During our 2019 reunion, we remembered the 75th anniversary of D-Day, the single most pivotal day in World War II.

In the early hours of June 6, 1944, Allied forces launched greatest combination of sea, land and air power in history headed for Normandy. Overhead, twelve hundred planes launched an airborne assault, preparing five thousand ships to land on the beaches.

It was an all-or-nothing mission. Out of the 160,000 troops and 13,000 paratroopers who landed on D-Day, 73,000 were Americans. Five thousand died on the beaches, most in the first few hours.

Lawrence Blood
(retired Geronimo)

Lawrence and his wife Lori made the “trip of a lifetime” and were able to observe and participate in the 75th Anniversary of D-Day. During their travels and touring, they bumped into two active duty Geronimo’s from 1-509th IN (ABN)! Would you believe that this chance meeting happened in Sainte-Mère-Église.... At the beer tent?!
As the newly elected President, it is my absolute honor to represent the best Airborne Association in the world! This year has seen significant change for the 509th Parachute Infantry Association and I am extremely happy to be part of everything we’re doing.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Jaime Garza for the many years that he served as President of the 509th PIA! Your steadfast leadership style ensured that the Association is stronger and “healthier” than it has been for decades.

Well-done Brother!

Sadly, Don McElroy decided to step down as our Vice President. This was completely unexpected, but the years of energy he dedicated to our organization were humbling! “Mac” brought incredible motivation and character to everything he touched. Thank you Brother, you will be missed!

Additionally, on behalf of our members, I’d like to thank Mrs. Margot Handscomb for her many years of dedicated service to the Association, as our Secretary and Newsletter Editor. Margo was always very focused and “no-nonsense” in her approach, which is just what a group of crazy Paratroopers needed!

Finally, a very special “Thank You” to Mr. John Eaves! In recent years, John stepped up and managed the Membership Secretary duties, ran the 509th PIA Store, AND is still an integral part of our Reunion Planner team! Without John’s dedication and efforts, we would not be the Association that we are today - Thank You Sir!

During our 2019 reunion in Fort Smith, Arkansas, a number of Executive Committee positions had to be filled. I am very proud to introduce our members that have been newly elected (or formalized) into those positions:

Vice President: Henry Hyde
Secretary & Newsletter Editor: Mrs. Sheila Hyde
Membership Secretary: Mrs. Joyce Hegeman
Sergeant-at-Arms: Philip Handscomb
Trustee: Eric Luneau
Trustee: SPC Rogelio “Rudy” Urrutia

I am positive that they will all do a fantastic job and represent the Association at the highest level possible – Congratulations to them all!

As you will read in this newsletter, the 509th PIA has been busy supporting our members and our active duty Battalions. The 1-509th IN (ABN) at Fort Polk, Louisiana and the 3-509th IN (ABN) at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (Anchorage), Alaska have both been incredibly busy, as you would imagine. Also, if you feel there is something missing from the newsletter, please contact us and let us know how it can be improved.

Lastly, I want to thank every one of you, our 509th family, for continuing to support the 509th Parachute Infantry Association! It is because of you, that we are able to perpetuate the esprit de corps, lineage, and honor of the 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

=AMERICA’S FIRST COMBAT PARATROOPERS=
Airborne All The Way – GERONIMO!

Kevin E. Boatman
President, 509th Parachute Infantry Association
The new Executive Committee would like to express our sincere gratitude to the previous officers who have stepped down:

- Jaime Garza, Jr., President
- Don McElroy, Vice President
- Margo Handscomb, Secretary
- John Eaves, Membership Secretary

Thank you all for your time, efforts, and dedication to the Association!
CONGRATULATIONS!

to our
509th Infantry ‘Distinguished Members of the Regiment’ - 2019 Inductees

MSG Charles E. Hosking Jr.
(May 12, 1924 - March 21, 1967)
Click below for Bio:
https://509thgeronimo.org/soldierhoskingce/soldierhoskingce.html

SPC Gabriel D. Conde
(November 2, 1995 - April 30, 2018)
Click below for Bio:

LTC Roy Tisdale
(April 9, 1970 - June 28, 2012)
Click below for Bio:
https://509thgeronimo.org/association/dmortisdaleroy/dmortisdaleroy.html

COL Matthew Tackett
Click below for Bio:
https://509thgeronimo.org/association/dmortackettmatthew/dmortackettmatthew.html

CSM Quint F. Pospisil
Click below for Bio:
https://509thgeronimo.org/association/dmorpospisilquint/dmorpospisilquint.html

COL (Ret) Stephen Sittnick
Click below for Bio:
https://509thgeronimo.org/association/dmorsittnickstephen/dmorsittnickstephen.html
CONGRATULATIONS!
to our
509th Infantry ‘Order of Geronimo’ - 2019 Inductee

Mark Jernigan

Early in his life, Mark served in the U.S. Army as a “Black Hat” Jumpmaster with the 8th Infantry Division (Airborne) Jump School in West Germany. He is also a Vietnam Veteran that served his country with incredible honor and integrity!

Mark has volunteered as an officer of the 509th PIA over the years in various rolls. These included: Trustee and Membership Secretary. As with everything he does in life, he brought pride, energy and undying commitment!

We are proud of all his accomplishments throughout his life and honored to call him “Brother”!

GERONIMO!!

2019 509th PIA Reunion
Fort Smith, Arkansas!
Check out more photos from the reunion on our 509th Parachute Infantry Association Facebook Group:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/509thgeronimo.org/

Mr. Mark Jernigan accepting the Order of Geronimo!
(Left to Right: Mark Jernigan, Kevin Boatman, Lee Barber, John Reitzell, Henry Hyde)
Thank you to our Guest Speaker
COL (Ret.) John Reitzell!

COL (Ret.) John Reitzell (DMoR)

John Reitzell served in the U.S. Army for 28 years, with assignments in the 82nd Airborne, the 4th Infantry Division, the 2nd Infantry Division and the 2nd Armored Divisions, November Company Rangers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade and commanded the famed 1st Battalion 509th Parachute Infantry and is in that unit's Hall of Fame.

His assignments began at the platoon leader level and increased in responsibility through Brigade Command. He commanded two Infantry Battalions of over 700 Soldiers and a Brigade of over 2,500. In combat Col. Reitzell served as a commander in Light Infantry, Parachute Infantry, and Ranger Infantry. He served as the aide-de-camp for the Commander of the 2nd Armored Division, MG George Patton IV. After a tour at the United States Air Force Academy as 'the Army guy' where he was the Officer in Charge of the United States Air Force Parachute Team, The Wings Of Blue, Col. Reitzell spent 1982-83 in Korea as the operations officer of the 'Frontline Brigade' on the DMZ.

What followed were multiple years in ‘black’ Special Ops at Ft. Bragg, where he deployed on 36 'real world' operations in support of the US Counter Terrorism mission. Operations such as the invasion of Grenada, the response to the hijacking of TWA 847 and the seizing of the cruise ship Achille Lauro by terrorists are examples of these missions. Tom Clancy chronicles Col. Reitzell's participation in the Achille Lauro response in the ‘Chase’ Chapter of his book "Shadow Warriors". New York Times best selling author W.E.B. Griffin has dedicated his series of "Presidential Agent" novels on the rising threat of terrorism.

Col. Reitzell retired in 1997 as the Chief of Staff of the United States Army Infantry School at Ft. Benning, and was inducted into the Madison County, Alabama Hall of Heroes in 2003.

Col. Reitzell and his wife, Glenda, live in Huntsville.

Hall of Heroes: COL (Ret.) John Reitzell
Price of Freedom Oral History Series Sponsored by the Madison County Military Heritage Commission

Interview [length ~53:04] - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPCzD1DVt_U
COL (Ret.) Don Loftis (DMoR)

Don Loftis served in the U.S. Army for 27 years, from 1968 to 1994 and retired as a Colonel of Infantry. He entered the US Army in 1968 and earned his commission through OCS at Fort Benning, GA. He served a combat tour in Vietnam and Cambodia as the Battalion Senior Advisor for a Vietnamese Infantry Battalion.

