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AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

Date: 12/18/2019

FOIA Tracking #: 2020-01

This letter concerns your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated 10/21/2019, and received in this Office on 10/21/2019, for records pertaining to complaint letters received by the ABMC. This response is made on behalf of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

Specifically, you requested:

- “A copy of each complaint letter to the ABMC from the public and/or from Congress during the years 2014 to present.”

Please be advised that a search has been conducted within the agency of paper and digital records. I have determined that 90 pages of material are appropriate for release without excision, and a copy is enclosed. Thank you for your patience while I processed your request.

For your information, Congress excluded three discrete categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of the FOIA. See 5 U.S.C. 552(c) (2006 & Supp. IV 2010). This response is limited to those records that are subject to the requirements of the FOIA. This is a standard notification that is given to all our requesters and should not be taken as an indication that excluded records do, or do not, exist.

I trust that this information fully satisfies your request. If you need any further assistance or would like to discuss any aspect of your request please do not hesitate to contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Jennifer Li, at (703) 696-6781.

American Battle Monuments Commission
2300 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22201
Telephone: (703) 696-6781
Email: lij@abmc.gov

Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, Maryland, 20740; email at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at (202)741-5770; toll-free at (877) 684-6448; or via facsimile at (202) 741-5769.

If you are not satisfied with the ABMC response to this request, you may administratively appeal by writing to the FOIA Officer, American Battle Monument Commission, 2300 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 500, Arlington, Virginia 22201, or you may submit an appeal through email, via: FOIA@abmc.gov. Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within ninety days of the date of my response to your request. If you submit your appeal by mail, both the letter and the envelope should be clearly marked "FOIA Appeal: 2020-01." If you submit your appeal by email, the subject line should state "FOIA Appeal: 2020-01."

Sincerely,

Robert Cedeno
IT Specialist
FOIA Assistant

Conley Mike

From: Conley Mike
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2019 3:27 PM
To: 'Strickland, Aaron (L. Graham)'
Subject: RE: ABMC Flower Fund History

Aaron,

In those four instances, flowers were not delivered to the cemetery so there was no photo to take. We can't say conclusively why the flowers weren't delivered in all 4 instances. In at least one instance we know the requestor changed their mind about sending the flowers after they had spoken to her about how to get a photo, but I can't speak conclusively for why the other 3 flower orders weren't delivered to the cemetery.

R / Mike

From: Strickland, Aaron (L. Graham) [mailto:Aaron_Strickland@lgraham.senate.gov]
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2019 3:11 PM
To: Conley Mike
Subject: RE: ABMC Flower Fund History

Mike,

This is perfect and thank you for that excellent data point. What is being done in regards to the four unfulfilled requests? Was it a lack of follow-up from the requesting individual or a processing issue?

Thanks,
Aaron

From: Conley Mike <conleym@abmc.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2019 2:57 PM
To: Strickland, Aaron (L. Graham) <Aaron_Strickland@lgraham.senate.gov>
Subject: RE: ABMC Flower Fund History

Aaron,

Happy Monday to you!

We have not deferred the photo process to florists. The information on how a family member can request a photo of their flowers in place at the gravesite is located on our website in the "Our Services" section. That link takes you to several offerings, one that provides the list of florists for each cemetery and one that provides a form for requesting a photo (a copy of the form is attached).

Floral Decorations: Flowers can be placed within ABMC cemeteries at gravesites. Orders for floral arrangements must be placed directly with a florist. [Local and international florists are available to process orders.](#)

Floral Decoration Photos: [Direct next-of-kin can request a photo of the floral arrangement at the grave site.](#) There is no charge for this service. Direct next-of-kin are defined as parent, spouse, sibling or child of the deceased.

We also receive a few phone requests that we take care of. A staff member in our office receives the forms and phone calls and coordinates with the cemetery superintendents.

We received 80 photo requests in FY 19; all but 4 of the requests were successfully fulfilled. A sample of the photos we send to next-of-kin is also attached.

Hope this is helpful.

R / Mike

From: Strickland, Aaron (L. Graham) [mailto:Aaron_Strickland@lgraham.senate.gov]
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2019 9:44 AM
To: Conley Mike
Subject: RE: ABMC Flower Fund History

Mike,

Hope you had a great weekend.

In your previous email you had mentioned the ABMC would process photographs. I am curious if this processing has been delegated to the individual florists now that the ABMC is no longer running the program. There have been concerns raised to our office that photographs are not being processed currently. Can you provide some insight into who is responsible for providing photographs and what role if any the ABMC is taking in ensuring that photographs are being delivered in a timely manner?

