

BCSO host Lizzie Borden researchers investigating Lizzie Borden's bed at Ash Street Jail, New Bedford

"There's a history mystery unfolding at the Ash Street Jail in New Bedford. For years, what was known as Lizzie Borden's bed has been kept in storage on the jail's upper floors. But is it really the bed Lizzie slept on during her trial? That's what folks from the Fall River Historical Society/Lizzie Borden Museum are looking at.

We hosted them this morning to see the bed up close and personal, and while it doesn't have a manufacture date or serial number, it does have these interesting face-like markings on the side. They also checked out the old jail cell in what was once the Sheriff's residence, where it is believed Lizzie stayed during her time.

The room, which is now a staff break room, still has the original, massive steel door on it. The bed is likely from the old jail infirmary; could the old Sheriff have used a bed from there for Lizzie, who was considered a high-society inmate?

How will the mystery unfold? We'll keep you posted. #history #historyfacts #historylovers #Lizzie #lizzie #lizzieborden."- Bristol County Sheriff's Office.



Bristol County Sheriff's Office photo.



Bristol County Sheriff's Office photo.



Bristol County Sheriff's Office photo.

New Bedford's Fort Taber Flag Honors Frank F. Lewis KIA during WWII

During the month of April, the 43rd Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of PFC Frank F. Lewis, who served in D Company, 2nd Ranger Battalion and was killed in action on December 7, 1944, during WWII.

Lewis was born in Taunton, MA on March 25, 1910, son of the late Antonio Francisco Luiz and Maria Julia. Their last name was changed from Luiz to Lewis while emigrating to the United States from the Azores.

Frank was raised in the town of Fairhaven, then moved to New Bedford. According to his family, he was an avid soccer player and prided himself on staying fit. He worked as a truck driver for Dawson Brewery before enlisting in the military. He married his wife Helen (Sokol) on March 11, 1937, and their only child, a daughter named Eileen, was born on May 16, 1937.

Frank enlisted in the United States Army on October 6, 1943, at the age of 33. He was originally stationed at Fort Devens, MA, then trained at both Camp Croft, S.C. and Fort George Meade, MD. He eventually earned the rank of Private First Class (PFC) while serving in D Company, 2nd Ranger Battalion. He served overseas for a total of 8 months and 3 days before being killed in action during a hard-fought battle in Germany during WWII.

The 2nd Ranger Battalion was activated on April 1, 1943, and was active until October 23, 1945. According to rangerfamily.org, "the Rangers had to have the highest physical stamina and superior mental ability to perform as an outstanding fighting team in order to accomplish any given mission. They were skillfully trained and were proficient in all types of weapons, hand-to-hand combat, infantry tactics and many other skills necessary to be successful in war."

Chris Piche, the grandson of Raymond Piche, who served alongside Frank Lewis, was quoted in a Standard-Times editorial reflecting on the Ranger battalion. "Dec. 7, 1944 was the third anniversary of the Day of Infamy, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. In Europe it was also a rough day for the 2nd Ranger Battalion. They were knocking up against Hitler's West Wall. The boys who had scaled Point du Hoc on D-Day were learning fast. In November, they helped punch through the bloody Hurtgen Forest in Belgium. Now they were ordered to take Hill 400 outside Bergstein, Germany."

Piche referenced many local men serving in the Rangers including Frank Lewis, William Gervais, Gerald Bouchard and

his grandfather, Raymond Piche. Through his research, Chris Piche summarized the battle explaining, "To take Hill 400 you had to cross an open field under mortar, machine gun and rifle fire. Bouchard was ordered to advance by himself to probe resistance, he was shot in the stomach. This lit a fuse in the 210 men of Fox and Dog Companies. They all rose up and charged ahead. Gervais fell crossing the field, but others stormed up the hill, capturing it. Lewis was hit late that day during a counterattack. Both he and Gervais died instantly from shell blasts. Piche, who was severely wounded, was hit by shrapnel the next morning and was transported across the English Channel."

Piche describes the great heroism of Lewis and others in the Ranger Battalion. "New Bedford and vicinity should be proud of these men's service. They all volunteered and gave their best to help beat back fascism. They were the sons of immigrants who heard the call of duty in the schools, mills and bars, during a time of global peril. They have the right to be called the Greatest Generation."

Lewis' family compiled hand-written letters from Frank to his wife, Helen, while he served in the military. These letters add a personal, human element to what Frank was experiencing while away from his family and training for war.

