



Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

Vol. 126 No. 41

Sam and Emily Bell

Sam and Betty J. (Emily) Bell have long been committed to the city of Columbus Junction. Sam, having been a life long resident, graduated from Columbus Community Schools in 1966. He then went on to pursue his college degree from Simpson College in Indianola, graduating in 1970. He was employed at Peoples National Bank from March 1, 1971, retiring on April 30, 2012. Sam has given of his time and talents in many aspects of the community. He is currently the finance officer for the American Legion. Sam's previous commitments have included: Past president of Community Club, Louisa County Board of Health Director, Louisa County Compensation Board member, member Louisa Development group, member Columbus Development Group, and Park Commis-

sioner. Sam is a member of the United Presbyterian Church. Sam reports his hobbies include hunting and fishing. He has proudly completed seventeen RAGBRAIS.

Sam and Emily were married in August of 1974. They have no children. They do have a cat named Willie.

Emily, a native of Lansing, Iowa, has dedicated thirty-nine and a half years of her life as an educator, spending thirty-seven of those years teaching at L & M School. Emily's accomplishments in the community include: Parish Council member at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Religious Education instructor at St. Joseph's for twenty-three years, Trustee at St. Joseph's Church, Altar and Rosary Treasurer, Library board member, member of the Civic Center Board, member of Chapter CX PEO, and



past president of the United Fund. The community of Columbus Junction is proud to have such dedicated and loyal citizens and they are very deserving of this honor.

Marvin and Verlinda Prior



Marv and Verlinda Prior have been active in the Columbus Junction community for many years. Marv retired after 32 years at the Columbus Junction State Bank. He has served on the Cedarcrest Board of Directors, Cemetery Board, Meals on Wheels, C.J. Youth Council, Habitat for Humanity, Community Club, Men's Bowling Association (in various capacities), American Legion (currently Commander), and volunteered at Roundy, assisting children in both reading and math.

Verlinda worked at Modine Manufacturing in Washington for 27 years before retiring. She has worked for the Columbus School District for the past 6 years. She has served on the Columbus City council, Cedarcrest Board, Columbus Junction Women's Bowling Association, as well as serving on the Board of Directors for relay for Life, Golf for Cancer, C.J. Youth Council, and the American Legion Auxiliary. She plays a drum with Beat for Peace.

Marv and Verlinda have six children and spouses. They have eighteen wonderful grandchildren.

Marv continues to enjoy bowling. Both he and Verlinda enjoy boating, fishing, spending time with friends and family, and camping at their "slice of heaven" on the river.

Congratulations to Marv and Verlinda for their dedication to our community.

Al and Dianne Bohling

Dianne and Al Bohling have been committed to our community for many years.

Dianne worked in the Columbus Community Schools, I-Jag, and Muscatine Community College for a period of 24 years. She has volunteered in various capacities, being a member of several boards; such as the Community Development Board, Director of the Louisa County Ambulance Board, Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation committee member, and a Wildcats First Group member.

Al is a registered landscape architect in both Iowa and Illinois. He has worked at Shive-Hattery Architecture-Engineering for sixteen and a half years, and had also worked for Hansen Lind Meyer Inc. for ten

years. He has volunteered with and has been a member of the following boards: Louisa County Conservation, Mississippi River Parkway Commission, Iowa Board of Landscape Architectural Examiner, Iowa Delegate to the Council of Landscape Registration, National Landscape Architectural Registration Exam Writer, has been a University of Iowa Guest Lecturer, as well as Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation Co-Founder and President., and Al is a member of the Louisa County Vietnam Veteran's Association.

Al and Dianne's hobbies include boating, fishing, traveling, and spending time with family and friends. Thanks to Al and Dianne for their dedication to our community.



The Finale: The Story of Lawrence Herrick

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

I cannot end the story of Lawrence Herrick without sharing with you two selections. One is the content of the letter sent to my mother, Jeannette Helmick Herrick from the lady doctor of the sanatorium who ran to Lawrence's body. It is this letter that allowed my brother, Richard Herrick, to help **Forced Landing** connect with the Reugny, France where his father was killed. The other selection is the speech given by the Mayor of Reugny at the ceremony given on May 8th, 2012.

