**Making Them Ours, Again!**

When wars are fought on foreign soil, Americans lost there and left behind, become the property of another nation. We think of the missing men as our own but they, along with most of what we want to know about them, are under the control of other countries. Information is in their archives. The missing men are buried in their soil. Too often these governments are adversarial.

Learning what happened to our missing fathers, brothers, uncles, and grandfathers, then bringing them home, is a tangle of foreign policy, politics, and cultural dilemmas. The fate of over five thousand of the Korean and Cold War missing men are under the control of three former adversaries – China, North Korea, and Russia. Making these men ours again is a tangle of international affairs. The negotiations that will resolve these multinational issues need to be conducted by the highest policy makers in each of the governments involved.

North Korea has most of the remains. China has most of the records. Russia and South Korea have varying degrees of both. If everyone got along, and backed up their professed interest in learning what happened to the men, we’d be well on our way to learning what happened. All the parties involved are actually banded together in what is called The Six Party Talks. Unfortunately, they were never talking about the missing men. (Something about nuclear disarmament.) And now they aren’t talking at all. Maybe if they agreed on resolving a humanitarian issue like the missing men, they would develop enough common ground to get serious about their political issues.

So when the U.S. Secretary of State sits down with his/her Russian counterpart, and the Secretary of Defense sits across from his/her counterpart in China, when the President of the USA sits down with the leader of any country, (someone needs to talk with anyone in North Korea!), learning the fate of America’s missing men needs to be on their agenda.

* Until They Are Home is featured in Memorial Day and Veterans Day speeches given by the highest government officials each year. They then pass the buck down the chain of command to middle-level agency directors, with little authority to negotiate meaningful solutions. It is time policy makers talk-the-talk and walk-the-walk! They are who will make the missing men ours again.

**Table of Contents**

| President’s Corner / Current Issues | Page 2 |
| Korea/Russia/China/Cold War | Page 4 |
| Research - John Zimmerlee | Page 7 |
| Membership/Contact Info | Page 9 |
| United States | Page 3 |
| Coalition News | Page 5-6 |
| Trickle Identifications/Generic File | Page 8 |
| Petition: We Call Upon …. | Page 10 |
Who Was That Masked Man?

Mike Linnington did just about everything right as DPAA Director — guiding the agency’s reorganization, maintaining transparency and accessibility; maybe most of all, bringing hope back to the mission. The families of missing men can be suckers for that. The slightest bit of hope goes a long way. Mike Linnington didn’t just promise hope though (promises have the longevity of smoke signals), he created hope. His actions were louder than words. He was a man of action.

He made one mistake, of course: he said he’d stay. Not just a little while, not just until things were on track; a decade is what he said. Ten years. He came in promising to be a fixture. He went out as a fixer. Maybe that’s who he is … destined to ride from one organization in need to the next; entering into chaos, leaving behind calm.

He seemed like one of us though; thought like us — a doer, not a non-doer; an idea man, unafraid to share those ideas. Just ask:

What should be done about remains of American soldiers being unearthed in North Korea?

Bring them out through Panmunjom.

He delivered it as a throwaway, as if he’d posed the same question to higher-ups … and was told no.

What can be done with more than 700 disinterred sets of U.S. Korean War remains buried in the Punch Bowl cemetery while bone samples are being tested by new DNA technology?

Build a mausoleum, he said, reaching down (he’s a tall fella) to straighten your crooked collar. It can be a memorial to honor the men, while housing them as they wait for their names to be sorted out.

Yet it was another answer delivered absentmindedly; as if it had already been rung up the flagpole, only to be ripped from the mast.

He’d charged into other battles with sword-a-waving only to return battered and tattered. The Chinese played coy with their Korean War POW camp and U.S. air loss records. The Russians and U.S. got together for a week to plan new archival research. It was the first of these plenums in ten years; only to spend most of the time in a promenade of social events with a token attempt at accomplishing anything of substance.

Things weren’t working out. A man of action can handle only so many doors being slammed in his face.