In a letter dated November 16, 1943, Frank explained that he had arrived at Camp Croft, S.C. after traveling 33 hours. "This camp is strictly an infantry training camp, and it has the reputation of turning out the best trained infantry troops in the country. Basic training is at least 17 weeks."

Two months later, in a letter dated January 1944 he wrote, "They are increasing the number and distances of hikes which take place after we have drilled all day. We are now learning to fire the light machine gun. We went on a twelve-mile hike Friday night in the pouring rain. We have a good bunch of fellows with the usual sprinkling of wits and comedians which

helps to make our stay here more pleasant.”

He later wrote, “This training is doing me a world of good, and I feel sure I can complete the course without much difficulty.”

Once completing basic training, Lewis went on to complete more training at Fort George Meade, MD before going overseas in April.

On April 2, 1944, Lewis wrote home to his wife, saying that he had arrived safely, but couldn’t say where. “We are not permitted to reveal our whereabouts or our activities.”

Then on May 10, 1944, his letter read, “I can’t tell you much about England or it’s people as I have not been to any town or city and these camps are usually placed in the middle of nowhere.”

Lewis wrote home on July 8, 1944, with some exciting news. “I am now with the 2nd Ranger Battalion. It is a good outfit and I hope I can stay with them.”

The last letter his wife Helen received was undated stating, “I am well and I hope you are all feeling the same. As you have probably guessed, I am somewhere in France. Don’t worry about me as everything is going along smoothly. Give my love to all the folks and give Eileen a hug and kiss for me. Lots of love to you and Eileen and best of luck. Your husband, Frank.”

PFC Frank F. Lewis was killed in action on Dec. 7, 1944, at the age of 34, a true American hero. He is buried at the Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial, which is located two miles northeast of the village of Henri-Chapelle, Belgium.

August Farias, a New Bedford veteran, who traveled to Belgium and France years ago, to visit WWII battle sites, promised Frank’s grandson, Timothy, that he would visit the grave of PFC Frank F. Lewis. A Standard-Times article showed a picture

of Farias standing before a simple white cross at Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery in Belgium. Farias was also given the flag from the soldier's grave which he shared with Lewis' grandson.

At the time of his death, Frank F. Lewis was survived by his wife Helen, his daughter Eileen Rezendes and her husband Paul; his brother Antone, Jr. and his three sisters: Anne Hendricks, Alice DeSimas and Julie Lewis; all now deceased. He is posthumously survived by his grandchildren: Steven Rezendes, David Rezendes, Chris Rezendes (and his wife Lisa), Timothy Rezendes (and his wife Kathy), and Andrew Rezendes, all of New Bedford.

Linda Ferreira, of Empire Ford of New Bedford, researches the life histories of area residents. American flags are provided by Empire Ford of New Bedford. Flags are raised by the staff at Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum. Those who would like to honor a local veteran in the future can contact Ferreira at lferreira@buyempireautogroup.com.

Massachusetts law ensures Schooner Ernestina- Morrissey's connection to New Bedford

"On Saturday, December 17th, the Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey's long-awaited homecoming will be celebrated with state officials, generous philanthropists, volunteers, members of the public, and the Prime Minister of Cape Verde, His Excellency Jose Ulisses de Pina Correia e Silva. The speaking

program will take place at New Bedford State Pier starting at 10am.

Significant state support was secured by Senator Mark Montigny in addition to special legislation he filed that ensures the Commonwealth's official vessel will be cared for by the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. An Act to preserve the Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey permitted the Commonwealth to receive significant funding from private philanthropy, saving taxpayers millions of dollars in renovation costs. The law, drafted and filed by Montigny in the Senate and co-sponsored and led by Cabral in the House, also honors the strong ties between the historic vessel and local Cape Verdean community while ensuring New Bedford remains her official homeport. Massachusetts Maritime Academy will dock the Ernestina-Morrissey at New Bedford State Pier, where she can be made available for educational programming and cultural events such as the annual Cape Verdean Recognition Week.

"The Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey is a treasured gift from the people of Cape Verde that reflects the strong, enduring bond between our nations," said Senator Mark Montigny, who has long-supported capital and operating needs for the Ernestina-Morrissey and successfully led legislation to secure her restoration. "It is almost hard to believe that after decades of securing millions of state dollars in earmarks and legislation, she is finally back home in New Bedford, fully restored and ready to navigate the open seas. Our law forever protects this historic vessel and her Cape Verdean heritage, and New Bedford is proudly displayed on her stern. This is a special day for our community and the Commonwealth, and I look forward to the day when the Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey can set sail for beautiful Cape Verde."