During the Cold War, he served as a Rifle Company Commander and the Battalion Intelligence Officer in the 3rd Battalion 6th Infantry in West Berlin. Later he was an Infantry battalion S3 and XO for the 1st Battalion 23d Infantry in the Korean DMZ. He commanded the 4th Battalion, 23d Infantry in the 9th Infantry Division, and then commanded the OPFOR (1st Battalion 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment) for the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC).

As a Colonel, he commanded the U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground and concluded his Army career in 1994 as the Deputy Commander of the US Army Test and Evaluation Command.

Upon retirement in 1994, Col. (Ret) Loftis worked for the defense contractors-BDM, TRW and SAIC He was a Vice President for BDM. He retired from SAIC in 2011 and still consults for various DOD R&D firms.

Don was a chapter President for the Association of the US Army (AUSA) and was on the AUSA National Board of Advisors. He is also a life member of the local Military Officers Association of America, 82d Airborne Association, the Army Ranger Association and is a life member of the 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association.

Col. Loftis graduated from UTEP in 1968 and Kansas State (MS/Computer Science) in 1983. He is a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College, the Defense Systems Management College and the US Army War College. In September 1998, he was inducted into the US Army OCS Hall of Fame.

Col. Loftis and his wife, Donna, live in Albuquerque.

New Mexico & the Vietnam War: Portrait of a Generation

Video Interview Clips of COL (Ret.) Don Loftis

Clip #1 [length ~4:03] - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lumD5Ksa3Ug
Clip #2 [length ~1:50] - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7H-UwO0R4uA
Clip #3 [length ~1:32] - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tTVVi2hm0
Clip #4 [length ~3:35] - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3bZxCdVs6M
Clip #5 [length ~2:22] - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3URnz_hgPE
Clip #6 (Agent Orange) [length ~1:11] - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBCCMnGRsDA

Thank you to COL (Ret.) Don Loftis for providing an incredible 75th Anniversary of D-Day Memorial Presentation!
Reunion 2019, held in Fort Smith, Arkansas, was a huge success with about 90 attendees despite the area flood warnings! Fort Smith was high and dry. Thank you to June, John, Ernie, & Sheila - with Housman & Associates, for making our reunion a memorable one! A fantastic job as always.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO DONATED ITEMS TO MAKE THE RAFFLES AND AUCTION A GREAT SUCCESS!

The executive committee and the membership invite you to attend the 2020 reunion, to be held at either:

(1) West Point, New York
   or
(1) Boston, Massachusetts

*Dates are still being worked out by our Reunion Planners! The membership voted to postpone the Ft. Bragg location until 2021, so that the reunion could be held as close as possible to Charlie Audet’s home! As an original WWII 509ther, we want to try and include him at the next reunion.

**The 2021 reunion location will be: Ft. Bragg, NC! This was determined by membership vote.
SPC Rogelio Urrutia (active duty), 1-509th IN (ABN) OPFOR, Ft. Polk, LA, happily holding his new "TORCH", 2019 Limited Edition .224 Valkyrie Rifle that he won as a raffle item! This weapon was created by Ryan Morgan at Airborne Arms, LLC (509th Veteran). This incredible rifle was purchased by retired CSM Doug Maddi and donated to the 509th PIA for the raffle! Your generosity is off the charts Doug! All proceeds go the 509th PIA!

John R. Buck - Custom Handcrafted Knife, by Jim Kober (509th Veteran). All proceeds from this item will be donated to the Children of Fallen Patriots! Thank you Jim, you represent the 509th on a level that we all aspire to!
PHOTOS FROM THE 2019 REUNION!

WWII 509ther’s represented by Ms. Ernestine Dellaca & Mr. Lloyd
MORE PHOTOS FROM THE 2019 REUNION!
MORE PHOTOS FROM THE 2019 REUNION!
MORE PHOTOS FROM THE 2019 REUNION!
1-509th IN (ABN), OPFOR, Fort Polk, Louisiana

1st BN (ABN) 509th IN prepare to jump into the Rotational Training Exercise as the opposing force at the Joint Readiness Training Center. Geronimo’s play the role of enemy forces to provide training and situation to light infantry and special operations forces while operating in combat conditions.