Or was it simply greener pastures: A man of his word stepping back from the challenge, and abandoning those who’d been abandoned so many times before. Our new best friend decided he didn’t want to be our friend anymore.

Neither scenario is any good. In the end, it doesn’t matter. It was great while it lasted, but he’s ridden into the sunset. We’ll get over him. Time to move on.

Rick Downes, President
(Lt. Hal Downes - MIA 1952)

Current Issues

These are important issues that the Coalition is working on now. Information is in this newsletter.

* Disinterring Punch Bowl Unknowns for DNA testing / collarbone X-ray matches
* Repatriating American remains being unearthed in North Korea
* Searching for U.S. air loss sites inside North Korea
The White House

The decision to return search and recovery teams to North Korea will be made at the National Security Council level. The President has the final word but consensus is that the policy will be developed within the NSC. For decades, foreign governments and nongovernmental organizations from around the world (including the U.S.) have cooperated on successful projects inside North Korea without any repercussions. The Administration’s political policies disregard these operations when it comes to going after its missing men.

Congress

When an issue within the POW/MIA mission progresses, chances are that members of congress and their staffs have taken it on as their own.

* Declassification - Senator Kelly Ayotte’s office, working with the Coalition, is finalizing the Bring Our Heroes Home Act of 2016. This potentially groundbreaking legislation will create a review board tasked with declassifying documents holding information on missing men dating back to World War II, including the Korean and Cold Wars.

* Amended North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act
The NKSEA included an amendment that exempted search and recovery efforts for Korean War POW/MIs inside North Korea from political sanctions aimed at curtailing North Korea’s nuclear program. The amendment was expertly introduced and promoted by Sen. Jean Shaheen’s office, at the Coalition’s request.


* House Resolution 799 – Congressmen Charles Rangel, Sam Johnson, and John Conyers (all Korean War vets) introduced House Resolution 799 - “Calling on the United States Government to resume talks with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea regarding the research, investigation, recovery, and identification of missing and unaccounted members of the United States Armed Forces from the Korean War.” The Coalition was invited to contribute to the resolution. It is currently pursuing cosponsors.

* Committee Hearings - Congress also keeps the mission alive through questions posed on POW/MIA issues during broad swaths of committee hearings on related topics held on both sides of Congress.

Department of Defense

* Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Christine E. Wormuth has stepped down. The USDP position oversees DPAA. Ms. Wormuth shared much of the same vision for the POW/MIA mission as former Director Mike Linnington. There will be new leadership in both positions. Unlike the DPAA director, the USDP nominee will need to be confirmed by Congress.

DPAA
* Director Mike Linnington left DPAA for a CEO position with the veterans’ group Wounded Warrior Project. Ms. Fern Sumpter Winbush will be interim director, while also handling her regular responsibilities as Principal Deputy Director (overseeing DPAA’s Washington operations).

* Mr. Todd Livick was appointed as Director of Outreach and Communications. His primary responsibilities will be communications with families, veterans, Congress, media and the general public. This office oversees the family updates.

* Family Updates – DPAA’s annual Korean/Cold War family briefing will take place in Washington, DC, on August 11-12 at the Marriott Renaissance Hotel-Capitol View in Arlington, VA. Marriott’s Residence Inn, attached to the Renaissance, is an alternate choice for rooms.

* Email Addresses - DPAA now includes a space for email addresses on the family update contact forms. The Coalition has pursued this addition for quite awhile. Inserting this common way of communicating brings the POW/MIA mission into the 21st century.
Korea

DPRK (North Korea)
The remains of 5300 missing Americans lay in North Korea. There have been ongoing reports of the DPRK uncovering remains during agricultural and construction projects. North Korea has made overtures to have the U.S. retrieve them. The U.S. has consistently refused these overtures, prioritizing political policies over the humanitarian mission. The message from all offices is that the U.S. will not proceed with recovery operations in North Korea in the near term. There is no word from U.S. agencies on what happened to these unearthed remains.

There are other avenues to retrieve them. Nongovernment groups and supportive individuals conduct ongoing relations with various aspects of the North Korean government. There may be access to remains through these relationships. There may be news on this in the next few months.

