



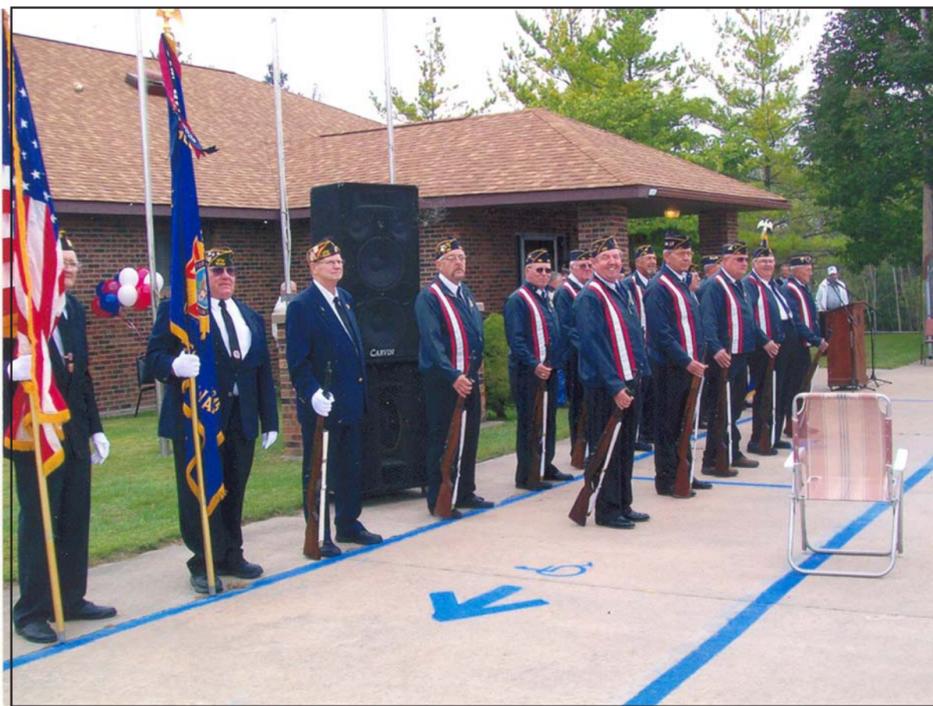
Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

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Legion to host Flag burning ceremony

American Legion Post 100 will be hosting a flag burning ceremony on Flag Day, Thursday, June 14th. The public is invited. The ceremony will start at 6 p.m. sharp, with members of Post 100 performing the ceremony. Worn and dilapidated flags have to be retired in a formal military manner, so if you have a flag to dispose of, please bring it that evening. Post 100 would like to remind the public that we do provide a flag drop off box for their convenience, and we have gathered a large number of flags because of this service. Music will be provided by the CCHS school band. Refreshments will be served after the ceremony. In case of rain, we will postpone the ceremony until June 21st, same time and location. Post 100 has a large inventory of US, MIA/POW, and state flags that can be purchased that evening. Please come and enjoy our flag burning ceremony.

Pictured are members of Columbus Junction the Allen Wright Hanft American Legion Post 100.



Briefly -

Museum to have special hours this weekend

The Columbus Community Heritage Museum at 122 E. Maple St. will be open on Saturday, June 9th from 9:00 a.m. to noon and from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The Museum will be open on Sunday, June 10 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Legion Auxiliary Blood Drive

The Columbus Junction Legion Auxiliary will host a community blood drive from 1:30 pm to 6:30 pm today, Wednesday, June 6th at American Legion Hall located at 99 Second St., Columbus Junction. To donate, please contact Tammy Martin at 319-728-2011. Walk-ins welcome! Potential donors must be at least 17 years of age (16 with parental permission form available through www.bloodcenter.org) and weigh more than 110 pounds. A photo I.D. or MVRBC Donor Card is required to donate. To schedule an appointment for donation, please call the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center at (800) 591-8049. Donors who last gave blood on or before April 10th are eligible to give blood at this drive. Blood donation is a safe, simple procedure that takes about 45 minutes to one hour. Individuals with diabetes or controlled high blood pressure may be accepted as eligible donors.

