

# LST 534 Newsletter

July, August, September 2011

Volume 14 , Issue 3

## SKULL DISCOVERED AT PEARL HARBOR

An excavation crew recently made a startling discovery at the bottom of Pearl Harbor when it unearthed a skull that archeologists suspect is from a Japanese pilot who died in the historic attack on Dec. 7, 1941.

Archaeologist Jeff Fong of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific described the discovery to The Associated Press and the effort that is under way to identify the skull. He said the early analysis has made him "75 percent sure" that the skull belongs to a Japanese pilot. He did not provide specifics about what archeologists have learned about the skull, but said it was not from one of Hawaii's ancient burial sites. They also contacted local police and ruled out the possibility that it's from an active missing person case, said Denise Emsley, public affairs officer for the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawaii.

The items found with the skull provided some clues: scraps of metal and a Coca-Cola bottle. Fong said researchers have determined it was from the 1940s.

Fifty-five Japanese airmen were killed and 29 of their aircraft were shot down in the attack, compared with the 2,400 U.S.

service members who died. No Japanese remains have been found at Pearl Harbor since World War II. Pearl Harbor is home to the USS Arizona Memorial, which sits on top of the battleship that sank during the attack. It still holds the bodies of more than 900 men.

The skull remains intact despite being dug up with giant cranes and shovels. It was April 1 when items plucked from the water during the overnight dredging were laid to dry. When it was determined a skull was among the dredged items, contractors were ordered to stop the work, Emsley said. "We definitely wanted it to be handled correctly," she said.

The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command on Oahu, charged with identifying Americans who were killed in action but were never brought home, has been asked to determine who the skull belongs to. The cranium was turned over to the command's lab for tests that will include examining dental records and DNA, said John Byrd, the lab's director and a forensic anthropologist. "We're working on the case but the case is just in the early stages of analysis," he said. "We're not going to know much more about

it for a while yet." The lab is the only accredited Skeletal Identification Laboratory in the United States.

JPAC has identified more than 560 Americans since the command was activated in 2003. When more information is gleaned from the skull, other agencies could get involved including the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the Japanese Consulate. Daniel Martinez, the National Park Service's chief historian for Pearl Harbor, said experts on Pearl Harbor know enough about the specific location where Japanese planes went down in the attack that they might be able to match the skull with a crewmember. Martinez said that beyond the historical significance of the finding, it is a reminder of a life lost.

I think anytime you're able to reclaim a casualty and perhaps even identify it, regardless of what country, it may bring closure to a family, he said.

*Credit: Jennifer S. Kelleher, AP, 7/20/11*



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## NEWS

### **Last Living US WWI Vet Dies in W. VA. at Age 110**

He was repeatedly rejected by military recruiters and got into uniform at 16 after lying about his age. But Frank Buckles would later become the last surviving U.S. veteran of World War I.

Buckles, who also survived being a civilian POW in the Philippines in World War II, died of natural causes Sunday at his home in Charles Town, W. VA. biographer and family spokesman David DeJonge said in a statement. He was 110.

Buckles had been advocating for a national memorial honoring veterans of the Great War in the nation's capital.

When asked in February 2008, how it felt to be the last of his kind, he said simply "I realized that somebody had to be, and it was me." And he told the Associated Press he would have done it all over again, "without a doubt."

On November 11, 2008, the 90th anniversary of the end of the war, Buckles attended a ceremony at the grave of World War I Gen. John Pershing in Arlington National cemetery. He was back in Washington a year later to endorse a proposal to rededicate the existing World War I memorial on the National Mall as the official National World War

I Memorial. He told a Senate panel it was "an excellent idea"

Born in Missouri in 1901 and raised in Oklahoma, Buckles visited a string of military recruiters after the United States entered the "war to end all wars" in April 1917. He was repeatedly rejected until convincing an Army Captain he was 18. He was actually 16 1/2. "A boy that age, he's not afraid of anything. He wants to get in there," Buckles said.

More than 4.7 million joined the U.S. military from 1917-18. As of spring 2007, only three were still alive, according to a tally by the Department of Veterans Affairs: Buckles, J. Russell Coffey of Ohio and Harry Richard Landis of Florida. The dwindling Roster promoted a flurry of public interest, and Buckles went to Washington in May 2007 to serve as grand marshal of the national Memorial Day Parade.

Coffey died Dec. 20, 2007 at age 109, while Landis died Feb. 4, 2008 at 108. Unlike Buckles, those two men were still in basic training in the US when the war ended and did not make it overseas.

After Armistice Day, Buckles helped return prisoners of war to Germany. He returned to the United State in January 1920.

