United States have all heard the haunting song, "Taps." It's the song that gives us that lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes.

But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about it's humble beginnings.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land.

During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on this stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock.

In the dim light, he saw the face of a soldier. It was his own son.

The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out.

Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son full military burial despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral.

The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

This wish was granted. The haunting melody, we now know as "Taps" used at military funerals was born.

Day is done,  
Gone the sun,  
From the lakes,  
From the hills,  
From the sky.  
All is well! ,  
Safety rest.  
God is nigh.  
Fading light  
Dims the sight.  
And a star  
Gems the sky,  
Gleaming bright  
From afar,  
Drawing nigh,  
Falls the night.  
Thanks and praise,  
For our days,  
'Neath the sun,  
'Neath the stars,  
'Neath the sky,

As we go,  
This we know,  
God is nigh.

I too, have felt the chills while listening to "Taps" but I have never seen all the words to the song until now. I didn't even know there was more than one verse. I also never knew the story behind the song and I didn't know if you had either so I thought I'd pass it along. I now have an even deeper respect for the song than I did before.

**REMEMBER THOSE LOST AND HARMED WHILE SERVING THEIR COUNTRY**

Submitted by Pat Berryhill Muse

### **FREEDOM IS NOT FREE**

I watched the flag pass by one day.  
It fluttered in the breeze.  
A young Marine saluted it,  
And the he stood at ease.  
I looked at him in uniform  
So young, so tall, so proud,  
With hair cut square and eyes alert,  
He'd stand out in any crowd.  
I thought how many men like him  
Had fallen through the years.  
How many died on foreign soil?  
How many mothers' tears ?  
How many pilots' planes shot down ?  
How many died at sea ?  
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves ?  
No, freedom is not free.  
I heard the sound of "Taps" one night,  
When everything was still.  
I listened to the bugler play  
And felt a sudden chill.  
I wondered just how many times  
That "Taps" had meant "Amen,"  
When a flag had draped a coffin  
Of a brother or a friend.  
I thought of all the children,  
Of the mothers and the wives,  
Of fathers, sons and husbands  
With interrupted lives.  
I thought about a graveyard  
At the bottom of the sea,  
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.  
No, freedom is not free.  
Written by: Cadet Major Kelly Strong  
Junior ROTC  
Homestead Senior High School  
Homestead, Florida 1988

Submitted by Pat Berryhill Muse

## World War II



Lindsey Short, Father of Donald Short served in Italy (1944-45). He never talked about his time in the service and I never asked. I have found out over the years most of the ww2 vets never talked about where they were or what they did. I do feel that everyone who ever served during war or peace deserve our undying gratitude as this is what made us free. We need to give a special thought to those that gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Submitted by Don Short

I have a really nice memory of World War II. Right before Christmas in 1946, my mom took me (age 5) and my sister (age 5 months) to visit my grandmother and grandfather in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. We left Hot Springs from the Rock Island station - it was where the convention center now sits - and traveled to Little Rock, then changed to the train going to St. Louis. My memory is of a train being literally loaded down with soldiers headed home for the holidays. They were everywhere - crammed into seats and sitting on their duffel bags in the aisles. No rules and regulations about fire hazards were in effect when our boys were coming home from the war at Christmastime!!

Submitted by Verna Hicks

My experience, although I don't remember—I was 3 months old. My dad was stationed in Brownsville, Tx . awaiting departure for the Pacific. My mom packed up their little car, ford I think, in Hot Springs and off we went to visit my dad before he left for California. My mom was a wisp of lady, 4'11", blond, and looked about 13 yrs old herself. She told me that my grandmother was crying because she was so afraid for us traveling that distance alone. Well, we did make it and the other interesting piece of lore was that my dad's commanding officer then allowed us to ride on the "troop train". We returned to Hot Springs and my dad returned safely from the Pacific front. He did spend time in a Manila hospital recovering from malaria.

