

CHAPTER 13 – NEW DISCOVERIES

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In 2010 I began writing George's WWII story from a box full of clippings, photos, medals and other documents that had been in the attic since 1996. That is when I was finally introduced to Gibby and Mike. Two chapters in that book were dedicated to their stories. I remembered visiting the Hofmann and Rauh families in Westchester County when I was very young and some of the photos actually brought back distant memories. In particular, I remembered Aunt Jeanne who I now discovered was Gibby's sister. I contacted her after many years in early 2014 and when I mentioned George was my dad, the vague memories for both of us came pouring back.

I went to Newburgh, New York, to visit Jeanne and her daughter, Donna, to talk about my book and try to fill in many blanks. It was a fun and productive visit. I came home with a handful of photos and much new information I did not have. As I was saying goodbye, Jeanne mentioned matter-of-factly that she was approached by people from the US Army in 2013 to take a blood sample for DNA analysis. She was not sure why and I never gave it a second thought.

In my research, I discovered that the VFW Post in Thornwood, NY, was named in honor of Gilbert Rauh. I contacted the Commander, Drew McFadden, who invited me to come and tell Gibby's story to their members and many others who attended on Memorial Day in May of 2014. There were seventy or so people there including a large group from the local high school. I remember vividly how quiet and attentive everyone was – surprising for a high school group. They were super respectful and hung on every word.



The veteran attendees sat in the first few rows. I remember them nodding and shaking their heads in remembrance of their own service as I spoke. It was quite touching but nothing like a conversation I had with one veteran at the reception after the lecture. His name was Jack Carosi.

Jack was a decorated WWII veteran who had served with the 116th Infantry. On D-Day, June 6, 1944, he stormed Omaha Beach at Normandy, France, in the H-Hour landing. As he spoke of that day, he went deeper and deeper into the emotions of the experience – he was reliving all of its upset and pain as he spoke, as if he were laying on that beach once again. He cried softly and frequently, and I joined him. I will never forget that moment and what these men had endured for my freedom. Three years after we spoke, Jack Carosi, husband, father, proud grandfather, peacefully passed away on February 23, 2017. Another member of the greatest generation who should never be forgotten.

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On September 20, 2014, I was invited to represent the Rauh family at the dedication of a POW/MIA Monument at Mount Pleasant Town Hall. Six service men from Westchester County were on the Missing in Action rolls and the monument was being placed in their honor¹⁵. Gibby was one of the six.



Hawthorne Post 112 Kensico Cemetery Westchester Detachment

POW / MIA MONUMENT DEDICATION
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2014- 1:00 PM
Mt Pleasant Town Hall, Valhalla, NY 10595



Lt, Barton S. Creed
Peekskill, N.Y.
MIA, Laos
March 13, 1971



William Phelps
Cortland, N.Y.
MIA, Vietnam
November 23, 1971



William Crumm
Scarsdale, N.Y.
MIA, Vietnam
July 7, 1967



John A. House
Pelham, NY
MIA, Vietnam
June 30, 1967



William D. Thornton
Tarrytown, NY
MIA, Vietnam
January 28, 1967



Gilbert Rauh
Mt Pleasant, NY
MIA, Philippines
February 4, 1946

Remembering our Missing in Action from Westchester County
PLEASE JOIN US AT THIS DEDICATION TO HONOR OUR HERO'S
Chairman: Commander Peter Fiumefreddo – (914) 424-2283 or legionpost112@aol.com

¹⁵ Captain John A House was subsequently recovered and buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on September 27, 2018.

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Searching for the Apocalypse Again

From 9 to 10 May 2014, during a DPAA Joint Field Activity, an investigation team traveled to Insein Township, Yangon North District, Yangon Region, Myanmar to investigate Apocalypse MACR 1223. The team interviewed various individuals near the Insein Railroad Yard and Hlaing River Bridge, but none of those individuals provided information regarding aircraft losses during World War II. No material evidence, identification media, or possible remains were recovered. The investigation team also canvassed the National Archives of Myanmar and various other sites such as churches and Buddhist monasteries around Yangon for additional information pertaining to Apocalypse MACR 1223 or other American losses. Those investigation efforts did not yield any information pertaining to American losses during the war.

Unfortunately, that investigation continued to focus on the area where the Apocalypse turned from the bomb drop, was hit by flak and disappeared into a cloud bank – seventy miles east of the mass grave at Yodayadet.