Public tours of the historic vessel will also be available on Saturday, December 17th from 2 to 4pm as well as on Sunday, December 18th from 11am to 1pm. Anyone wishing to attend the speaking program is encouraged to register with the

New Bedford's Fort Taber Flag to honor CPL Robert R. Gonneville KIA While Serving in Vietnam War

During the month of November, the 39th Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of CPL Robert Roland Gonneville, who served with the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. Gonneville paid the ultimate sacrifice when he was killed in action on November 9, 1967, at the age of nineteen, while fighting in the Quang Tri Province of South Vietnam. It is fitting that CPL Gonneville be honored this Veteran's Day, which marks 55 years since his death.

Robert was born on January 29, 1948, in Acushnet, the son of Gerard L. Gonneville and Doris B. Gonneville. While living in New Bedford, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corp on June 30, 1966, in Boston, MA. He was assigned to the H&S Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, 3d MRVID (Rein) FMF and began his tour in Vietnam on July 13, 1967. His military specialty was Rifleman.

Nearly four months after arriving in Vietnam, CPL Gonneville was killed in action, at the age of 19, in South Vietnam, Quang Tri Province on November 9, 1967. "The Marines defensive position on Hill 158 at Nui Con Tien in the Gio Linh District of Quang Tri Province came under one of many attacks by the

NVA firing artillery and mortars at the defenders. CPL Gonneville was killed in a defensive position by multiple fragmentation wounds from hostile artillery fire," according to findagrave.com/memorial. During the Vietnam War, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines sustained the highest casualty rate in Marine Corps history.

Prior to his death, Gonneville had been wounded previously, receiving a Purple Heart, and returned to the intense fighting around Quang Tri , Khe Sanh and the DMZ. His unit earned the name "The Walking Dead" for its high casualty rate, and some claim that N. Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh had given them this label "Di bo Chet"; a threat that the unit adopted as a badge of honor, according to a New Bedford Guide article published March 19, 2014 while honoring Gonneville on Vietnam Veteran's Day.

During his seventeen months of service, he participated in many combat and non-combat unit operations including: Operation Beacon Star, Operation Buffalo, Operation Kingfisher, Operation Lancaster and Operation Kentucky.

CPL Gonneville was awarded the following commendations for his service: The Purple Heart, The Combat Action Ribbon, The National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, The Vietnam Service Medal, the Marine Corps Presidential Unit Citation, The Vietnam Gallantry Cross, The Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal and Marksman Badge.

He is honored on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington, D.C. with his name inscribed on Panel 29e, Line 58. According to his brother, Richard, a plaque and flagpole were dedicated in Robert Gonneville's name at Brooklawn Park's Whaling City Little League field. This dedication was presented by the city of New Bedford, the Whaling City Little League and the local Poirier Post.

Survivors include his six siblings: Jeannette Demanche and her husband Robert of Fairhaven;

Rita Pothier and her husband Gerard of Fairhaven; Alfred Gonneville and his partner Lucille Post of New Bedford; William Gonneville and his wife Rosemary (deceased) of Plymouth; Richard Gonneville and his wife Patricia of Acushnet; and Gerard Gonneville and his wife Elaine of Acushnet.

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Fort Taber Flag to honor Thomas “Frank” McCoy WWII Army Veteran Who Fought in the Battle of the Bulge

During the month of September, the 37th Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of Thomas “Frank” McCoy, a WWII veteran who served in the Third Armored Division of the United States Army, participating in the infamous the Battle of the Bulge.

Frank was born in Wichita, Kanas on January 27, 1925. He attended East High School, graduated in 1943, and joined the Army shortly after. Once completing his training in the U.S., he headed to with the Third Armored Division, where he fought

in the Battle of the Bulge. Also known as the Ardennes Offensive, this was the last major German campaign during World War II. The battle took place over forty days from December 16, 1944 to January 25, 1945.

At the end of World War II, McCoy was discharged and returned home. He went on to receive his BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts) from Kansas University in 1950, then studied at the Academie Royale des Beaux Arts in Liege, the Academy of Fine Arts in the Belgian city of Liege, where he received a Diploma with High Distinction. Before returning home again, Frank worked as the interim head of the art department at the Army's community newspaper, Stars and Stripes, in Germany.

