

Chapter 30 – Finally a Marker

During the 2014 Christmas season, Gill Thorpe, Ken Dooley, Rep. Marvin Abney, Sgt Major Ed Kane [US Army retired], and Rep. Martin met with CPO Jonathan Rascoe [U.S. Navy retired] to discuss the placement of a stone at the RI Veterans Memorial Cemetery in memory of 2nd Lt. Thorpe.

The stone would be placed in the section of the cemetery that is dedicated to those who are missing in action and/or those whose remains could not be brought home. While the stone commemorates the sacrifice of Lt. Robert Thorpe, it stands in silent testimony to the sacrifices made by all of the WWII members of the 39th Fighter Squadron who also gave their lives for their country.

Gill Thorpe agreed to abandon his lifelong search for his brother's remains in order to have this commemorative stone placed at the Veterans Cemetery.

As he signed those documents, his life-long friend, Ken Dooley looked on.

22_Ch_30_Ken_and_Gill.jpg

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs provided the stone at no cost. It was delivered by the following February.

23_Ch_30_Marker.jpg

As this book was submitted for publication, plans were being made for a formal placement of this stone at the cemetery as soon as the warmer weather arrives.

During the ceremony the following list of 43 members of the 39th Fighter Squadron who lost their lives during World War II will be publicly read.

World War II

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ADKINS, Frank - 1945 | AVANT, Lt. - 11/6/44 |
| BAKER, W.C. - 1945 | BERRY, Jack W - 8/4/42 |
| BONG, Richard I. - 8/6/45 | BUNDGA, Michael - 1944 |
| CAREY, Ralph C - 1945 | CLISHAM, Robert |
| DORSEY, Harry N - 9/4/43 | DUNCAN, Gene - 3/14/44 |
| EASON, Hoyt A - 3/3/43 | FAUROT, Robert L - 3/3/43 |
| FOREST, Joseph E - 9/22/43 | FOSTER, Dewey W - 4/11/44 |
| FOSTER, Paul L - 10/45 | FOSTER, Robert - 1945 |
| GEORGE, Kenneth - 1945 | HAIGLER, Lee C - 11/13/43 |
| HOLLABAUGH, Simpson - 12/1/43 | KISH, Andrew K - 7/6/44 |
| LANE, Albert H - 4/5/44 | LYNCH, Thomas J - 3/8/44 |
| MANGAS, John H - 1/8/43 | MORGAN, George E - 5/45 |
| PITZER, Dwight - 1944 | PLAIN, William - 1942 |
| PRENTICE, George W - 1945 | RICHARDS, Billy E - 8/23/44 |
| ROUND, Howard N - 11/7/43 | SCHOPKA, Herbert E - 3/45 |
| SELLS, William - 4/14/43 | SHAW, Jim (Chaplin) - 7/30/44 |