As told earlier, a lady doctor of the sanatorium ran through the timber to Lawrence Herrick's body after hearing the explosion. She found there was nothing to be done, as the young pilot was already dead. She then cut a lock of his hair and sent this letter and the lock to my mother, Jeannette Helmick Herrick. The letter arrived after my mother had been notified by the military of Lawrence's death. The letter reads:

Launay, November 11, 1944 Madame, On the 5th of August a plane exploded in flight. I am a doctor and I left my work to go and see if I could be of service. Alas! When I arrived at the site where the plane fell, there was nothing to be done for your poor husband. With another of my patients, we moved your husband's body out of the sun, and for you I cut this lock of hair. I hope that this souvenir will please you, dear little Madam. I realize you may well be quite young, for your husband was only 23 years old. If that is of any comfort to you, I can assure you that he did not suffer. From now on, he lies in a small country cemetery. His tomb is always full of flowers. I often go and visit him, staying there praying for a while. At the time speaking, the American flags are flapping in the wind and your husband is being paid a great deal of visits. . . You might have well been informed, that Reugny, the village where the accident took place, this very crash that has taken the life of your husband, went through a real tragedy. Indeed, the German authorities, being persuaded that one soldier had survived, required the native people to denounce him; otherwise 20 hostages would be shot down 24 hours later. We went through a good deal of difficulties to search after and get a model of

the plane, in order to prove that the aircraft was a single-seater one. Nowadays everything is in order but we lived a tragic night during which many mothers, sisters, and wives trembled for their men. I finish, dear Lady, in wishing you courage, my thoughts go out to you often with all my sympathy. Write to me, this would give me great pleasure. My patient who helped me the morning of August 5th asks me to send his most respectful memories and as for me, I take your hand warmly. Doctor Lucie Dezderli, Sanatorium of Launay.

Sad as this letter is and sad as it must have been for my mother, how wonderful that Doctor Dezderli sent Jeannette Herrick this letter and a lock of hair to remember her lost husband. How many war widows lost their loved ones and never knew what became of them? I have been asked, "Would a man doctor have done this?" I cannot answer this question. I just know that Doctor Dezderli must have been a very caring and thoughtful woman, and I'm sure it helped that she was not a war doctor, but rather a doctor at a sanatorium where many women went to recuperate. This, too, probably made her more perceptive into thinking about a young woman who had just lost her husband. I now know that my mother was very blessed to receive this letter. Also we would not have made connections with Reugny, France this past year without this letter.

This thought brings us to the ceremony in honor of Major Lawrence Herrick held on May 8, 2012 in the town square of Reugny, France, right in front of the church where Lawrence's body had been kept for a few years. I would like to share with you the "Tribute speech of Bernard Bardin, Mayor of Reugny" which he delivered at the ceremony. I share this speech with you not just to praise Major Herrick, but more so that all veterans from here and everywhere can see the gratitude war-torn people feel for our troops who come to save them. Here is the letter.

Dear members of the Herrick family,

You have come a long distance to join us on this day of remembrance. It is an honor for us to welcome you to this ceremony in memory of Major Lawrence Herrick. On behalf of the residents of Reugny, I extend to you a most cordial welcome. I can assure you that we will do everything possible to see that your stay with us is most pleasant and that it meets all your expectations.

On August 5, 1944, Lawrence as you call him, is killed in an explosion of his P-38 LIGHTNING while flying over the community of Reugny.

Major Herrick was born January 20, 1920 to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Herrick, of Letts, Iowa and on the day of this tragedy, he is only 24 years old. In addition to his parents, he leaves his bereaved wife, Jeannette, and his sons Lanny and Richard; the latter having been born 3 weeks after the death of his father. He also leaves in mourning his two sisters, Harriett and Miriam.

Major Herrick enlists in the American Air Force in December 1940. He is deployed to England in 1943 with the 370th Bomber Group, he being the leader of the 485th squadron with a rank of major.

From May 1944, Major Herrick participates in bombing missions over France. In June 1944 he is credited with bringing down a German Messerschmitt 109. Major Herrick will carry out 48 combat missions between May and the fateful August 5th 1944.

On Saturday, the 5th of August 1944 Major Herrick takes off from the airfield at Cardonville near Caen, Normandy, in the company of 3 squadrons, for a mission that will take them from Chartres to Saumur. Near the train station at Crotelles, he strafes a locomotive traveling in the direction of the viaduct of Villedomer. He hits his target; the boiler of the locomotive explodes. After making a loop to the left in the direction of Reugny, his wingman, 1st LT Quinlan, sees his leader's plane explode in flight. A number of inhabitants of Reugny and surrounding communities witness the explosion and hurry to the scene. Several of those witnesses are here with us today.

The evidence shows that the pilot did not survive this terrible accident.

In spite of the German occupation, the inhabitants of Reugny want to offer Major Lawrence Herrick a burial befitting a soldier killed in the line of duty for the liberation of France. The Germans oppose this and demand that the burial be carried out without a ceremony.

They hadn't counted on the courage of a retired French Army officer, Monsieur Plancke, who, in full view of a German officer, risks his life by marching into the cemetery and carrying out military honors to the soldier, Lawrence Herrick, who gave his life defending France.

Today the residents of Reugny

and the surrounding communities, as well as witnesses, who have come from across France, render homage to Major Lawrence Herrick. This is also an occasion for the people of France to pay homage to all the women and men of the allied forces who gave their lives so that our country could again be free. We would like to say that we have not forgotten the tremendous sacrifice made by Major Herrick and his family. It is always present in our memories. No, we have not forgotten. We will never forget!