Upon returning to Kansas, he earned his MFA (Master's in Fine Arts) from the University of Kansas. He worked for several years as the men's fashion illustrator at Henry's Clothing Store in Wichita before taking a job at the Swain School of Design in New Bedford in 1954.

According to his obituary, after teaching at Swain, Frank taught at Bradford Durfee College/New Bedford Institute of Technology which became SMU (Southern Massachusetts University). Frank and fellow professor, Ed Togneri, developed the strong drawing and painting program at SMU which transitioned into the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, where Frank taught painting, drawing and printmaking until he retired in 1991 after 32 years of teaching.

He continued to draw, paint and exhibit his own work for the next 25 years. Because he still loved to teach, he mentored a group of SouthCoast summer residents who enjoyed Frank's paint instruction as well as his critiques.

Throughout his life, Frank enjoyed reading, Big Band music, jogging, tennis and, of course, art.

Frank died at the age of 93 on February 17, 2018. He leaves behind his loving and kind companion of 21 years, Gretchen

Knowlton, his faithful, sweet Cocker Spaniel, Lily, numerous friends, and appreciative students whose lives he touched. Many of his former students left messages of remembrance on the funeral website including Gayle Giroux Thorley who recalled, "Frank was my painting and drawing professor at SMU (UMass Dartmouth). He was a kind, inspiring and constructive presence always. A true artist and art lover."

Mary Natalizia, also a former student, shared these thoughts..."Sat at my easel today (which Frank gave me when I was poor and struggling) mixing greys (like the ones I mixed 40 years ago in a palette knife painting he had assigned to loosen me up and help me understand the graphic underpinnings necessary to all good painting)- thinking of how important this man was to my development as an artist. He taught me to draw, and by that, I mean to open my eyes and SEE! Rest In Peace Dear Frank and thank you for being such a wonderful teacher and human being."

Lastly, Helen DeGroot, fondly remembers, “Just being in the same room with Frank was a pleasure. Being a student in his class was a privilege.”

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Coalition Wants COVID

Prevention Plan For Massachusetts In The Fall

By Chris Lisinski

State House News Service

Massachusetts K-12 students and staff should be tested for COVID-19 before classes resume in September, while government, education and business leaders should outline clear plans for when mask mandates would be triggered if another surge builds, a group of public health experts, labor leaders and community organizers said Monday.

Most Massachusetts residents are vaccinated against COVID-19, and precautions that defined public life during long stretches of the pandemic have faded. While the virus is still circulating, many Bay Staters are comfortable going maskless in most settings, test rates have dropped, and public activity has rebounded.

But with the impending start of the school year marking the approach of autumn, a range of speakers organized by the Massachusetts Coalition for Health Equity argued Monday that the virus continues to pose major threats, warranting additional preparation as the weather cools.

"We all want our society and our schools open. We all want this pandemic to be over," said Katie Murphy, president of the Massachusetts Nurses Association. "But wishing it won't make it so, and pretending that we're doing all that needs to be done for the fall and winter seasons and what they may portend isn't acceptable on any level."

In the week ending Aug. 18, Massachusetts recorded 8,224 COVID-19 cases and a seven-day hospitalization average of 569 patients. That's higher than the 8,112 cases and average hospitalization of 383 patients in the week ending Aug. 18,

2021 and the 1,817 cases and 183 average hospitalizations in the week ending Aug. 18, 2020, according to Boston University School of Public Health professor Jonathan Levy, who said regional wastewater data is also showing greater COVID-19 impact than at the same point in each of the past two summers.

Levy said the state's position "is certainly not as good as in prior years heading into the fall," though he added that the deployment of vaccines and boosters marks a significant improvement in protection over the past two years when those options either were not yet available or had not been adopted as widely.

"Nobody knows what this fall and winter will look like. Anyone who is confident that nothing is going to happen or we're going to be overwhelmed is probably overstating their confidence," he said. "We might still be dealing with BA.5, we might have BA.6, 7, 8, who knows, or we might have an entirely new variant. Remember, this time last year, no one had heard of omicron. It showed up at Thanksgiving and threw us for a loop."

The coalition called on state government, school district leaders, local officials and employers to take steps ahead of the fall and winter. Officials should not hesitate to deploy mask mandates early on in surges rather than waiting until the strain on the health care system becomes more intense, speakers said Monday.

Coalition members urged the state to require students or workers who contract COVID to isolate for 10 days or until they no longer test positive on a rapid test, a contrast from the latest U.S. Centers for Disease Control guidance that calls for at least five days of isolation followed by masking.