Paratroopers assigned to 1st Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, conduct M67 fragmentation grenade live-fire training at Fort Polk, LA. To maintain a safe instructional environment and enforce safety standards, a ‘pl’ non-commissioned officer supervised the Soldiers who were conducting the training in the grenade pits, directing them on proper handling and use of explosives. The fragmentation hand grenade has a lethal radius of five meters and can produce casualties up to 15 meters, dispersing fragments as far as 230 meters.

The Bn has also conducted several other recent major training events that include: Engineer’s demo range, multiple small arms ranges, a Carl Gustaf (lightweight, recoilless rifle that uses a wide range of ammunition, which makes it extremely flexible and suitable in a wide variety of roles) range, and live fires through squad level.

1st Battalion, 509th Airborne Infantry Regiment Ball and DCMR Ceremony.

Left COL (ret) Randy Harris, Guest Speaker and former DCMR recipient.
Paratroopers in 1st Battalion, 509th Airborne Infantry Regiment are among more than five nations in the Normandy, France region to honor the "greatest generation" this week.

The commemoration includes music, parades, and memorial services. The Fort Polk group will be participating in seven events including a memorial jump re-tracing the footsteps of world war two paratroopers on D-Day.

It’s a once-in-a-lifetime experience for soldiers as they visit sites like Omaha and Utah Beach and Iron Mike II Drop Zone. Troops will also learn more about their units historical ties to D-Day and WWII.


Clockwise from top left: The Army birthday cake is cut by the oldest and youngest Soldiers on Fort Polk. Col. Margaret Collier (left) and Pvt. David Sand (right), assisted by retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius Gates.

Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius Gates speaks during the 244th Army Birthday celebration June 14 at Fort Polk’s Warrior Field.

From left: At the 244th birthday celebration of the U.S. Army at Warrior Field June 14, World War II veterans retired Maj. Gen. Erwin Wise, Johnny Davis and Jack Jones also went to 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment Soldiers Capt. Robert Doyle and Sgt. 1st Class Jerrod Choate, who represented the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk at 75th D-Day anniversary ceremonies in Normandy, France.

JRTC, Fort Polk celebrate 244th Army birthday

Standing on Warrior Field before the cutting of the Army birthday pie from left Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy, 1st Bn (Unio), 509th Inf Reg; Jack Jones, WWII veteran; Col. Margaret Collier, oldest Soldier in attendance; retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius Gates, guest speaker; Pvt. David Sand, youngest Soldier in attendance; Capt. Robert Doyle, 1st Bn (Unio), 509th Inf Reg; retired Maj. Gen. Erwin Wise; Sgt. 1st Class Jerrod Choate, 1st Bn (Unio), 509th Inf Reg; and Johnny Davis, WWII veteran.
3 Geronimo would like to recognize these four Paratroopers for their outstanding efforts in taking first place in the military team division 12 mile run earlier today! From left to right we have 1LT Jacob Carroll, 1LT David Berg, SGT Ryan Bittinger, and MAJ Joseph Davis. Thank you and Congratulations on all your hard work! In addition, 3G congratulates LT Berg, who finished 1st overall! Remember always be #varsity! #3G for the win!

3 Geronimo said goodbye to some of the Battalions senior leadership on Wednesday with Change of Command ceremonies occurring for Baker, Dog, and Havoc Company.

-Captain Grant Skallerud replaced Captain Christopher Beatty as Baker Company Commander.

-Captain Beatty replaced Captain Todd Graham as Dog Company Commander.

-Captain Edgar Burgos replaced Captain Darren Johnson as Havoc Company Commander (HHC).

Our 3G family would like to take this time to thank CPT Beatty, CPT Graham, and CPT Johnson and their families for dedication to the Battalion. Each of them will be greatly missed by their formations.

We look forward to the leadership of CPT Skallerud, CPT Beatty, and CPT Burgos as they take on their new responsibilities and roles within the Battalion.