Republic of Korea (South Korea)
Former Dir. Linnington finished a spring Asia trip with a stop in South Korea. In an exchange of remains ceremony, the U.S. turned over 15 South Korea soldiers exhumed in North Korean battlefields during the joint recovery missions (1996-2005). South Korea repatriated remains believed to be two U.S. soldiers found last year near the demilitarized zone/Heartbreak Ridge area. The remains of the two Americans are in the DPAA laboratory in Hawaii for identification.

DPAA investigative teams currently operate in South Korea on three season-based tours of 60 days each. South Korea continues searching for remains along the DMZ; and may okay plans inside the DMZ. The remains of some 40,000 South Koreans are believed to be buried in North Korea.

China
Former Dir. Linnington’s spring Asia trip included a stop in China. The purpose was to solidify upcoming investigation and recovery missions, work out better archival arrangements, and present information requests.

In the discussions, however, it was learned that much of the information wanted from the Chinese is still classified, or one agency after another claims to not have them. Records may be in 14 different locations. Even when found, everything must be screened by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

The fate of missing Americans in the POW camps and air losses over North Korea can be held in China’s archives. The 2008 archival agreement to access these records appears to be a paper agreement only. China also pulled scheduled investigation and recovery missions on their soil. They have also stopped accepting U.S. payments for organizing their records ($100,000 /yr).

Russia
In February, former Dir. Linnington visited Russia. An agenda was set for the US-Russia Joint Commission annual meeting (plenum) on POW/MIA issues, which took place in Washington on May 23-24. A decade had passed since the last plenum was held. The agreement calls for individual working groups on the Korean/Vietnam/Cold Wars and WWII. The working groups have met over the years, most notably conducting research in Russia’s Podolsk archives. The hope was that the plenum would make new Russian archives available. Reports indicate, however, that the meeting was mostly ceremonial. Working groups will continue meeting, requesting information on individual cases. The next plenum is scheduled for the fall of 2017, in Russia.

Cold War (1946-1991)
U.S. military and civilian aircraft were shot down while flying operational missions during the Cold War. 126 Americans remain unaccounted for, most of them in over-water losses. There have been few developments over the years.
Coalition News

The Coalition’s mission calls for work in advocacy, outreach, and research. Here are current issues high on the agenda.

Advocacy

* **Declassification / Bring Our Heroes Home Act, 2016 (BOHHA)** – We have had the ongoing pleasure of collaborating with Sen. Kelly Ayotte's office on many issues involving the POW/MIA mission. The Senator and her staff are ardent, dedicated supporters. For the past year, we have focused on legislation that will create a review board charged with declassifying documents relating to POW/MIAs dating back to World War II, including the Korean and Cold Wars. This potentially groundbreaking legislation is called the **Bring Our Heroes Home Act**. Donna Knox, the Coalition’s legislative liaison, has coordinated the effort with Sen. Ayotte’s office. Working on it has provided quite an education on how a bill of this magnitude moves from inspiration, to written form, to then begin the ambitious trip through committee rewrites, and hopefully arrive on the Senate floor for a vote. Sen. Ayotte’s staff has strategically maneuvered the bill through each turn. If successful, the same actions will be pursued in the House of Representatives.

* **Remains Recovery / North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act/Amendment** - The Coalition worked with Sen. Jean Shaheen’s office to submit and pass an amendment to the NKSEA that exempted Korean War POW/MIA recovery operations inside the DPRK from sanctions named in the legislation. Sen. Shaheen and her staff worked quickly and efficiently to move the amendment through committee and get attached to the bill in time for its passage.

* **Remains Recovery / House Resolution 799** – Rep. Rangel, Rep. Johnson, and Rep. Conyers (all three, Korean War veterans) introduced this resolution in June calling for renewed talks to return search and recovery teams to North Korea. Rep. Rangel’s office led the way. The Coalition was invited to contribute to the resolution’s writing. It was an honor and a pleasure to be involved with such a dedicated staff.