They also suggested creation of options for vulnerable Bay Staters who feel more comfortable in masked settings, such as businesses offering mask-only hours and universal masking

rooms in schools and workplaces.

Lara Jirmanus, a primary care physician at Cambridge Health Alliance, said masks and testing in particular should feature prominently as schools return to session over the next two weeks.

“That’s the way that we can actually prevent transmission – test everyone before they go back to school, hold school vaccine clinics, and require people to start the school year off wearing masks. (It) would keep cases at a minimum,” Jirmanus said. “I understand that is something that is not as potentially politically viable. If we feel that we can’t start the year with masks, we have to have a plan for a cutoff at which masks start, and it shouldn’t be when we’ve already hit the peak of the surge. The whole point is if you start masks beforehand, the surge is not as bad.”

Some educational settings in Massachusetts are preparing additional precautions for the fall. At UMass Amherst, all students will be expected to take a PCR test within 72 hours of arriving on campus or an at-home test within 24 hours of arriving on campus, and the university’s community can also visit University Health Services for a PCR test, officials announced in a message to families last week.

Gov. Charlie Baker lifted many COVID-19 restrictions including capacity limitations and masking requirements in some settings in May 2021, and Baker and education deputies lifted a mandate requiring face coverings in K-12 schools at the end of February.

Two districts, Boston and Chelsea, kept universal masking mandates in place in their schools through the end of the year in June, according to Tori Cowger, a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University’s FXB Center for Health and Human Rights.

Cowger described a study she helped conduct comparing COVID-19 trends in Massachusetts districts that lifted masking

requirements to those that kept them in place.

The pre-print study, which has not yet been peer-reviewed, estimated that the end of in-school masking requirements was associated with nearly 45 additional COVID-19 cases per 1,000 students and staff over a 15-week period.

“This translates to approximately 12,000 cases among students and staff in school districts that lifted their masking requirements, which is approximately 30 percent of all cases observed in schools over that timeframe,” Cowger said.

Last week, Education Commissioner Jeff Riley and Public Health Commissioner Margret Cooke told districts the state “is not recommending universal mask requirements, surveillance testing of asymptomatic individuals, contact tracing, or test-to-stay testing in schools” for the upcoming year. They also described plans to run free vaccine clinics aimed at students, teachers and families – which the administration has conducted in previous years – in August and September.

The commissioners pointed to U.S. Centers for Disease Control guidelines updated in August that scrapped a test-to-stay recommendation for anyone exposed to COVID-19 in a school setting and no longer called for people exposed to COVID-19 to quarantine.

“With COVID-19 vaccines now readily available, treatments accessible to those at higher risk for severe disease, and widespread availability of self-tests, DESE and DPH have continued to evolve our support for schools in collaboration with the medical community and in line with the most recent CDC guidance issued August 11, 2022,” they wrote.

That stance drew criticism from speakers at Monday’s event, with Jirmanus calling it “the wrong approach.”

“You don’t need an M.D. or a Ph.D. to know the new CDC guidelines and the changes in the Massachusetts state

guidelines are about getting people back to work rather than to promote our health,” Jirmanus said.

Asked if there were any plans in place similar to the coalition’s recommendations or if the Baker administration is confident that the state can withstand any winter surge with the current guidelines, a Baker administration spokesperson who agreed to communicate on background only said the Department of Public Health strongly encourages families to get students vaccinated for COVID-19 before school begins and summarized options including family vaccine events and mobile clinics.

Fort Taber flag to honor New Bedford’s Donald “Don” R. Couture, Sr. Former Air Force Pilot

During the month of May, the 33rd Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of Donald “Don” R. Couture, Sr., of Black Diamond, Washington, formerly of New Bedford. Don joined the Air Force after graduating high school and became both an airplane and helicopter pilot.

Don was born in New Bedford on September 11, 1933, the son of Azarius “Pete” and Louise Couture.

According to his obituary, “His smarts and work ethic led to a career as an officer flying planes and helicopters while stationed at Strategic Air Command bases around the country.”

After completing his military service, Don settled in the Seattle, WA area with his family, his first wife, the late Ann Jezek Couture, and their four children. He went on to become a manager at Boeing, a corporation that designs, manufactures, and sells airplanes, rotorcraft, rockets, satellites, telecommunications equipment, and missiles worldwide. Don also served as a pilot with the Washington Army National Guard after his active-duty service ended.

