

A message from our President, Lonnie Mettler**Restoring Honor by Replacing Headstones**

Hopefully all of you are aware the Walla Walla Chapter ROA has a signature project known as Veteran Headstone Preservation and Restoration. This effort began with cleaning headstones several years ago and continues to grow as we have inventoried veterans' graves at Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery and Mountain View Cemetery.

In the inventories it was identified two headstones in the Grand Army of the Republic Abraham Lincoln Post No 4 section, also known as the Civil War section, of Mountain View Cemetery have deteriorated to the point where the names are unreadable, and the headstones don't even look like headstones.

Efforts began in May 2023 to request replacement headstones for the two veterans from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. The replacement stones arrived near the end of 2023 and funding to install them has been obtained.

Installation may start in the first part of August. If you ever visit Mountain View Cemetery, stop by the new headstones say the veteran's name out of respect for the individual and so he is never forgotten.



Headstone
SGT James C. Mason



Headstone
PVT Joseph L. Wilson

Walla Walla Team

Walla Walla Chapter Officers

PRESIDENT

MAJ Lonnie Mettler, USA (Ret.)

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

LTC Sarah Bro, USA (Ret.)

SECRETARY

Capt William Howard III, USAF (Ret.)

TREASURER

CSM Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.)

Walla Walla Chapter Committees

INVESTMENTS

LTC Allen Alass, USA (Ret.)

VETERAN HEADSTONE PROJECT

LTC Allen Alass, USA (Ret.)

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

PO3 Gene Gossett, USNR
SGT Ted C. Hanson, ARNG

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

SSG Chad Bro, USA (Ret.)

Walla Walla Chapter Advisors

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

1LT Michael Howell, USAR

CHAPLAIN

RDML Darold Bigger, USN (Ret.)

FLAG PROGRAM

CSM Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.)

LEGISLATION

LTC Ben Morris, USA (Ret.)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

CSM Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.)
MAJ Lonnie Mettler, USA (Ret.)

PUBLIC OUTREACH

LTC Sarah Bro, USA (Ret.)

Activities Calendar

Executive Committee Meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend the Executive Committee meetings. They occur at the Fort Walla Walla Museum Conference Room at 9:30 a.m. See the dates below:

Aug 26, 2024

Oct 21, 2024

Sep 23, 2024

Nov 25, 2024

The luncheon takes place at noon, at the Walla Walla Country Club.

Sep 6, 2024 – Headstone Dedication at Mountain View Cemetery- Follow by lunch at Walla Walla Country Club.

Oct 4, 2024 – Ms. Rebbecca Hom USAF WASP's

Nov 1, 2024 – Mr. Ron Kilcker Reenactment of Governor Stevens

Dec 6, 2024 – Annual Business Meeting President Lonnie Mettler.

ROA Walla Walla Chapter Welcome New Chapter Members

- ❖ P03 Harriet E. Link USN
- ❖ Capt Gordon "Mick" C. McLean USAFR
- ❖ 1LT Charles B. Phillips, USA

Public Outreach

Email Public Outreach:

roa21@gmail.com

Web Page ROA NW-021:

www.roaww.org

Facebook ROA NW-021:

www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090403814151

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed herein are those of the editor or columnist and do not necessarily reflect those of Walla Walla Chapter, Department of Northwest, or ROA.

Program Speakers

By Capt William Howard III



United States Air Force Military Experiences

May 3, 2024, Guest Speaker
SrA Rocco Shanks, USAF
Military Experiences – Saudi, Dhahran, Riyadh
Air Force Base

SrA, Rocco E. Shanks, Jr., a former USAF veteran, passionately spoke about the significance of serving his country during his time in the military from 1993-1997, including his contributions to Operation Southern Watch. As a present-day chaplain, he enlightened the audience on the crucial role of faith, family, and country in our lives. He emphasized the interdependence of these values and how they form the backbone of a solid and united nation. His words were a powerful reminder that we all have a duty to serve our country and cherish the values that make it great.