Dear members of the Herrick family, in a few moments we are going to unveil a commemorative plaque in the honor of Lawrence. His memory will rest forever engraved so that generations to come will know that a young American pilot fought, right here, for our liberty, at the sacrifice of his own life.

Long live the United States!
Long live France!

In our American Legion here in Columbus Junction, Iowa, there is a mural that says, "Freedom is not free." From my trip to France and the ceremony, I saw and heard first hand the former suffering of some of these witnesses and people, and I think for the first time in my life, I really realized that indeed FREEDOM IS NOT FREE. I thank ALL of you veterans from the bottom of my heart for my freedom. I also now know how very fortunate my family is to have found out this information about Lawrence Herrick and to know how carefully the people of Reugny took care of him.

We also are still in amazement at the wonderful ceremony and events of our May trip to Reugny, France. To Mayor Bernard Bardin, City Council Members and townspeople, Axelle Trehin and her husband, Guillaume Metayer, Forced Landing Association, Mary Porter, the schoolchildren, and a host of others too numerous to name, we cannot thank you enough. It was indeed moments in our lives. And to Daniel Sellier and his lovely wife Daniel Sellier, and of course Edmond, "Ma Coeur est votre Coeur."

To my readers, thank you for all the comments on what this story has meant to you. To the people of Letts, your quiet cemetery shall forever be the resting place of Major Lawrence Herrick. Also, thank you to all the veterans who opened up to me to share your war stories. To everyone, we are all in this world together. May we live it in peace and love. God Bless.

Briefly -

Beat for Peace Fundraiser

The Beat For Peace is trying to fundraise for our trip to St. Louis to perform. Our expenses are busing, hotel and food. We will perform downtown for the Columbus Day celebration at 11:00 AM under the viaduct - where we usually perform. We will make an appeal for assistance there at that time. We are also working with the Roundy Parent Night committee and providing a Tostada Dinner Night on October 23rd to help raise money for our trip. The Tostada Dinner will be \$5.00 a plate. Many of our BFP parents have donated food and supplies so that any money we raise will go for the group. More donations are always welcome. You may contact Griselda Cuellar if you wish to donate food for the dinner.

Book signing by Christal Arthur

On Saturday, October 13, 2012, there will be a Columbus Day book signing by Christal Arthur for her book, Overdrawn, A Tale of Tax Season. The signing will be located between Northwestern Mutual and Schweitzer and Wink Law Office.

Lions Club Breakfast

The Columbus Junction Lions Club will serve an All-You-Can-Eat Sausage Gravy and Biscuit Breakfast (which includes honey, jam, coffee, milk and juice) on Saturday, October 13, Columbus Day, at the Columbus Community Senior Center from 7:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. Cost will be: Adults \$5.00 and Children under 12 years \$2.00. Net proceeds will be donated to the Great Beginnings Pre-School and Colonel's Kids Childcare Center.

Jack Cecil Memorial Car Show

The 2nd Annual Jack Cecil Columbus Day Car Show will be held on Saturday, October 13th from 8-noon. Registration ends at 10 with awards at 11:15. Bring your hot rod, custom, muscle or classic car or truck, even motorcycle to join in raising money for a local family impacted by cancer. This is held in conjunction with the Columbus Day Celebration. Come join the festivities, join in the parade after and have fun with the crowd. We are asking a \$20 entry donation to help raise funds. Top 25 awards, Best of Show, special awards also. Door prizes are being sought. For more information contact Curt Larkin 641-990-4436 or curt.larkin@johnston.k12.ia.us. Special invite to the class of '82 to bring out your special rides and relive some of the "high school" spirit during your reunion!

Columbus Day petting zoo

The Columbus FFA will be hosting a petting zoo Saturday, October 13th during the Columbus Day celebration. This year, the petting zoo will be held at the Louisa County Veterinarian Clinic and not under the viaduct, as in years past. The petting zoo will be from 8:30 to noon. All ages are invited to stop by and learn about livestock.

Columbus Day Tractor Show

Columbus Junction's Columbus Day is October 13th. The antique tractors and engines show will be at the north end of Main Street. We will start registering them at 8 a.m. and want them all in place by 9 a.m. They will be on display until noon, at which time they will be moving to the high school for the parade line up. Any questions, please call Lee or Carol Foster at 319-728-5648 days and 319-728-2903 in the evenings. Hope you see you there with your tractors and machinery.

Conesville UMC fall supper

The Conesville United Methodist Church will be having their annual fall supper on Thursday, October 11th at the Conesville Community Center. The menu includes: hamballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, chicken and noodles, green beans, salads, rolls, pies and cakes, and beverages. Serving begins at 5 p.m. There will be a free will offering.

Brieflies continue on page 2