* **Petition** - There are 1100 signers to-date! Copy as you like; take them with you to gatherings. Mail to the Coalition.

* **DC Trip** - Unquestionably, our most productive trip to Washington, DC, came this past June. We want to thank the offices of these House and Senate members for holding sharing their insights on how POW/MIA issues may be moved forward:


Along with declassification and remains recovery, issues discussed were air losses over North Korea, identifying Punch Bowl Remains, new DPAA leadership, and archival agreements with China and Russia.

Thank you to family members who asked their Members to meet with us! This made the difference in several instances. If any Members we met with are your Senators or Representatives, please give their offices a call to thank them for their support. It is important that they know how much you care.

**Korean Peace Network** - We are embarked on a new relationship with the Korea Peace Network, whose focus is on people-to-people relationships between South Korean Americans and North Korean citizens. While in DC, we were honored to participate in a panel during a KPN summit at George Washington University.
The Coalition has developed collaborative relationships with several nongovernmental organizations with parallel missions. We have been honored to work with the National Committee on North Korea for several years; intertwining the search for missing Americans with their mission to improving relations between North Korea and the U.S.

Richardson Center – We met with former congressman, governor, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, and Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson and his inspired staff. Two projects are in the works to: (1) locate air loss sites within North Korea, and (2) return U.S. remains unearthed inside North Korea by erosion, agricultural development and large-scale construction projects. These projects are in very early development, but the optimism and past successes of Mr. Richardson and his staff make them quite hopeful.

**Outreach**

* Families - The Coalition works with family members of missing men on any needs you may have. This year we have been able to assist with arrangements for a ceremony at Arlington Cemetery, interactions with Congressional offices, questions about government briefings, validation on telephone calls from unfamiliar sources, X-File findings, and research on missing family members. We are here to assist your search in any way we can.

* Speaking Engagements – We give presentations on the issues and broaden awareness of the mission throughout the year. Highlighting this year’s events are a Freedom Riders gathering coordinated by the NE POW/MIA Network, and a summit organized by the Korean Peace Network.

* Website – There is a new format to the Coalition’s website. Along with background information on the Korean and Cold Wars, and analysis of the issues, there are summaries of current projects and ways to support them. We are also engaged with merchant partners as another means of support. When you link to favorite online shopping websites through the Coalition page, a percentage of your purchase total will be donated by the merchant. Please take a look: http://www.coalitionoffamilies.org.

* Social Media – The Coalition’s Facebook page is now 265 members strong. We thank family member Jan Curran for keeping the postings current. There are 121 Twitter followers (@KoreanWarMIAs). We hope to do more there. Please join with us on both these sites for more frequent updates and recent news.

**MISC**

* Suzanne Schilling has left the Coalition’s board of directors. We will miss her frankness and event planning skills.
* We want to thank Mike Badzioch for his considerable technology assistance!

**To-Do Task!**

We are strongest when the we work together. Your involvement can help move this issue forward!

**Punch Bowl IDs** - We are calling on the DPAA and Veterans Administration to disinter the remains of hundreds of Korean War Unknowns buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punch Bowl). Bone samples need to be taken for new DNA testing and to have collar bones matched against existing X-rays. These actions can lead to identifying hundreds of men missing from all the services (see page 8). The agencies involved are unwilling to take on such a large undertaking. Congressional offices will need to get involved. Contact your Senate and House representatives then let us know their response. www.senate.gov/senators/contact/, www.house.gov/representatives/find/, coalitionoffamilies@gmail.org.
Unidentified remains of our Korean War fallen were assigned “X” numbers before being interred in The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) located in Hawaii. Each remains was accompanied by a case file containing all known information pertaining to its discovery. After reading each and every one of these “X” files, I was enlightened and disgusted. A number of cases revealed compelling information and some of them were narrowed down to just one soldier, but the families were never told.