Washington State Army Reserve Ambassador

June 24, 2024, Guest Speaker
Mr. Beau J. Ruff, UEA (Ret.)
Army Reserve Ambassador

Mr. Beau J. Ruff was selected as the U.S. Army Reserve Ambassador for Washington state by Chief of Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Jody J. Daniels. In his new role, Mr. Ruff gave an informal presentation to the ROA members. Army Reserve Ambassadors act as volunteer links between the Army Reserve and their respective states. Their responsibilities include promoting understanding, awareness, and support within their communities and serving as influential advocates for conveying messages to the public.

Mr. Ruff's service record is a proud one. He served four years on Active Duty as an attorney, with a yearlong deployment to Iraq, for which he was awarded the Bronze Star. Following this, he continued to serve for an additional 17 years in the Army Reserve, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2021.

Walla Walla Second Walla Walla
2020 Treaty Council and
 Stevens Skirmish of 1856

August 2, 2024, Guest Speaker
Mr. Dan N. Clarke, Walla Walla Retired
Attorney and Historian

Mr. Daniel N. Clark, a retired attorney with a profound understanding of Walla Walla, Washington, is a key figure in the local community. His wide-ranging interests encompass the works of local historians who have provided profound insights into the Walla Walla Valley. He has also delved into the significant events of the Second Walla Treaty Council and the Stevens Skirmish of 1856, offering meticulously researched and balanced perspectives on these pivotal historical moments.

Mr. Clark provided an in-depth account of Stevens' background, offering valuable insights and key information. Stevens who graduated from West Point at the top of his class in 1839, was an American military officer and politician who served as governor of the Territory of Washington from 1853 to 1857 and later as its delegate to the United States House of Representatives.

He detailed the significance of the treaty. As the number of settlers increased in the Washington Territory in the mid-1800s, the United States wanted to ensure land was available for settlement. Isaac Stevens, the first governor and superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Washington Territory, was authorized by the United States to negotiate with Washington tribal nations to settle their traditional lands peacefully.

Mr. Clark also shares a comprehensive history of Walla Walla Chief Peo-peo-mox-mox (Yellowbird), an influential Indigenous figure within the Treaty Council.

ROA Recognizes Future Leaders

Kennewick High School Air Force JROTC Kennewick, Washington



LTC Skip Novakovich, USA,
(Ret.) Cadet William Rigby

The Kennewick, Washington High School Air Force JROTC held its awards ceremony during the military ball on May 3, 2024. LTC Skip Novakovich, representing the Walla Walla ROA Chapter, presented the ROA award to Cadet William Rigby, and a ROA Challenge Coin. He is a high school junior.

Cadet Rigby is currently in the Washington National Guards with the rank of Private E-2. He plans to continue in the Army National Guard and work his way into special Forces to serve in a way that not everyone can. He stated, "The award is special, too, because it reminds me that hard work does pay off and that I should never quit what I am doing because everything has a purpose.



Capt William Howard, USAF, (Ret.)
Cadets- Rafe Richardson, Cooper Razey,
and Karl Martin

Washington State University Air Force ROTC Pullman, Washington



On April 26th, 2024, Captain William Howard III, a representative of the Walla Walla ROA Chapter, attended the Washington State University Air Force ROTC award ceremony. During this momentous event, Capt Howard had the honor of presenting the ROA award to Cadet Rafe Richardson, Cadet Cooper Razey, and Cadet Karl Martin, including the esteemed ROA Challenge Coin.

Walla Walla High School Army JROTC Walla Walla, Washington



c/1LT Octavio Osorio
PO2 Robert McCoy USCG

The Walla Walla High School JROTC held its 106th Annual Military Ball. PO2 Robert McCoy, USCG, representing the ROA Walla Walla Chapter, presented the ROA Award to c/1LT Octavio Osorio in recognition of outstanding achievement and exceptional leadership. PO2 McCoy also presented the ROA Challenge Coin to c/1LT Osorio.

He is a graduating senior who has served three years in the Blue Devil Battalion. C/1LT Osorio has served on the Armed Drill, PT, Color Guard, and Sporter Rifle Team. After graduation, Octavio plans to attend Eastern Washington University for Accounting to become a CPA.