He was known as a gifted storyteller with a wonderful sense of humor, who loved to entertain. According to his family, he was known for his "wit and charm" and "loved to tease, and had many jokes for any occasions, which he delivered like a pro."

Don had a sharp mind, excellent memory and loved history. According to his obituary, he was an animal lover and had many interests including reading, playing golf, painting, listening to music, dancing, and sports. He also loved to travel. Together with his second wife, Fon, of 30 years, they traveled to many places around the world and spent each winter in Hawaii.

He also ventured back to his hometown of New Bedford, nearly every autumn, to visit with family and friends. He loved to take in the New England foliage and enjoy the local seafood.

Don died on November 23, 2021, of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma at Valley Medical Center in Renton, WA at the age of 88. He is survived by his wife, Fon (nee Bayley); a sister-in-law, Glenda Bayley; his children, Donald (Donny) R. Couture Jr., Marie Couture (Gary Olivas), Denise Couture, Jacqueline Couture Escudero (Travis Eckert); his step-children, Cyndee Blackmore and Tiffany Jorgensen (Greg Yutani); grandchildren Trevor Jennings (Kelly), Mellissa Siler, Elise Howerton (Kyle), Aryn Escudero (Ashley), Hunter Blackmore (Kelsey), Gavin Olivas, Dalton Blackmore (Jenna), Evan Hirsh, Calder Hirsh and Maddie Blackmore; great-grandchildren Luke and Liam Jennings and Zoey Howerton; nieces Rona Mingola (Olavo), Jayme

Couture, Caitlyn Mingola and Heather Steffenson (Paul); and a nephew, Michael Bayley (Teresa). Don had two elder brothers, the late Arthur and Edward, and a sister who died in childhood.

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Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Flag Honors New Bedford's PFC Justin C. Kirby

During the month of March, the 31st Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of PFC Justin Candido Kirby, a New Bedford native who was killed at the age of 21, two years ago, on March 9, 2020, in a training exercise at the Fort Irwin National Training Center in CA.

Justin was born on April 13, 1998, in Brockton, MA, the son of Robert J. Kirby and Patricia (Cox) Kirby, both of New Bedford. He attended the Global Learning Charter Public School in New Bedford from 5th to 12th grade, graduating in 2016. Principal Lena Pires recalled “the amazing growth that that young man experienced, and I don’t think it was just our school, it was his own amazing growth.” She had seen him while he was on a break from training. “My last memory is of him happy, healthy, talking with a sparkle in his eye about what he’s doing in the

military." She could tell he was living his passion.

He graduated from Bristol Community College in Dec. 2018 with honors, earning an Associate Degree in Fire Science and successfully completing the Emergency Medical Technician program. According to his family, it was his intention to serve in the military and eventually become a firefighter. He had already committed to serving in the military for an additional 4 years.

PFC Kirby enlisted in the United States Army in January 2019 and completed Basic Training at Fort Jackson, SC. Upon completion, he attended Advanced Individual Training (AIT) and graduated as a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Specialist from Fort Leonard Wood, MO.

While participating in Basic Training, Justin shared his experience with his family through letters. On January 20, 2019, he wrote, "I'm slowly losing touch with the civilian style of life, and I am adjusting well to the soldier lifestyle. The days are pretty long so it feels as if I've been gone a lot longer than I have been." Then nearly two months later, on March 18th, Justin wrote about his excitement about becoming an Army soldier. "As of yesterday, I'm officially a soldier. We completed the forge which forged us into soldiers. We stayed in the woods for 3 nights and four days. It poured nearly the entire time and was freezing. We are given a small tarp and some rope and 3 stakes and just kind of make a canopy on a tree for shelter. We marched a total of 50 miles in those 4 days, going from location to location with our gear." He was excited to have completed the training and was proud of his accomplishment.

PFC Kirby then moved to Fort Benning, GA in June 2019 to participate in the Ranger Assessment and Selection Program. In September 2019, he moved to Fort Irwin, CA where he was assigned to the Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Troop (RHHT), Regimental Support Squadron (RSS), 11th Armored

Cavalry Regiment (ACR) as a member of the Regiments' Smoke Platoon.

According to Fort Irwin, as a member of the Smoke Platoon, PFC Kirby participated in nine obscuration missions in support of the Brigade Tactical Group during three Decisive Action rotations at the National Training Center. He enabled Smoke Platoon to achieve 100% on their Platoon Mission Essential Tasks external evaluation during Rotation 20-01. He also led training for over eighty 2916th Aviation Battalion Soldiers in November 2019 which enabled them to become proficient at CBRN-related tasks and gain confidence in their equipment.