United Methodist Women to meet

The United Methodist Women will meet in the Columbus Junction United Methodist Church for a 12:30 p.m. salad luncheon today, Wednesday, June 6, 2012. Devotions – Marilyn Thomas. Guest speaker – Shirley Samuels, District Shepherdess. Hostesses – Marlys Austin, Carla Harris and Florence Harbison. Everyone bring a salad to share.

Alumni Banquet this weekend

The Columbus area Alumni Banquet will take place at Roundy Elementary School on June 9, 2012. Social Hour will begin at 5:30 p.m., and Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. Special recognition will be given to the 50-year (1962) class and the 25-year (1987) class. Put the date on your calendar now! Tickets are available at both Columbus Junction Banks.

This week at the Farmers' Market

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) will be sponsoring this week's farmers market. We are glad to have Cathy Henry, FWS Refuge Manager, representing FWS with us this Friday. Stop by her booth to learn about the different aspects of what the FWS does for our community, state, country, and what it does for hunters. Reminder, the farmers market is every Friday from 4:30 to 6:30 at the American Legion parking lot. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, homemade noodles, jams and jellies, and plants. Some vendors accept Iowa Farmers Market Nutrition, WIC, and Senior Program coupons. Buy fresh and local and taste the difference! For more information, including how to participate as a vendor or sponsor, contact Mallory Smith at 319-728-7971.

Half Hour Club to meet

The Half Hour Club will meet Tuesday, June 12, at 1:30 p.m. at Melanie's Gifts and Antiques on Main Street, Columbus Junction. Program: What do you know about that? Dorothy Allen and Janet Pretz are hostesses. Roll Call: The program I liked best through the years.

County Fair dates set

The Louisa County Fair dates for 2012 are a July 22 kick off and the fair is July 23-28.

Head Start taking applications

Head Start in Louisa County is looking for children to attend classes starting in September. Head Start not only works with children to get them ready for Kindergarten but also works closely with families to help them reach their personal goals. Children must be at least 3 years old by September 15, 2012. Head Start is a free preschool program. Transportation is provided. Applications will be taken in Wapello on June 19 at the Methodist Church and in Columbus Junction on June 12 and 26 at the Community Action office from 9-3. To schedule and appointment please call Jeanette Brockert at 319-752-5692 ext. 107.

Historical Society Tractor Ride

The Louisa County Historical Society will hold its Tractor Ride on Saturday, June 23. A registration fee of \$25 will include driver's meal at the end of the ride. Additional meals will be available for only \$10. Pre-registration is a must for meal planning. All proceeds will go to benefit the Louisa County Historical Society. For more information call Dick McCormac at 319-728-8818.

McGill/Kemp Reunion

The annual McGill/Kemp Reunion will be held at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 24th, at Academy Park in Grandview, Iowa. There will be a potluck lunch, a family picture taken, and an auction. Playground equipment is available for the children. All descendants of John Lee and Jesse Belle McGill, descendants of John's grandparents William and Elizabeth McGill and descendants of Walter Kemp are welcome. For more information, contact Rondalyn K. Weyrick, 13685 105th Street, Wapello, IA 52653; Telephone: 319-523-5252.

Morning Sun 5K Fun Run/Walk

The Morning Sun Youth League will be sponsoring the Firecracker 5K Fun Run/Walk on Sunday, July 1. The run will start at the Morning Sun Community Center at 106 N. Main. There will be a 5K run/walk; a mile run for kids 8-12 and a 1/2 mile run/walk for 7 yrs. and under. Registration will start at 7:00 a.m. with the races to start at 8:00 a.m. The fee to enter is \$15 for the 5K if registered before June 15. \$20 after June 15th. Age groups include: 12 and under; 13-19; 20-29; 30-39; 40-49; 50 and older. There will be T-shirts for all who register early. Medals will be awarded for the top 2 times in Male/Female categories. For more information or to enter contact Mike Crow at 319-868-7699 or email mcrow15@hotmail.com.