Our 3 Geronimo family was certainty getting after it this week! Of special note, before the Brigade run, 3 of our Paratroopers were awarded the Army Commendation Medal for their exceptional efforts during the BN CAMLFX. CPT Rodriguez, SGT LaFrancois and SPC Leblanc were all recognized in front of the Brigade for their tremendous work.

Additionally, Dog Company was awarded the Arctic Excellence streamer. This is given quarterly to the best company in USARAK across a variety of readiness categories including physical fitness, marksmanship, and SHARP training. This is a tremendous achievement and a testament to the excellence of our Geronimo Paratroopers! #DontbeJV #Varsity!

(That first picture is 3G Paratroopers crushing the BDE run, led by our BN XO MAJ Davis and our Guidon Bearer SGT Bittinger!)

4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.
Congrats to 3-509th’s newest Jumpmasters. Today SGT Tremblay, 1LT LaFleur and SSG Turcotte graduated from Jumpmaster school. This demanding three week course trains paratroopers on Airborne operations and is the next step for these paratroopers to earn the Senior Parachutist Badge. Congrats and GERONIMO!

Congrats to CPT Hatch on earning the coveted Master Parachutist Badge. Senior Parachutists must be a Jumpmaster who has completed at least 65 jumps along with having certain jumps fill additional requirements. CPT Hatch pulled his last required duty on Monday and was pinned on Malemute DZ. Congrats Doc! Geronimo!

Recently, 3 Geronimo had the opportunity to say goodbye to some of our senior leaders. On Friday, Baker Company had a Change of Responsibility ceremony for 1SG Martinez. Stepping in as Baker 1SG is 1SG Trueblood.

On Monday Able Company had a Change of Command ceremony for CPT Burgos. The new Able Commander is CPT Lorette. CPT Burgos will be taking over as the 3G HHC Commander in May.

Finally, on Monday, Hawk Company had a Change of Responsibility ceremony for 1SG Mast who is relinquishing her role to 1SG Taylor.

Our 3G family would like to thank 1SG Martinez, CPT Burgos, 1SG Mast and their families for their dedication to the Battalion. Each of them will be greatly missed by their formations.

We also look forward to the leadership of 1SG Trueblood, CPT Lorette and 1SG Taylor as they take on the sacred task of leading America’s finest Paratroopers.
CSM Huff was a 509ther and the first American Paratrooper to receive the Medal of Honor in American history.

Hosted by: Mr. Barry Simpson
1-509th IN (ABN) Honor Guard: SGT Acfalle, SGT Rhodes, SGT Baker
Date: Saturday, February 9, 2019, from 11 AM - 12 PM EST
Location: Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, 1700 S. Ocoee St., Cleveland, TN

Corporal Huff's official Medal of Honor citation reads:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty, in action on 8 February 1944, near Carano, Italy. Cpl. Huff volunteered to lead a 6-man patrol with the mission of determining the location and strength of an enemy unit which was delivering fire on the exposed right flank of his company. The terrain over which he had to travel consisted of exposed, rolling ground, affording the enemy excellent visibility. As the patrol advanced, its members were subjected to small arms and machinegun fire and a concentration of mortar fire, shells bursting within 5 to 10 yards of them and bullets striking the ground at their feet. Moving ahead of his patrol, Cpl. Huff drew fire from 3 enemy machineguns and a 20mm. weapon. Realizing the danger confronting his patrol, he advanced alone under deadly fire through a minefield and arrived at a point within 75 yards of the nearest machinegun position. Under direct fire from the rear machinegun, he crawled the remaining 75 yards to the closest emplacement, killed the crew with his submachine gun and destroyed the gun. During this act he fired from a kneeling position which drew fire from other positions, enabling him to estimate correctly the strength and location of the enemy. Still under concentrated fire, he returned to his patrol and led his men to safety. As a result of the information he gained, a patrol in strength sent out that afternoon, 1 group under the leadership of Cpl. Huff, succeeded in routing an enemy company of 125 men, killing 27 Germans and capturing 21 others, with a loss of only 3 patrol members. Cpl. Huff's intrepid leadership and daring combat skill reflect the finest traditions of the American infantryman.