Kirby was taking part in a "large-scale" exercise within the center's training grounds at the time of his death. Conducting combat maneuver operations in an M1113 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle, known as a Humvee, when a "vehicle accident occurred. Col. Scott Woodward, 68th Colonel of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, said Kirby was well known across the regiment and "his passing has deeply affected us all."

Jason Miller, from Fort Irwin's Public Affairs office, told the California Daily Press that the military exercise involved approx. 7,500 soldiers who were in the center's training area at the time of the accident. "This number includes personnel from the National Training Center as well as approx. 5,000 soldiers who (were there) for training." The National Training center conducts 10 training rotations annually, training Brigade Combat Teams to build and sustain readiness to fight and win." The soldiers were conducting what Miller described as "realistic training reflective of the complexities our nation could face in combat."

A former Global Learning classmate of Kirby's, Eric Santos, explained "It was always his dream to serve his country." He had plans of serving in the Army and then becoming a firefighter. "Justin Kirby is a role model to many, including

myself, and a truly exceptional human being.” Santos said “he had a very bright future ahead of him, and at the very least he died doing what he loved. I remember him as a great friend, a great warrior and a hero.”

During his high school and college years, he worked at Pa Raffa’s, his family’s restaurant, where he was well known. Justin was also an Instructor at the Community Boating Center, located at the Fort Taber-Fort Rodman Park, where he had taken lessons as a kid. Justin also enjoyed wrestling and boxing. He had a love of music and attended many concerts over the years, including a KISS concert which he recalled in one of his letters to his dad while attending Basic Training.

New Bedford Mayor, Jon Mitchell, ordered flags at city buildings flown at half-staff after Kirby’s passing. “Justin’s service to our nation reflected his deep commitment to a cause larger than himself and the values of his family of public servants,” Mitchell said in a statement. “It is my hope that the gratitude and reverence of our city for Justin’s dedication and patriotism may bring some measure of comfort to Justin’s family as they mourn his sudden loss.”

Justin’s father and twin brother are both in public service, with his dad, Robert Kirby, working as a New Bedford firefighter and Justin’s brother, Jason, working as a full-time firefighter/paramedic for the town of Lakeville and a part-time paramedic for the city of New Bedford. Jason’s older brother, Richard, also known as “Ricky,” is employed as a Project Manager for a security company in Plymouth, MA.

According to his mother, Justin’s Readiness NC0, SFC Jason Boyd, from Camp Edwards said, “he couldn’t believe he accomplished so much in his short career with the Army.” PFC Justin Kirby was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon and the Battalion Commander and Sergeant Major’s coin for excellence.

Tricia, his mom, explained that Justin's death happened right at the beginning of COVID, when things were shut down. However, she was "overwhelmed with gratitude for the love and grace everyone bestowed upon Justin. I didn't know how everyone knew but they were all there to honor him, even in dark times." From the moment they left Rock Funeral home, on their way to Logan Airport, she was struck by the support of complete strangers. "All of the people on the plane remained (in their seats) until he was released and welcomed home by his family." She goes on to explain that she remembers "Justin and (our) family being honored at every overpass by firefighters, first responders and police! I saw a WWII veteran standing and saluting at the bottom of an exit ramp. All the way home this continued. I'll remember that day all the days of my life." She said it was wonderful to see the scores of people lined up along Acushnet Avenue, as well as outside Pa Raffa's, his former workplace, and along the Sacred Heart Cemetery to pay their respects.

Justin's dad explained that the day they brought Justin home after his passing was the "Best-Worse day ever." He remembers the amazing tribute Justin received on the car ride from Boston to New Bedford, bringing Justin's remains home. He was struck by the display of support which included shutting down the highway along the route. Each overpass along the way was filled with local firefighters, EMS personnel and police officers paying tribute. "There was one ladder truck with 3 firefighters standing at different levels on the ladder, saluting Justin as we drove by. We can't thank them enough for their support. It really meant a lot."

Justin is survived by his mother, Patricia (Cox) Kirby of New Bedford, his father, Robert J. Kirby and his wife Dawn of New Bedford, his twin brother, Jason D. Kirby of New Bedford, his older brother, Richard A. Kirby of S. Dartmouth, a sister Angela Russano and several aunts, uncles and cousins. He was predeceased by his paternal grandparents William F. and

Georgette M. Kirby and his maternal grandmother Cecelia A. Cox.