Rees Reunion scheduled

The annual John A. Rees Reunion will be held at Noon, on Saturday, June 16, 2012 at Marr Park west of Ainsworth. We will meet in the first shelter for a potluck meal. Officers are President: Jay Greene, Vice-President: Sarah Mayo, Secretary-Treasurer: Sharon Rees and Web Master: Richard Arthur. Table Committee will be Sandra Rees, chair, Megan Wheeler and Betty Gipple.

The story of Lawrence Herrick - Chapter 2

By Mary Masonholder Wilson
Gazette Staff

Dear Readers,
Two weeks ago I wrote a letter to the citizens of Letts telling about a trip I had just taken to Reungy, France with my brother, Richard Herrick and other family members. In France, we found that his father, Lawrence Herrick (originally from Letts and married to our mother) was considered a hero. Lawrence had been a pilot in World War II and was killed over this small village of Reungy while bombing a train bringing in German supplies. On May 8, 2012 Lawrence Herrick was honored at a ceremony there, which we attended.

The response we, at the Gazette, have received about this article on my mother and Lawrence Herrick has been overwhelming, and for that I am very grateful and I thank you. Thus the question has arisen, "How much of the story do I tell?" It is a very long and complicated story. Plus I notice in talking to my brother and his sons, we sometimes tend to have a "different version." This is partly because at the dinner following the ceremony, there were 16 witnesses to the explosion of Lawrence's plane (Isn't it amazing they are still alive!) and what happened with his body, etc. Of course the witnesses all spoke in French, their stories didn't always agree, and we were dealing with translators. (I now know the meaning of "lost in translation".)

Talking to John Carpenter, my editor, today, I asked him this very question: "John, how much of this story should we tell?" He answered, "All of it." Thus I am sitting at my computer asking myself, "Where do I begin?" In my first article, I told you about my mother, Jeannette Helmick, meeting Lawrence and marrying him, and being left with two baby boys upon his death in the war. The next part of the story should go back and pick up Lawrence leaving the USA and my mother and going to Europe and what he did in the war.

I have decided, indeed, that this will be the next feature article in the story. However, I need to do some research on this first so that hopefully I will get it "right." At least MY version of "RIGHT." Consequently, I will need some extra time. Also I will be printing each segment as a chapter that will appear from time to time in this newspaper.

I do think there is some information I should give you today, though. This is a little bit more about how my brother got connected with the people of Reungy, France and found out about his father's crash, death, and what happened af-

terwards. I want to tell you this, because as I mentioned in my last article, we are very blessed to have found out all this information on Lawrence Herrick. How many families who lost loved ones in any war never find out anything? It is so sad—not only because they don't know what happened, but they too cannot feel the pride that we have been given now because we know all that occurred on that day and the days following. (At least we have 16 different versions!)

Here are the "steps" my brother, Richard Herrick used as he tried to find information. He knew his father had been part of the 370th Fighter Group, and in 2005 he went to a "Reunion of Pilots in World War II" held in Tennessee. There he met people who had known his father and got some names. He also got a book called *The 370th Fighter Group in World War II* by Jay Jones, copyright 2003. He even had some of the pilots there, who were pictured in the book, autograph it. The book's author, Jay Jones's, grandfather had been a member of this fighter group.

While reading this book, Rich found out about a family who wanted to know more about a relative of theirs who had crashed in the war, and they had contacted a group called **Forced Landing**. My brother then got on the internet to see what he could find out about this group. He found it right away, and he started to communicate with a man of this group named Jean Pierre. My brother then told Pierre that he knew the crash was in Reungy, France, and he had a letter from a woman doctor who had been called to the crash site of Lawrence. She had cut a lock of Lawrence's hair and sent it to our mother. (More on this in another chapter.) Rich copied this letter and sent it to Jean Pierre, so he had something else to work with. At first Pierre reported that he could find nothing on Lawrence Herrick and the doctor's name was not registered and was of no hope. However, later he replied that he had found Reungy, France (evidentially there was more than one) where Lawrence had been killed and there was indeed a very old sanatorium there.