Submitted byPatty Jones Atchley

My father,Junior Rachilla[H.D.] served in the navy during WWII. He was on the U.S.S. Sarrotoga air craft carrier. He had a busted eardrum from the noise of the planes. He was in the South Pacific,Phillipines.I have some letters he sent to his

Grandmother about how he was worried about his girls [my two sisters and I]. One of them talks about how his brother, Bud, was in the service, also another brother and a couple of his cousins. One cousin didn't make it home. He lost his life in the war.

His father, (my grandfather, Anthony Rachilla, whose parents immigrated from Poland, served in the Army during the era when Pauncho Villa was leading the rebellion. His group was supposedly involved somehow. Then he was still in during the W.W.1. and he was stationed here at the Army & Navy Hospital. He met my grandmother here and they married. He died during the big Influenza epidemic when my father was a toddler and his wife expecting their second son.

My Mother's brothers, the Goldens [5 of them] served in the service. One still suffers from bouts of malaria which he contracted while serving in the Canel Zone. I remember all of them telling stories of war. Others in my family served in the war between the states on both sides. I thank God for our country and I am proud to say that many in my family served and fought for our freedom.

Submitted by Sue Rachilla Miller Sorrells



The Keith Brothers: my father, Marvin, served in the Navy in the South Pacific, my Uncle Randolph served in the Army in Germany, and my Uncle Ford served in the Air Force in India among other places. My father was not wounded. Uncle Randolph was slightly wounded and Uncle Ford died after the war at age 27 from a kidney disease not directly caused by the war, but it was said that the water in India did probably worsen his condition. My father never graduated from high school, although he was one of the smartest men I ever knew, especially in math. Uncle Randolph and Uncle Ford both graduated from Hot Springs High School and married their high school sweethearts. I can't imagine the anxiety and worry that my grandparents, my mother, and my aunts went through while they were all off at war. I still have the draft notice that my father received. He was almost 30 and had 3 children. I also have an inscribed small New Testament that my grandmother gave him to carry with him.

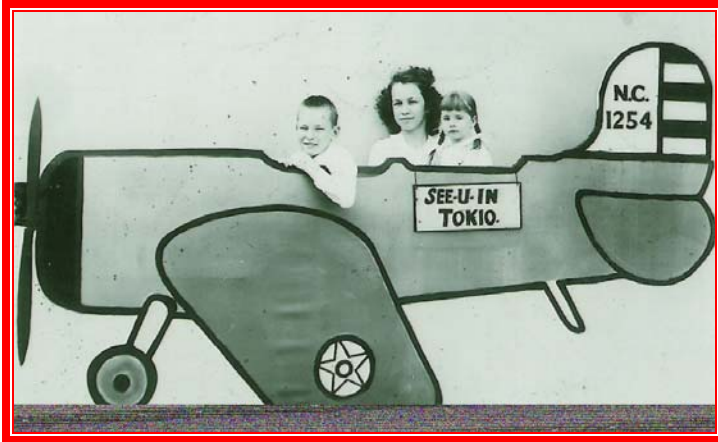
Submitted by Alice Keith Collier



**Me (Alice Keith) in 1943 on a visit to California to see my dad. I don't remember this trip, but one of my very earliest memories is of my dad coming home in 1945 and how in awe I was of him. My aunt told me just a few years ago that when he got home he took me in his arms and cried.**



**German postcard sent to Alice Keith from her Uncle Randolph Keith during WWII.**



Millard Keith, Blanche Keith and Alice Keith in photo taken at Happy Hollow in Hot Springs during WWII

3 photos above submitted by Alice Keith Collier

I remember going to see my Daddy in San Antonio when I was 18 mos old. We rode the train. I think he was sent to the South Pacific from there.

I have attached a picture he carried in his gear thru much of his service. When a Commanding Officer saw the tube containing the picture he asked my Dad what it was. You see they were not to carry any personal belongings with them. My Dad said it was his reason for fighting in the war. He



didn't ever want to see the enemy on our soil. The Commander understood what Dad meant once the tube was opened.

I have been only an on looker of wars since then. 9/11 would have broken my Dad's heart. Affghanistan and Iraq would have made him proud because he saw first hand the terrible disasters Dictators heap on their own people.

