2012

Veterans Among Us

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Veterans Among Us

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Produced on behalf of the Brockport Veteran Affairs Advisory/Veterans Day Committee
From the time of the Civil War, many from the Brockport College community have served their country.

Co. A, 140th NY Infantry was raised in Brockport and included students and alumni of the college. Many served in other units as well.

The 140th played an important role at Gettysburg and many other battles.

Reenactors of the 140th NY Infantry.
Spanish American War, 1898

The “Rough Riders” at San Juan Hill.
After Brockport she went on to study nursing at the Bellevue Nursing School in New York City. When the Spanish American War began she joined the Red Cross nursing service and went to Cuba with the army.

She returned home at one point to recover from malaria and "nerve exhaustion" and then returned to serve as a nurse in the Philippines.

Pictured is a group of nurses on a ship off of Cuba.
A militia company from Brockport went into service during the war, one of whose members was Harry Burlingame, son of a popular professor at the college, Herman Burlingame, a mathematics professor, pictured at right.
World War I, 1914-1918

“Doughboys” training with a machine gun.
The WWI memorial poplars, from the 1932 Saga Yearbook

In the 1932 yearbook, Principal Alfred Thompson wrote:

"Beautiful thoughts are inspired by nature's trees. The Lombardy Poplars around the campus that lift their heads so gracefully to the sky are living memorials to the one hundred one members of our school who answered our country's call in the World War. Some of our poplars did not survive and some of our boys did not return. Beautiful thoughts these trees inspire."

These trees stood along Utica St. and the north side of Hartwell Hall up until the 1960s.
An ambulance driver in WWI, he recalled his experiences in an article in the February 1919 edition of the Stylus, including the war’s ending:

“We celebrated November 11…, everyone was everyone else’s friend and booze enough flowed to float the Maine. …who can say that there was not just the slightest feeling of regret? It meant the end of a big adventure…”
Peter D. Ricci
Grandfather of Mark Ricci, University Police Department

Age approximately 19 years old. Immigrated to the U.S. through Ellis Island in New York City.
Marvin Croom

Grandfather of Charlie Cowling,
Drake Memorial Library
Sheldon Jones
Regimental photo

Grandfather of Robin Catlin,
Drake Memorial Library
An American soldier on Guadalcanal.

World War II, 1939-1945
Lt. Cecil N. King, father-in-law of Richard Black of the Office of Design & Production, was part of the 509th Composite Group, a unit tasked with the operational deployment of nuclear weapons.

Displayed here is rare footage from Tinian Island which shows the 509th prepping the ‘Enola Gay’ and ‘Bockscar’ bombers to deliver the atomic bombs to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Footage courtesy of Richard Black.
Many from Brockport served, and after the war the returning veterans helped the school expand to unprecedented dimensions.
1945 Saga Yearbook
Before coming to Brockport as a history professor, Frank Manno was a Navy lieutenant and served as a beachmaster during the D-Day invasion, where he was one of the first officers to go ashore.
Floyd Harris
Father of Kim Myers,
Drake Memorial Library
Frank Willitts
Uncle of Bill Jolly,
Facilities and Planning Department

At Pearl Harbor.
Daniel Wierzbowski,
U.S. Navy

Grandfather of
Kenneth Wierzbowski,
Drake Memorial Library
Richard Jones
Father of Robin Catlin,
Drake Memorial Library

Kneeling at left
Vernon VanBuren
Grandfather of Sharon Chaplain,
Box Office Manager
Albert Casey

Grandfather of Erin Rickman,
Office of Student Retention
Korean War, 1950-1953

Soldier resting on a Chinese Communist bunker.
Bill Oakes, seated, served in the Navy and was present at the atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll.

Sam Platania, standing, served in the Army in Guadalcanal and other island campaigns.
Stanley Dukat

Grandfather of
Kenneth Wierzbowski,
Drake Memorial Library
A memorial page from the 1954 Saga Yearbook.
Dr. Joseph P. Winnick

c. 1955

Distinguished Service Professor, Kinesiology, Sport Studies and Physical Education
Vietnam War, 1965-1973
Richard Anderson ‘66

- Served in the Marine Corps and received the Bronze Star.

- He had played football at Brockport for three years under Coach D’Agostino.
Ken Herrmann
Vietnam, 1968-69
Associate Professor,
Department of Social Work

In the village of Hiệp Đức as an Army advisor in Vietnam
Mark Ricci
University Police Department

U.S. Army – August 1973 – August 1976
Military Police – Stationed at Fort Riley, KS
Rank SP4/Acting Sergeant

Basic Training Entry station – Fort Dix, NJ August, 1973
Byron Highland,
Gunnery Sergeant, USMC
Father of Julie Pruss,
Office of the President

KIA Feb. 1967 Vietnam
Bill Jolly
Facilities & Planning Department
Chris O’Connor
University Police Department

Gulf War
Charles Maxwell,
CDR, USN
Husband of Pat Maxwell,
Drake Memorial Library

At far right.
Julie Pruss,
Gunnery Sergeant, USMC (Ret.)
Office of the President

With Master Sergeant John Pruss, USMC (Ret.),
HQMC, 2000
Rod Brinkman
Department of Military Science

In Korea, 1993.
The Freedom Bird
The 707 bringing A1C Sharon Anderson back to the United States from Seoul, ROK in April 1991

Incentive flight for A1C Sharon Anderson at Eglin, AFB in Florida 1991

Sharon Chaplain
Box Office Manager
War on Terror, 2001-date
Kevin Lair
Facilities & Planning Department
Ryan Kelly
Iraq, Army, 10th Mtn. Division
Class of ‘06 and Husband of Sara Kelly, Residential Education
Paul Pratt,
Col.
Brother of Pam O’Sullivan,
Drake Memorial Library

At right, receiving Purple Heart.
Brandon Nunnery,
Cpl. USMC
Student,
The College at Brockport

Fallujah, Iraq

With Senator John McCain (R-AZ)
Jason Daniels,  
L.Cpl., USMC  

Son of Tracy Daniels,  
Secretary to the College Senate  
President  

Homecoming with sister Nicole Daniels, sophomore at the  
College at Brockport; mother, Tracy Daniels; sister, Megan  
Daniels; father, Steven Daniels
Daniel Kruppenbacher,
US Navy, Petty Officer First Class (E-6, CTR1)

Relation of Amy Kruppenbacher,
Office of Community Development
Jon McHugh,
AFC

Grandson of Mariangela Ardino,
Division of Academic Affairs
There was an active veteran’s group of one sort or another from the 1950s through the early 1970s, when they seem to have ended. There is a Veterans Association on campus today. Following are photos from the earlier groups, including one from the variety benefit show they did in the 1950s!
Veterans Club, 1955 Saga
The “Brockettes”

In the 1950s the Veterans Club did a variety show that toured area VA hospitals; here are the “Brockettes” at the VA in Bath in 1954.
From the 1967 Saga

Vet’s Club


1973 Saga Yearbook; there is a new Veterans Association today.