Now the story changes for a minute. There was a 16-year-old young man in Reungy, France who was very interested in the history of his town and had started a blog: His name, Guillaume Metayer. Jean Pierre discovered this blog and told Guillaume he was trying to find out information on a soldier who had been killed in this town during World War II. Guillaume now connected Jean Pierre to a man in his village named Daniel Sellier. Sellier had been born and raised in Reungy, remembered hearing the stories of Lawrence, and also Sellier had worked in aviation all his life and was therefore interested in the story. Sellier, in France, started asking about the story of Lawrence Herrick, a downed World War II pilot, and all sorts of information started to be told. Sellier also started emailing Richard Herrick in Columbus Junction and

each of them began telling the other "what they knew" about Lawrence Herrick. This was the fall of 2011.

In no time, Richard had an interest in going to Reungy, France, and much later Daniel suggested that he come in May as on May 8th, France had a celebration much like our Memorial Day, and Sellier would like someone from Lawrence's family to come to that ceremony. In the end, eight family members went, and little did we know all the information we would find and that we would be part of the ceremony, and a plaque in the town square would be unveiled in honor of Lawrence Herrick. Once again, we were indeed fortunate for this wonderful event.

This story is growing everyday. As of this week, the French people are reading my articles in the Gazette over there. (Of course the front page is all that is posted.) I am getting more emails from them that they love the story.

Then, too, Guillaume Metayer, has added the story of "La Famille Herrick" to his blog over there. If you would like to check his blog, it is: <http://reungy-neuille.blogspot.fr>. There is also much information about the village on the blog. Of course it is written in French; however, the pictures practically speak for themselves.

Much thanks must also be given to the Forced Landing website. Without them the connection never would have been made, we would never have known about Lawrence in the war, and we would never have attended the wonderful ceremony in Reungy, France. The people of Reungy will be our friends forever. Daniel Sellier writes that even after we have left, more information and more airplane pieces are still coming. It is indeed a miracle. Forced Landing has now also done a complete

Trip is planned for Louisa County Viet Nam Veterans to see the Memorial Wall in Washington D.C.

A trip to Washington, D.C. is planned for this fall, November 9th - 11th for all Louisa County area Viet Nam Veterans. The primary focus of the trip will be to see the Viet Nam Memorial, as well as other major monuments and memorials. All Louisa County Veterans and their spouses are eligible for the trip. The trip is called the "Welcome Home Tour" due to the fact that many Viet Nam Veterans never received a welcome home or thank you for their service and sacrifice for our country. A highlight of the trip is that we have been approved to do a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier during the Changing of the Guard Ceremony. We will have a bus dedicated to our group as well as a licensed Washington D.C. guide each day. Each veteran is responsible for the cost of the trip, but we are raising money for the round trip by chartered bus to and from the airport in Chicago. Essentially all costs associated with the trip are included in the trip price. The trip price is dependent upon the number of vets going, but should be less than \$900.00 per person. June 20th is the due date for the first payment of \$200, with subsequent payments at later dates, so if you decide to go, make sure to get your first payment in on time. If you have questions, call Brian Cummings, 319-850-2258; Jerry Murphy, 319-212-0307; or Dick Grimm, 319-850-0903. Many area vets have not had a chance to see Viet Nam Memorial and this will be a trip they will never forget. Due to the response that many vets received when they returned from Viet Nam, this trip, specifically visiting the wall, may have a therapeutic/healing effect.

Don't miss out on this great trip with fellow Viet Nam Veterans.



This is the plaque dedicated to Major Lawrence Herrick in Reungy, France on May 8, 2012. The plaque is located amidst the flowers in their town square at the base of their town monolith: How symbolic that the next morning a poppy was drooping over it.

book on Lawrence Herrick. It is amazing what they have put together.

And so, dear Readers, I hope you enjoy the chapters ahead on Lawrence Herrick. Most of all I hope this story encourages you, if you have a lost war loved one, try to research what happened to them. There are many organizations now that can and will do this. We have already learned that Forced Landing is looking for another family who has been told of our experience and the wonderful ceremony that we attended in the honor of Major Lawrence Herrick. I hope this family has as wonderful of an experience as we have had.

Until the next chapter,

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www.thecolumbusgazette.com