Before leaving the army, Huff reached the highest enlisted rank, command sergeant major, a position which carried the responsibilities of being the senior enlisted advisor to the commanding officer and a monitor for, and advocate of, the enlisted men in the command.
In Memorial

Brigadier General Ward Morehouse LeHardy, USA (Ret.)
(December 27, 1934 - April 18, 2019)

On Thursday, April 18, 2019, much beloved Ward Morehouse LeHardy of Kilmarnock, Virginia and Kiawah Island, South Carolina, passed away peacefully at his home in Kilmarnock, surrounded by his family.

Ward was born in Annapolis, MD in 1934 to Navy LT Louis Marcel and Sara Morehouse LeHardy. Just days before the attack on Pearl Harbor, he along with his mother and sister, Linda, boarded a ship in Hawaii bound for California. Sadly, his father died in combat a year later, while serving as a staff officer aboard the USS San Francisco, during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. Sara LeHardy raised her two children in Coronado, California, where Ward came of age. When it came time for him to enter college, he surprised many by selecting West Point over the Naval Academy, joining the Class of 1956 at the United States Military Academy. While at West Point, he met Judy Powell Nevins. They were married in November of 1956 in Alexandria, VA, and a 62 year romance ensued.

Ward served in the Army proudly for 32 years, during which time the family household moved 28 times. Unaccompanied duty stations were Korea (1957) and Vietnam (two one-year combat tours: the first as a military advisor in 1962 and the second with the First Cavalry Division in 1967). Other tours of duty included Japan, Germany, Italy, the Canal Zone in Panama and several posts in the United States.

He took great pride in forming and commanding the 3rd Battalion (Airborne) 509th Infantry in Mainz, Germany, and transferring the whole unit, including families, to Vicenza, Italy in 1974, where it became the only U.S. Airborne unit in Europe.

He was proud to be a member of the 101st Airborne Division, serving at Fort Campbell, Kentucky twice; once in the 1950s, and again in the 1980’s as commander of the Third Brigade (Air Assault) and later served as chief of staff of the Division.

Ward was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in 1984. After his retirement from the Army in 1988, the LeHardys settled in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Ward's life included a love of the sea. He embarked on his boyhood dream of visiting the area where his father was killed when he and Judy set out to sail around the world in 1991. Aboard their trusty 39-foot cutter Cormoran, they set sail from the dock at West Point during the class of 1956’s 35th reunion. What followed was an epic five-year adventure that included a stop 50 years later, to the minute, at the precise location where Ward’s father lost his life in the Solomon Islands on November 13, 1942. Later, to document and share their trip with others, Ward and Judy co-wrote a book entitled Once Around.

With their great voyage behind them, they moved to Kilmarnock, Virginia in 1998. Their beautiful waterfront home, would ultimately become a 20+ year stay (their longest by far) and the site of many joyous family gatherings.

He was instrumental in the fundraising for and building of Light of Christ Anglican Church in Heathsville, Virginia. Ward’s in-depth involvement in the 10-year effort to shift from Episcopal to Anglican inspired him to put together a book, entitled Strong at the Broken Places, detailing the transition and incorporating the thoughts of many church members that were part of the process.

Ward was also an enthusiastic member of the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Georgia.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Judy and their children: Sally Barstow (Mark), Ward Jr. (Debbie), Marcel (Nancy) and Peter (Becky), as well as his sister, Linda LeHardy Sweet. He was extremely proud of their fifteen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Ward was loved and respected by classmates, family and friends. He expected to live to the age of 101 in honor of his beloved 101st Airborne. At 84 he was a young-at-heart adventurer to the end.
In Memorial

William A. Tippins, CMSgt USAF (Ret.)
(July 5, 1925 - March 18, 2019)

His beloved wife “Pinky” preceded him in death; he credited her with saving his life while a prisoner of war in World War II.

Chief Tippins retired from military service as head of USAF Pentagon security detail, continuing his career as an investigator at the Department of Agriculture. Bill was an avid golfer, fisherman, and storyteller, and he will be remembered for the twinkle in his eye and the sleight of his hand.