In 1941 while on business in the Philippines, Buckles was captured by the Japanese. He

spent more than 3 years in prison camps. "I was never actually looking for adventure," Buckles once said, it just came to me."

Frank Buckles passed away February 27, 2011.

*Credit: Vicky Smith, AP*

### **And Then the Last Foreign WWI Vet Dies also at 110**

Claude Choules, the only remaining male veteran of WWI and one of the last people to have served in both world wars, died May 5, 2011 at a nursing home near Perth in western Australia. He was 110.

The former seaman, who was underage when he signed up for duty, witnessed the surrender of the German Imperial Navy in 1918. He also watched as German sailors scuttled their own fleet at Scap Flor, near Scotland, to avoid having the ships fall into British hands after the war.

Mr. Choules and another Briton, Florence Green, became the war's last surviving service members after the death of American Frank Buckles in February, according to the Order of the First World War, a U.S. based group that tracks veterans.

Mr. Choules lied about his age so he could join the British Royal Navy in 1916, two years after the Great War began.

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Enlistees were supposed to be 18 years old.

He wrote a memoir "The Last of the Last," which was published in 2009.

*Credit: News Service*

## AND LAST, BUT NOT LEAST, THE LAST LIVING FEMALE VETERAN OF WWI

Florence Beatrice Green (nee Patterson, born February 19, 1901) is the last known living female veteran of the First World War. She was a member of the Women's Royal Air Force.

Green joined the Women's Royal Air Force in September 1918 at the age of 17, where she served as an officers' mess steward. She worked in the officers' mess at RAF Marham and was based at Narborough airfield. She was identified as a Great War Veteran in Jan. 2010.

On February 19, 2011 she celebrated her 110th birthday, becoming a supercentenarian—one of just 10 living in the UK, all women.

With the death of Claude Choules on May 5, 2011, Green became the last known living veteran of World War I.

*Credit: Wikipedia*



## HOLIDAYS

### July

4 Independence Day



24 Parents Day

### August

19 National Aviation Day

### September

5 Labor Day

11 Grandparents Day  
Patriot Day

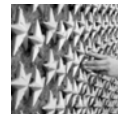
16 National POW/  
MIA Recognition Day



17 Constitution Day &  
Citizenship Day

21 Senior Citizen Day

25 Gold Star  
Mother's Day



29 Rosh Hashanah

## What is National Senior Citizens Day?

President Ronald Reagan signed a Presidential Proclamation in 1988 honoring our nation's senior citizens.

**Proclamation:** "For all they have achieved throughout life and for all they continue to accomplish, we owe older citizens our thanks and a heartfelt salute. We can best demonstrate our gratitude and esteem by making sure that our communities are good places in which to mature and grow older."

## What can you do on this day?

- ◆ Spend some time with senior citizens.
- ◆ Show your appreciation for seniors.
- ◆ Volunteer in support of the senior.
- ◆ Check out senior discounts in your area.

## Constitution and Citizenship Day:

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day commemorates the formation of the United States and signing of the Constitution of the United States on Sept. 17, 1787. It also recognizes all who, by coming of age, or by naturalization, have become US Citizens. **Wear your red, white and blue on 9/17.**

## BIRTHDAYS:



### August 16

Luther Lyles  
2407 Reynolds Road  
Wauchula, FL 33873

### August 23

Sammie Porter  
5813 Seminole Ct.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73132

### September 1

John Stanley Primmer  
19410 East Cameron Road  
Rockford, WA 99030

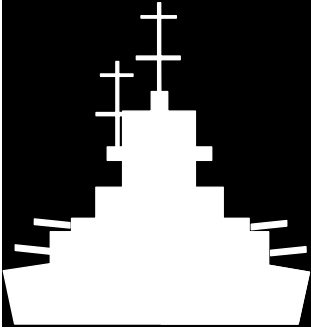
### September 11

Myron W. Pully, Jr.  
63 Yorktown Road  
Newport News, VA 23603

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LST534 Newsletter  
250 West 49th Street  
Suite 400  
New York, New York 10019

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## LST534 Newsletter

# Just for Fun

### JOKES

A beggar walks up to a well dressed woman shopping in New York and said he was hungry and hadn't eaten in 4 days. She replied, wow I wish I had your will power.

A young son asks his Dad, "Is it true? I heard that in some parts of the world, a man doesn't know his wife until he marries her." The father replied, "That happens in every country, son."

*Jokes from the Scuttlebutt*

### NAUTICAL TERMS

*In memory of James Richard Drew who contributed to this column until his passing.*

Hold - A compartment below deck in a large vessel, used solely for carrying cargo.

Piloting - Navigating by use of visible references, the depth of the water, etc.

Swamp - To fill with water, but not settle to the bottom.

**Editor and Comments:**  
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