The Commander allowed Dad to continue carrying this picture. I have been as close to war and despots as I ever want to be. God Bless America

Submitted by Fran Graves Barnett

## Remembering the Heroes of Our Generation



Donald Short (Class of 1960)  
U. S. Army 1960-62



Here's a pic of me at DaNang in front of  
my AC-119K "Stinger" Gunship. Love  
those 'jock' shots.  
Submitted by Irving Greenburg

**My story is about one of the other two officers I served with in Vietnam. Bert Wilson became a good friend and we visited him last year. From the mementoes he had on his wall we found out he was a Tuskegee Airman (the first blacks in the military). He flew P-51s in WW II (4 Meschersmitts), F-86s in Korea, and was at a Combat Reporting Post with me at the DMZ in Vietnam. An actor plays him in the movie "Tuskegee Airmen" but not many know of him. My thoughts today turned to him, and others like him who did their duty (on both sides of each American conflict). I remember Vic Kemp. Wish I had something profound to**

say, but the memories are profound enough for me today. Lincoln in 1863 did, however, give justification to our saving the world from Hitler, to our saving S. Korea from one-man Communist rule, from our liberating Iraq from its one man dictatorship, "...that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and the government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Submitted by Terrell Bledsoe

As you know many of us served in Vietnam. I was there in 1968 and 69. I served with the Saigon Support Command in the Delta. After returning to the States I was assigned to serve with the Defense Intelligence Agency as an admin officer. While there I found Christ and soon requested release from active duty to attend seminary. I finished up in the Army Reserves as a chaplain. Marguerite (Holzer) and I are living in Hot Springs.

Submitted by Lanny Robbins



**John Kidd**

As a Captain in the Air Force in 1973, my first real program management job was to manage a contract to produce an air-to-ground missile for use against moving ground targets. It was called the Maverick missile. And I got it into the inventory. Much later, as a Colonel during the first Gulf War, I was in charge of launching and using in orbit satellites that tracked enemy missiles from 20,000 miles in space. We were the folks that spotted Iraqi Scud missile launches and reported them to Central Command for attack by Patriot missiles. We also provided launch trajectories so that AF F-15 aircraft could find the Scud launchers and destroy them. When I found out that the F-15s were using my old Maverick missiles to kill the launchers I knew things had come full circle and it was time to retire, which I did after 27 1/2 years of active duty.

Submitted by John Kidd

No war stories, even though I have plenty. Only a request: Please don't teach your children (or grandchildren) that we lost the war in Viet Nam. The nation lost the political will to properly prosecute the war, but the U.S. military was not defeated. There was never a major battle during the entire war that was lost. The media would have you believe that Tet of 68 was a loss, when in fact the bad guys were soundly whipped. The men who served in Viet Nam are as proud of their contributions as any other veteran. The myth of the homeless, drug addicted Viet Nam vet are mostly that-a myth. We served our country when we were asked to, and did our best. I am proud of the men I served with. Some of them did not come back, but they were never unsure of what they were doing. Remember Vic Kemp.

Submitted by Ed Sullivan

## Remembering Those Who Made the Ultimate Sacrifice

Vic Kemp (Class of 1960)



This day of the year take a minute of your time to remember Vic. I think he is the only one we lost. Take another minute to thank all the others that served.



Scotty Mailhes (Class of 1958) died in Vietnam.



Robert “Ned” Sauls and Alice Keith on November 9, 1960.

I was engaged to Ned from Sept. 1960 until the spring of 1962.

He was first stationed in Oklahoma and then sent to Germany in 1961. God in His wisdom had other plans for my life and sent Martin Collier to me in 1962. I think God knew that I probably would not be able to handle becoming a widow at age 27. Ned died in Vietnam on March 11, 1969. I did not learn of his death until I learned to use the Internet in 1997 and found his name on the “Vietnam Wall”.

During our courtship and engagement he wrote me many letters and poems. Among them he sent me the following. I think it sums up the feelings of all our heroes!

### **The American’s Creed**

**I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable; established upon these principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.**

**I therefore believe it is my duty to my Country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.**

Remember these heroes we have honored in our newsletter and also those who are serving us today. God Bless Them and

**God Bless the USA!**