Linda Ferreira, of **Empire Ford of New Bedford**, researches the life histories of area residents. American flags are provided by Empire Ford of New Bedford. Flags are raised by the staff at Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum. Those who would like to honor a local veteran in the future can contact Ferreira at lferreira@buyempireautogroup.com.

Fort Taber Flag to honor 2LT Alfred Standish Milliken WWI Veteran KIA

During the month of February, the 30th Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of Alfred Standish Milliken, a New Bedford veteran killed during WWI.

Milliken was born in New Bedford on May 1, 1891 to Frank Milliken and Susan B. (Crowell) Milliken. He attended New Bedford High School and went on to attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1910. He graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering in 1914. While attending the Institute, he was a member of the Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity, Freshman Tug-of-War Team and manager of the Sophomore Tug-of-War Team.

According to an undated newspaper article, Milliken entered the second Plattsburg training camp from which he graduated and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, Engineers O.R.C., and was assigned to Co. D., 6th Engineers, 3rd Division. He was sent overseas on Dec. 5, 1917.

During the German offensive of March 21, 1918, the 6th Engineers were sent into the line near Villers-Bretonneux, France and Lieutenant Milliken, who had charge of a section of Company D, defended the trench in front of the village of Warfusse-Abaucourt.

On March 21, 1918, near the Somme River in France, the German army launched its first major offensive on the Western Front in two years. According to History.com, "the attack came as a relative surprise to the Allies, as the Germans had moved quietly into position just days before the bombardment began. From the beginning, it was more intense than anything yet seen on the Western Front. German commander Erich Ludendorff had worked with experts in artillery to create an innovative, lethal ground attack, featuring a quick, intense artillery bombardment followed by the use of various gases, first tear gas, then lethal phosgene and chlorine gases. He also coordinated with the German Air Service, to maximize the force of the offensive.

Winston Churchill, at the front at the time as the British minister of munitions, wrote of his experience on March 21: There was a rumble of artillery fire, mostly distant, and the thudding explosions of aeroplane raids. And then, exactly as a pianist runs his hands across a keyboard from treble to bass, there rose in less than one minute the most tremendous cannonade I shall ever hear. It swept around us in a wide curve of red flame."

All German assaults were driven back, but during the afternoon of March 30, the position was subjected to heavy bombardment, during which Lt. Milliken was killed.

According to his Gold Star Record, Milliken was awarded the Silver Star citation "For distinguished and exceptional gallantry at Cambrai on 30 March, 1918, in the operation of the American Expeditionary Forces." A battery of coast artillery guns at Fort Rodman is named in his honor.

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Fort Taber Flag to honor Robert H. Andrews And Stephen B. Dahill First New Bedford Residents Killed in WWI

During the month of January, the 29th Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of both Robert H. Andrews and Stephen B. Dahill, the first New Bedford residents killed during WWI.

If you're a SouthCoast resident, you probably travel Rte. 195 in New Bedford. If so, you will pass over the bridge which is a tribute to these brave men. The bridge on Interstate Rte. 195 over the intersection of County St, Cedar Grove and Penniman Streets was designated as the Robert H. Andrew and Stephen B. Dahill Bridge. The bridge was named in memory of these brave men who were the first residents of New Bedford to be killed in WWI, according to the State Library of MA. This dedication was approved by the Department of Public Works on May 5, 1967.

PVT Andrews and PFC Dahill were "among the 18,556 American Gold Star casualties recorded in the archives with close ties to Massachusetts," according to honorstates.org.

PVT Robert H. Andrews enlisted in the U.S. Army during WWI. Although military records are difficult to locate for WWI veterans, honorstates.org listed PVT Andrew as serving in Battery Group D, 101st Field Artillery, 26th Infantry Division. He was killed in action on April 12, 1918 and later awarded the Purple Heart. His body was disinterred on March 8, 1921 and received by H.L. Potter for Thomas L. Andrews, Robert's father, on July 31, 1921.

PFC Stephen B. Dahill served in the U. S. Army, Battery Group D, 102nd Field Artillery Regiment, 26th Infantry Division. He was killed in action 3 months after PVT Andrews, on July 22, 1918 and was buried or memorialized at Plot B, Row 28, Grave 37 at the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery, Fere-en-Tardenois, France.

To be clear, there was some confusion regarding the last name of PVT Andrews. Documentation from Honorstates.org listed his last name as Andrews, yet the State Library of MA listed his last name as Andrew. For the purpose of this article, Andrews was used as the name throughout.

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