University of Idaho Army ROTC Moscow, Idaho



On April 26, 2024, LTC Benjamin Morris, a Walla Walla ROA Chapter representative, attended the University of Idaho ROTC Award Program. Morris had the honor to present the ROA award to Cadet Piper D. Krier, and Cadet Ethan E. Marshall. (No photo available)

Former Walla Walla JROTC Battalion Commander



2nd Lt Luke Matlock
U.S. Air Force

Second Lieutenant Luke Matlock, who served as the Walla Walla JROTC 2020 Battalion Commander, graduated from the Air Force Academy in May 2024. He graduated at the top of his class and is now commissioned as a pilot. Following this achievement, he will pursue a master's degree at the Air Force System Tech before heading to flight school.

Community Activities



Celebrating Independence Day

A classic American Fourth of July celebration occurred in the Walla Walla Pioneer Park. It was a full day of live music, community performances, great food, arts and crafts, and vendor booths.

Walla Walla Chapter (ROA) set up a booth and shared information and initiatives within the community about the Reserve Organization of America and the Chapter's work in the community.



Manning the booth were MAJ Lonnie E. Mettler, CSM Terry Atchison, PO3 Gene Gossett, SSG Sherilyn Jacobson, Capt Bill Howard, and SGT Ted Hanson

Chaplains Corner

By RDML Darold Bigger, USN (Ret.)

Discipline

Frederick Richard was one of more than 500 athletes who represented the United States at the Olympics in Paris last month. As a child he began doing gymnastics and continued practicing until in college at the University of Michigan he spent six hours a day in the gym! He didn't get to Paris by accident.

Brody Malone's mother died in Georgia when he was a child. He worked through his grief physically, riding horses, roping steers, and doing gymnastics. He, too, was in Paris and a member of the U. S. men's gymnastics team. Getting here was not easy, especially after a devastating leg injury on the high bar. After three surgeries to repair his tibial plateau fracture, a dislocated knee, and several torn ligaments, followed by intense physical therapy, he returned to the gym, qualified for the U. S. Olympic team, and was part of the men's all-around team that earned the first medal in this event in 16 years.

They and hundreds of other athletes model for us a crucial truth: Success requires hard, sustained work. Remember what the apostle Paul said to the Greeks in Corinth long ago?

"Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever."
I Corinthians 9:25

What is worthwhile is worth working for.

Jonathan M. Wainwright Army General

The most famous of the “Battling Bastards of Bataan,” Jonathan Mayhew Wainwright, was a tough, professional soldier who led a heroic defense of the Philippines in the early days of World War II. His tenacious stand became a symbol at a time of national calamity. Despite authorizing the largest surrender in American history, Wainwright became a national hero and earned the Congressional Medal of Honor following his release.

Wainwright was born in Walla Walla, Washington, on August 23, 1883. He was the son of a West Point graduate and cavalry officer who died while serving in the Philippines. Wainwright followed in his father’s footsteps by attending the U.S. Military Academy and being commissioned a cavalry second lieutenant in 1906. He rode in Texas for two years before transferring to the Philippines in 1908 to fight Moro pirates after additional service out west. Wainwright graduated from the Mounted Services School at Fort Riley, Kansas, in 1916, and the following year, he served as a staff officer at the officer training camp at Plattsburgh, New York. Once the United States entered World War I, he ventured to France in February 1918 as assistant chief of staff in the 82nd Infantry Division. Wainwright fought well during the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives of that fall. Winning a Distinguished Service Medal and rising to temporary lieutenant colonel. After two years of occupation duty in Germany, he returned to the United States in 1920 with the rank of major. Over the next two decades, Wainwright distinguished himself in various command, staff, and student positions. After serving as an instructor at Fort Riley, he transferred to the General Staff as part of the elite Third U.S. Cavalry Regiment at Fort Myer, Virginia, from 1923 to 1925. Promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1929, Wainwright attended the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1931 and then the Army War College in Washington, D.C., in 1934. He rose to colonel in 1935 and commanded the Third U.S. Cavalry until 1938, when he became a brigadier general in charge of the First Cavalry Brigade at Fort Clark, Texas. Wainwright performed well in all these capacities, and in September 1940, he was promoted to major general and ordered to Asia to lead the Philippines Division. Ironically, the gaunt, gangly officer, who went by the nickname “Skinny,” felt that this assignment meant he would miss out on World War II.