“X-8” was recovered in the Hwanggan area in October 1950. Based on deterioration, estimated death date was July 24, 1950. These remains were recovered along with another. The latter was identified as John T Mahoney of 25th Div, 27th Rgt. who was determined to have been killed in action July 28, 1950. Logic would lead us to review those unresolved cases who went missing from the same area and time period as Mahoney. That turns up 21 possibilities, but only one matched the information inscribed on the Zippo lighter found on the soldier, X-8, which read “Sharp, Ohio, Korea 48-51”. PFC William James Sharp from Green Ohio was from the same unit and area as Mahoney, and his estimated death date was just 4 days earlier. His remains are likely those of X-8 in grave 1076 of the National Cemetery in Hawaii.

“X-311” had an estimated death of 7/19/1950 and his remains were recovered with two others who died on the same day. Soldiers, Fontaine & Blair were from the same unit. Only one member of their unit lost on that same day is still unaccounted-for . . . Robert Agard who is still MIA according to our government. Maybe, someone should run DNA testing on X-311 in grave 678?

“X-6302” is disturbing. J.C. McFarland of the Memorial Div wrote on Aug 30, 1954, “Although subject remains are eligible under current policy, it is considered inadvisable to dispose of the remains in this manner because of the next of kin’s knowledge of their existence and the former association with Pvt (Leo) Bernal.” His dog tags were on the remains. Leo Bernal is probably in grave 825.

A Field Search Case listed Robert Bray (with handwritten notes) as a candidate for unidentified remains (now assigned X-704). These remains had on clothing with a laundry mark of B-9552 which matches Robert Bray RA15269552. Perhaps a call to his family would confirm a match for the remains’ red hair . . . which only 2% of the population shares!

After most gruesome battles, a survivor walked the battlefield to identify those killed-in-action. He removed one of the two dog tags from a dead man’s neck chain and put it in his pocket. The other one was placed in the deceased mouth and closed for later identification. Then he moved on to the next dead soldier for the same dog tag routine. If, in his third move, he stepped on a land mine . . . it might explain Cox awaits in grave 1090. The other one might be in grave743.

The file on X-1667 narrowed down the possible identification to two soldiers: Bobby Myer and Richard Crotty. However, Bobby had previous teenage injuries that did not show up in the remains, therefore he should have been eliminated from consideration. Crotty’s nephew is now asking why he was never informed of this remains years ago.

Three remains were recovered on May 26, 1952 and a local Korean testified that the bodies of “two Negro men” were among them. It was determined that the men died around Nov 11, 1950 and two men fit the descriptions from the files of X-5588 and 5590: Roosevelt Dixon and Royal Sanford of “A” Company; yet both remain unaccounted-for. Perhaps someone should open the corresponding graves, 456 and 466 in NMCP. While we are at it, why not consider the only other man missing from “A” Company on that date, James Marcella Bell, for the ID of the last of the 3 remains recovered from that area. X-5589 in grave 416?

Also consider that servicemen, Charles W Barton Jr, Joseph Bologna, George Grimes, Harry Guinther, Lester Hubbard, James I Jubb, Pete Strickland, Howard A Troup, and William D Ware were near perfect matches for individual remains, lacking only dental history to confirm. They had no dental history, therefore these bodies rest “unidentified” in graves 851, 630, 464, 348, 838, 413, 403, 1145, and 819 at NMCP.

Three remains were recovered together from Hwasan-dong. Two were identified and sent home, The third had only 5 teeth and dental could not be verified so he was labeled “unidentifiable”, . . . but Robert Elijah Mitchell’s dog tags were wired to the skull. Maybe, the men who buried him were trying to tell us something. Check grave 990!

Sixteen remains were recovered in the Kye-Ri area. All but one were identified and shipped home. The last one was positively identified as Roy E Moore due to laundry markings, driver’s license and shoe size by the approval board, but they weren’t sure that would convince the family, . . . so they never told them! Check grave 759.

If you need info on any unaccounted-for serviceman from the Korean War, please contact me at john.zimmerlee@gmail.com.

Together we can …. and will get answers!

