

The repatriation and burial of PFC Randolph Allen, missing in action from WWII, the result of nine years of privately funded research and field work by History Flight Tarawa Recovery Project

WASHINGTON (DC), July 26, 2014 – History Flight is pleased to acknowledge the funeral of PFC Randolph Allen, USMC, at Arlington National Cemetery Tuesday, July 29, at 11 a.m. The remains of Pfc Allen were recovered by History Flight during the last 18 months of History Flight excavation work on Tarawa, that resulted in the in situ recovery of over 13,000 American bones from fallen U.S. Marines that were systematically recovered using systematic and thoroughly documented forensic archaeological techniques. These remains may be helpful to identify potentially dozens of the missing 539 U.S. marines still unaccounted for from the Battle of Tarawa.

The History Flight Tarawa Recovery Project is the culmination of nine years of research and field work and over a million dollars of privately raised funding, that has recovered a minimum number of American individuals totaling 110 on Tarawa.

PFC Randolph Allen, 344151, USMC, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, perished on Nov. 20, 1943 during the Operation Galvanic USMC assault of Betio Island, Tarawa Atoll. Operation Galvanic, the seizure of the Japanese held Gilbert Islands in November 1943, was the largest operation of the Pacific war to date. Seventeen US Naval Carriers and hundreds of supporting ships delivered the 2nd Marine Division onto Tarawa Atoll and they captured the island in 76 hours from 5,000 Japanese soldiers and Korean laborers. Between 1,027 and 1,203 Marines and Sailors lost their lives in the invasion and between 514 and 539 of them remain unaccounted for today.

PFC Randolph Allen was identified by The Dept. of Defense's Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), who completed this excellent identification in less than six months.

Because there are 74,000 missing service personnel from WWII and 539 missing from Tarawa, DNA samples from the relatives of the missing are urgently needed to complete the identification process. Relatives of the missing men are urged to contact the casualty office of the branch of service they served in – or contact History Flight at (888) 743-3311 or historyflightinfo@gmail.com – for instructions on how to submit a DNA sample.



PFC Randolph Allen, USMC

The success of the project is the result of nine years of hard work by volunteer and paid staff, the generosity of three remarkable anonymous donors and a positive collaboration between History Flight and the Dept. of Defense's Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command.

According to Johnie Webb, JPAC's Deputy to the Commander for External Relations, "JPAC is appreciative of History Flight's diligent and successful recoveries of missing Americans from the Battle of Tarawa."

"The History Flight/JPAC collaboration on Tarawa has laid the foundation for present and future success in recovering American service personnel and it has leveraged NGO assets and skill sets that have enhanced the number of recoveries per year and will continue to do so for years to come," states History Flight Director Mark Noah

On Monday, July 28, at 6:30 p.m., former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge is hosting an invitational reception for the Allen family at the National Press Club, 529 14th St. NW, Washington DC. The program will include an overview on the History Flight MIA Recovery Project.

The burial service, which is open to the public, is scheduled for Tuesday, July 29, beginning at 11 a.m. at Arlington National Cemetery, Fort Myer, Arlington VA. Those attending should meet at the administration building at the cemetery's main entrance no later than 10:30 a.m.

Members of the public who wish to attend the Press Club presentation should contact History Flight at (888) 743-3311 or email historyflightreception@gmail.com.