On November 28, 1941, Wainwright arrived in Manila to function as *Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s* senior field commander. He commanded the North Luzon Defense Force, composed of poorly trained and equipped Filipino forces. Wainwright’s illusions of missing World War II were shattered only a week following this arrival when Japanese air forces attacked American bases throughout the Philippine islands. Shortly after, the 14th Japanese Army under Gen. Masaharu Homma landed at Lingayen Gulf and drove to Manila. This veteran force quickly brushed aside American and Filipino resistance, and in late December, MacArthur ordered a strategic retreat into the Bataan Peninsula, which guarded the entrance to Manila Bay. Homma’s forces were pursued closely but could not prevent a masterful withdrawal by Wainwright, which enabled American defense to consolidate at Bataan. Throughout January, fierce fighting erupted with heavy losses to both sides, but the American line held. As endemic food shortages and disease mounted, the defenders referred themselves as the “Battling Bastards of Bataan.” Wainwright fought in the trenches alongside his troops and personally received a Distinguished Service Cross from MacArthur. When MacArthur was ordered to Australia by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in March 1942, Wainwright was promoted to lieutenant general to succeed him. Subordinates encouraged him to leave, but he refused. “I have been with my men from the start,” Wainwright insisted, “and if captured, I will share their lot.” However, the ensuing two-month stalemate did nothing to alleviate the supply situation, which had grown critical.

Continue Page 7

The Japanese, meanwhile, had been greatly reinforced, and in early April, they began a final assault on the rugged defenders. Allied lines began collapsing, but Wainwright managed to pull a small core of troops to the offshore land fortress of Corregidor. He then authorized Gen. Edward King to surrender 70,000 American and Filipino defenders on April 9, 1942. Bataan became the largest capitulation in American military history, and Homma immediately prepared for an all-out assault on Corregidor.

After 28 days of furious aerial and artillery bombardment, Japanese troops gained a foothold on May 5, 1942, and landed tanks ashore. Braving fierce resistance and heavy losses, they pressed the defenders back until Wainwright agreed to an unconditional surrender on May 6. "With broken heart and head bowed in sadness but not in shame," he cabled Roosevelt, "I report to Your Excellency that today I must arrange terms for surrendering the fortified islands of Manila Bay." Homma then insisted that he broadcast his surrender statement to other parts of the island, and by June 9, 1942, all resistance ceased.

Like the men of his command, Wainwright endured the horrors and hardship of Japanese internment. Repeatedly beaten and starved, he maintained his calm, dignified bearing for over three years and was transferred to a series of prison camps in northern Luzon, Formosa, and Manchuria. Wainwright had no idea how his surrender had been received at home or how it would reflect his military reputation. Fortunately, in August 1945, the Soviets declared war on Japan, and their troops subsequently liberated Wainwright from his Manchurian prison camp. He was flown to Tokyo for a tearful reunion with MacArthur and sat at his side throughout surrender ceremonies on the battleship *Missouri* on September 2, 1945. "The last surrender I attended; the shoe was on the other foot." He then returned to the Philippines and received the capitulation of Japanese forces under Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita.

After returning to the United States, Wainwright was surprised but pleased with the hero's welcome and had President Harry Truman pinned the Congressional Medal of Honor on him. He was also promoted to full general and addressed a joint session of Congress. Wainwright's memories were published in 1945, and the following year, he received command of the Fourth Army at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He retired in August 1947 to San Antonio, Texas, dying there on September 2, 1953, a symbol of dogged resistance in the face of impossible odds.