Viewing will be available at Demaine Funeral Home, 5308 Backlick Rd, Springfield VA 22151 on April 6 at 10:30 AM with a memorial service at 11:30 and light fare to follow. Burial at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date announced by the family.

Link to full obituary: https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/springfield-va/william-tippins-8219668

Learn More About This Great Man

There are several videos that feature Bill on YouTube - just search his name! Here are two of my favorites.

They look similar, but tell two stories:

"Bill Tippins WWII POW": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k25qwOWvrQY
"TIPPINS LOVE STORY": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypLVJm2BY7

509thgeronimo.org Memorial Page

Thank you Matt Anderson (509th PIA Historian & Webmaster) for creating and maintaining the premier website for all things 509th! Here is the most recent memorial page that Matt created to honor William A. Tippins:
https://www.509thgeronimo.org/soldiertippinswa/soldiertippinswa.htm
On a clear spring day, bursting with pink buds and early-greening leaves, more than 250 people gathered at St. Mary of the Lakes Roman Catholic Church to say goodbye to U.S. Army Specialist Nicholas DiMona III, a 20-year-old paratrooper from Medford Lakes who died during an Army training exercise in Alaska last month.

The funeral capped more than a week of tributes. The soldier is to be interred at Arlington National Cemetery at a future date.

But remembrances at Tuesday’s funeral were not just for the Soldier, who enlisted shortly after graduating from high school.

Nicholas DiMona was 5 years old when his father, Chief Warrant Officer Nicholas P. DiMona II, who had served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, died after crashing his Apache Longbow helicopter during a training mission in Georgia. He was 32.

Family and friends say joining the Army to follow in his father’s footsteps was a lifelong dream for Nicholas, one he fulfilled when he enlisted shortly after graduation. The Rev. Daniel F. Swift, pastor of St. Mary of the Lakes, on Tuesday described Nicholas DiMona as a “hero” who set an example with his commitment to the principles of duty, honor and courage.

The younger DiMona was assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division and trained at Fort Benning, Georgia, before reporting to Alaska in April 2018.

A little less than a year later, the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson infantryman was shot during a training exercise. He was MEDEVAC’d to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital but died March 30 from his injuries, according to the Army. His squad leader and members of his unit attended the funeral Mass. Several of the soldiers carried his casket into and from the church. DiMona’s family followed behind.

DiMona was awarded the Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon and the parachutist badge, according to the Army.
JOIN TODAY!

Return application and payment to:
509th Parachute Infantry Association
P.O. Box 43
Owatonna, MN 55060
Make payable to:
509th PIA

509th PARACHUTE INFANTRY ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
(Select your membership level; see next page for definitions)

____ CHARTER MEMBER (WWII Veteran) – Free Lifetime Membership
____ GOLD STAR MEMBER – Free Lifetime Membership
____ HONORARY MEMBER – Free Lifetime Membership
____ ACTIVE DUTY MEMBER – $25.00/one-time fee (for duration of active duty)
____ REGULAR MEMBER – $25.00/year
____ ASSOCIATE MEMBER – $20.00/year

NAME (FIRST MI LAST):______________________________________________________________
(As you want it to appear on your membership card)

SPOUSE’S NAME:________________________ YOUR OCCUPATION:________________________

MAILING ADDRESS:_______________________________________________________________

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE:_________________________________________________________

PHONE NUMBER:________________________ E-MAIL ADDRESS:________________________
(No e-mail address may limit your access to information)

SERVICE INFORMATION: ON ACTIVE DUTY____ IN RESERVES/NATIONAL GUARD____ RETIRED MILITARY____
(Check any that are applicable)

509™ SERVICE:________________________________ DATE SERVED:______________________
(Platoon, Company, Battalion) (Mo/yr – Mo/yr)

COMBAT TOUR(s):________________________________ DATE(S) SERVED:____________________
(Platoon, Company, Battalion) (Mo/yr – Mo/yr)

https://509th.org/join-renew