(Capt. John Zimmerlee, Jr. - MIA)
**Trickle Identifications**

New *Next Generation Sequencing* (NGS) DNA technologies will finally overcome decades-old DNA extraction problems created when, following the Korean War, chemical preservatives were applied to hundreds of remains of American *Unknowns* then buried in the Punch Bowl cemetery/Hawaii. The next hurdle is for the U.S. government to disinter these fathers, brothers, uncles, grandfathers, and take the bone samples needed to apply the new technologies.

The agencies involved have declined to do this in the past, when it was learned that collarbone matches were near perfect identifications. Large numbers of remains that contained collar bones were expected to be disinterred and matched with 6000 newly found X-rays. They are still in the ground, waiting instead for circumstantial evidence to warrant single unburials. The *trickle* rather than *cascade* method of identification.

NGS is the next technological advancement the government has declined to apply toward large-scale identifications. The reasons offered are easily dismissed: multiple people have the same mitochondrial DNA, not all families have submitted samples. Knowing the mito DNA of the Unknowns will narrow down the number of associations. A low 10% of the families haven’t submitted samples. It will be best if the DNA of their loved one is waiting and ready when they do submit.

The true reason appears to be that agencies don’t know what to do with the large numbers of disinterred remains while waiting for testing to be done. Viable suggestions have been made: rebury them, or honor the remains in a mausoleum while they wait. Cost and landscape alteration are concerns. These are not proud reasons that will be mentioned in Memorial Day *Until They Are Home* speeches.

The families of these men, whoever they may be, have waited sixty years for their loved one’s name to be returned. The technologies are there. Hundreds of families can find closure now, not a trickle over time.

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**DoD’s Generic File of Korean War Live Sightings**

This is the current list of classified/declassified reports of encounters with unnamed American *POWs* inside North Korea.

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**Case File for the Korean War**

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**Special thanks to Roadwork Pictures and Hanover Park Entertainment!**

**Finnigan’s War**

- Proceeds from these films are being donated to the Coalition. Please visit the websites and purchase these powerful documentaries!
- www.createspace.com/379520

**Keeping the Promise Alive**

- www.keepingthepromisealive.com/

Visit coalitionoffamilies.org for other important works: *American Trophies* and *Missing, Presumed Dead*. Please also visit Amazon.com for a new book release, *Devotion*, chronicling pilot Tom Hudner’s quest to retrieve the remains of Jesse Brown, his wingman, from North Korea.
Membership!

The Coalition relies on memberships and broader donations to pursue the issues that one day will lead to someone learning something about their missing loved one. Thank you to all long-standing supporters. Please continue renewing your memberships, adding-on donations, supporting individual projects, and now doing online shopping through links on the Coalition’s website.

(http://www.coalitionoffamilies.org/merchant-partners.html)

For those of you who have yet to join with us, we invite you to do so. We have also initiated Associate Memberships for family friends of missing men and other supporters.

The application form for all memberships is below. The Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible.

Please join us in this mission to learn what happened to so many missing fathers, brothers, husbands, uncles and now grandfathers. Thank you.

* * * * *

"The true patriot willingly loses his life for his country. These poor men have lost not only their lives, but the very record of their death."

Clara Barton

---

Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIA's

National Membership Application

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
Address: ___________________________
City, State, Zip Code ___________________________
Email: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________________

Relationship to missing service member:

(Associate Membership / Non family member – please check here: _____)

Service member’s full name: ___________________________ Service #
Branch of Service/Unit or Group: ___________________________
Date & Area of Loss: ___________________________

Annual Membership Donation - $25. Please make checks payable to: Coalition of Families.

Send to:
Coalition of Families (Attn: Treasurer) P.O. Box 4194, Portsmouth, NH 03802
Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIAs

We call upon the governments of the United States, Russia, China, North Korea, and South Korea, to:

* Fully investigate reports that missing American servicemen were kept in captivity following the Korean War,
* Pursue the recovery and identification of American servicemen’s remains located within their borders,
* Honor pledges for full transparency regarding still classified Korean and Cold War documents, and,
* Pursue these humanitarian objectives steadfastly, in the present frame of time, not an unending point in the future.

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