TAPS

The Walla Walla Chapter Reserve Organization of America takes a moment to pay tribute to the following members.



David T. Pearson

Major David Theodore Pearson Sr. USAF (Ret.) died at 93. Leaving behind a legacy that will be cherished. A poignant graveside service was held in Ellensburg to pay tribute to his memory. He served three years in the Navy and later attended the University of New Hampshire, thanks to the GI Bill. His dedication led him to become a sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserve. Subsequently, he enrolled in the Army ROTC and commissioned as a second lieutenant in the newly formed U.S. Air Force



Jim Barnhill

Colonel Jim E. Barnhill USA (Ret.) died In Yakima at the age 92. An Oklahoma native born April 5, 1931. He was the former Yakima Herald Republic publisher for over 47-year career. During each summer, he attended two weeks of Army Reserve training, leaving his daughter with lasting memories. After retiring, Col Barnhill developed a love for hiking and outdoor photography.



Lester W. Johnson

Major Lester "Wayne" Johnson USAF (Ret.) passed away at the age of 98. Lester was born on December 2, 1923, in Faulkton, South Dakota. The family moved to Ellensburg in 1937, where Wayne completed his junior high and high school education, graduating in 1941. Following graduation, he pursued further education at Central Washington College until he enlisted in the army. He underwent basic training in California and received flight training in Arizona. During World War II, he was stationed at Ladd Field in Fairbanks, AK,

Wreaths Across America

By SSG Chad Bro, Wreaths Across America Coordinator



Thank you for an incredible 2023

Your Sponsorship Makes a Difference

On July 4, the Walla Walla Chapter launched the 2024 Wreaths Across America program. This year, we aim to place a wreath on every veteran's grave at Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery and at Blue Mountain Memorial Gardens. We need approximately nine hundred wreaths.

We are reaching out to you, our valued members, and potential sponsors for your continued support. Every contribution, regardless of size, helps us reach our goal. Please join us in Remembering and Honoring those who served.

If you are willing to volunteer time to place the wreaths on December 14, 2024, you will be taking a moment to say their name after having placed the wreath. We strive to ensure these veterans are never forgotten.

To sponsor wreaths, follow the instructions on the last page of this newsletter.



Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery

Wreaths Across America

HOW TO BECOME A SPONSOR

There are several avenues available to become a wreath sponsor. All require a GROUP ID and a LOCATION ID. These IDs need to be included in your sponsorship process, so the right Group gets credit for the sponsorship and the wreaths arrive at the desired site.

- GROUP ID is **WA0181P** – ROA-Walla Walla Chapter (NW 021), Walla Walla, WA
- LOCATION ID is **WAFWWP** – Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery, Walla Walla, WA
- LOCATION ID is **WABMMG** - Blue Mountain Memorial Gardens, College Place, WA

Please provide the following contact information:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE: _____

SPONSORING WREATHS WITH A CHECK or MONEY ORDER

1. Make checks payable to **Wreaths Across America**
2. Mail checks to:
Terry Atchison
ROA Walla Walla Chapter Treasurer
149 Thunder Ridge Dr
Walla Walla, WA 99362-7762

SPONSORING WREATHS ON-LINE WITH A CREDIT CARD

1. Input: www.wreathscrossamerica.org/wa0181p, in the internet search box.
2. A ROA-Walla Walla Chapter (NW 021) screen will appear. Click on **SPONSOR WREATHS**.
3. Fill in circle (O) for quantity of wreaths to order.
4. Select Location to Support, by scrolling down to and clicking on
 - a. **FORT WALLA WALLA POST CEMETERY, WALLA WALLA, WA 99362** or
 - b. **BLUE MOUNTAIN MEMORIAL GARDENS, COLLEGE PLACE, WA 99324**.
5. Click on **REVIEW MY SPONSORSHIP**.
6. At this point follow directions to finish order.

Wreaths Across America and ROA Walla Walla Chapter would like to say *Thank You* for your wreath sponsorship.

Wreaths Across America is a 501(c) (3) organization.

Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. You should always consult a tax professional.