Chapter 30 – Finally a Marker

SHIFFLET, Fred B - 3/3/43

SILVERMAN, Edward - 10/45

STEELE, James C - 11/6/44

THEGE, Edward O - 1944

THORPE, Robert - 5/27/44

WEBER, Lt. - 2/42

SILVERMAN, David - 5/10/42

SPARKS, Keneth C - 9/5/44

STEELE, James F - 7/16/43

THOMPSON, Ray D - 1944

WAKEFIELD, Roger - 4/42

Korea 1950-1953

AANES, Agustus E - 12/17/51

ANDERSON, Capt Beriger A - 10/21/50

BAXTER, 2/Lt Thurston Richard - 12/21/51

CASSERLY, 1/Lt Thomas F III - 10/1/52

COLEMAN, Capt John J - 6/20/51

CRENSHAW, A3C Horace Jr - 6/18/53

DEAN, Zack W - 4/20/51

DREZEN, 1/Lt Richard Stanley Jr - 7/16/52

FEAGIN, Forrest - 1951

FRANKART, 1/Lt Ned C - 11/3/51

GOLDEN, 1/Lt Newman C - 10/17/51

GROSSMAN, Capt John Frank - 8/14/51

HARPER, 1/Lt Lee A - 6/19/51

HODGES, Kenneth S - 12/6/50

HORN, Capt John Lucius - 8/14/51

JACKSON, Lt William E - 1951

LAFFERTY, 1/Lt Thomas C - 1/31/52

LUKAKIS, 1/Lt George M - 11/6/50

MATHIS, 1/Lt James J - 8/10/50

MOLLAND, L/C Leland P - 5/21/51

NEILLANDS, Lt Richard G - 9/18/51

OLSON, Capt Ralph Maynard - 12/19/50

PITCHFORD, 1/Lt Donald L - 9/28/50

PRICE, Maylon D - 1951

ROBERTSON, Thomas D

RUDOLPH, Lt Keith Allen - 6/19/53

RUSHING, Lt Henry E - 1951

ABERCROMBIE, 1/Lt Aaron Richard - 11/1/50

ATKINSON, Leland R - 1950

CARLSON, Capt Raymond J - 7/4/51

CLAY, 1/Lt James E - 2/5/52

COTTLE, A1C Edward K - 6/18/53

DAVIS, Maj Murrit H - 8/14/51

DOODY, Joseph Jr - 1952

EBY, Otto J - 1952

FINCHER, Maj Deltis H

FRANKS, Ned - 1951

GRISHAM, "Snowflake" - 1951

HAMNER, Lt Robert H - 2/18/52

HENRY, Capt Ivan R - 1/16/52

HOKE, 1/Lt John David - 8/31/51

JACKMAN, 2/Lt William Edwin - 9/13/51

JONES, 1/Lt George D - 10/28/51

LONGSHORE, Lamar B - 10/19/50

LYND, 2/Lt Don O - 11/20/51

MCGOWAN, 1/Lt Clarence A - 1952

MONROE, Maj Shelton Wilson - 4/17/51

OLCOTT, 1/Lt Richard Lee - 10/6/51

PALMER, Capt Duncan - 4/22/51

PITTMAN, Capt Walter Everett - 7/5/51

RAMSEY, Capt Robert D - 12/10/51

RUDOLPH, A1C Donald R - 6/18/53

RUSHING, 2/Lt Harry - 3/3/52

SCHNEIDER, James J

Chapter 30 – Finally a Marker

SEQUIN, 1/Lt Richard J - 5/23/51

SHEETS, A3C Richard L - 6/18/53

SMITH, 1/Lt Robert Leslie - 12/14/51

SMITHSON, Joseph P - 1953

THOMPSON, Capt John F - 6/11/51

WALKER, Andrew - 1950

WILLIAMS, Capt Edward J

WORMACK, 1/Lt Thelbert B

Viet Nam

SCHMIDT, Norman - 1967

SEYMOE, Joseph P

The ceremony will mark the end of the journey for the Thorpe family that began when two Army officers arrived at the Thorpe home in 1944 and announced that their son and brother was missing in action.

Expression of Gratitude

After the planning meeting at the cemetery, Gill Thorpe sent the following message to all those who had been involved in honoring his brother, Robert Thorpe.

"In 2002 I started the venture to find out about Bob. I had no idea where it was going to lead me however my guilt trip of not doing anything was getting to me in a big way. By now you know all there is to know about the journey and thanks to you in the biggest way the journey was more successful having you on board than it would have been without you.

To the point that my closure with Bob only came to me, and gratefully so, when Ken Dooley got us involved with Peter Martin and the group at the State House.

Then there was the beautiful day at the Veterans Cemetery. That was the icing on the cake.

I can't express to you my feeling of Bob's case now being completed and that finally after all these years the State of RI and the Veterans Association have finally recognized Bob.

I have just begun to realize that my mind and body have come to terms with Bob, Mom and Dad. Now it is time to end the journey.

Nothing will surpass the recognition given to the Thorpe's at the State House and the Veterans Cemetery

My journey is now complete.

I can never thank you enough."

Gill