Best,

Aaron M. Strickland
Deputy Military Legislative Assistant
U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham
(202) 224-5972

From: Conley Mike <conleym@abmc.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2019 10:50 AM
To: Strickland, Aaron (L. Graham) <Aaron_Strickland@lgraham.senate.gov>
Subject: ABMC Flower Fund History

Aaron,

Good to talk with you. Here's the basic background info I promised—a summary of information we provided to the Hill and constituents over the past several years. Let me know if you want to discuss anything in more detail.

R / Mike

Michael G. Conley
Chief of Staff
American Battle Monuments Commission
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AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

When the Flower Fund program began after World War II, it provided a way for families to place flowers at our overseas graves when no better alternatives were available. This is no longer the case. We believe that ABMC, a federal agency, should no longer be in the business of processing checks and ordering flowers for a service that the private sector can provide more efficiently and effectively. It is important to note that flowers can and always will be allowed to be placed at gravesites in ABMC cemeteries. We are simply taking ourselves out of a middleman role in that process.

ABMC maintains a list of florists that serve ABMC cemeteries overseas on the agency website at www.abmc.gov. In nearly all cases, these are the same florists who have been providing floral decorations at ABMC cemeteries in the past. This list is updated as we learn of additional florists that serve our cemeteries. If a florist proves to be problematic, that florist is removed from the list. The posting of the list is not an endorsement of the florists, which we cannot do, but a list of options available to the public. Commercial florists offer advantages over the ABMC Flower Fund Program: More options for style and price of floral decorations; convenience of credit card payment; faster service. We continue to provide photos of gravesite floral decorations at no charge for direct next-of-kin, which is defined as Parent, Spouse, Sibling, Child; we are unable to provide photos at sites that are not staffed by ABMC personnel, such as the Honolulu Memorial; the East Coast Memorial in Battery Park, New York City; or the West Coast Memorial in the Presidio in San Francisco.

When we were managing the Flower Fund program, there was a great deal of staff effort directed toward processing checks; converting dollars to Euros or other currencies (ABMC deals in ten foreign currencies); accounting for hundreds of individual accounts (over the years, ABMC established individual accounts for users and allowed them to carry a balance, as people tended to write checks for several hundred dollars and ask ABMC to tell them when the account ran out of money – a very unsound business practice); negotiating flower package costs with florists at 25 different cemeteries, etc. Additionally, customers were beginning to complain that ABMC did not accept Credit Cards, PayPal, etc. via our website for ordering. Over the decades, the management of the Flower Fund was wanting, and as such, it is hard to specifically quantify the costs. However, in Fiscal Year 2014, the last full fiscal year we ran the program, approximately 741 man-hours supported the floral program at the Overseas Operations Office in Paris. This included reviewing correspondence related to the program, processing checks, placing orders, communication with the cemeteries, and processing of photographs, mailings and invoices. Man-hours at the cemeteries varied widely: at Normandy American Cemetery, our busiest in Europe, the estimated total man-hours was 340 per year. This includes ordering, delivering to the gravesite, processing the photographs, clean-up and mailings. The average number of man-hours dedicated to the program at each of the other World War II cemeteries is estimated at 159. This often required overtime pay for employees. The agency, including our Headquarters office in Arlington, Va., had a total of 395 FTE in FY 14. This is a snapshot of one fiscal year; the program had been in operation for more than 60 years, thus our assessment that thousands of man-hours have been absorbed by a process that now can be performed much more efficiently, effectively and appropriately by the floral industry rather than publicly by a federal agency. This was clearly a waste of government resources. This led our Commission to the decision to transform the program and get the agency out of the commercial flower business.

Furthermore, the Administration has been clear that federal agencies are to look for opportunities to eliminate or restructure services that can be performed better by the private sector. Placing and processing individual commercial floral orders is simply not inherently governmental. This service can be provided much more efficiently and effectively by commercial florists, so we removed ourselves from the financial transaction while continuing to offer a convenient portal to international florists through our website. In doing so, we remain an avenue for those who desire to decorate the graves of their loved ones and will continue to assist in all ways appropriate. The only thing that has changed, and has been our policy since 2015, is that we no longer accept payments and place orders.

It is hard to measure the efficiency of the new program because it is executed completely by commercial florists. I do know that our Deputy Secretary tested the program at several cemeteries: North Africa, Manila, and Oise-Aisne in France. He was able to order flowers from his computer in Virginia and, in all cases, flowers were delivered and placed within 24-36 hours. ABMC required at least several weeks lead for flower orders. Our cemetery superintendents tell us that the new program is working efficiently. Following the transition period, well over four years ago, ABMC devoted a full time staff member for one year to help users make the transition; after that period, complaints from users disappeared.

After meeting with one constituent, Bob Holiday, our Secretary William Matz wrote the following to him. I think it is a useful data point on where this agency stands:

“Thank you also for sharing your perspective on the former ABMC flower fund program which was closed in 2015. In transitioning from that, I believe that ABMC is moving in the right direction in developing interpretative and educational outreach programs which we use to tell your fathers’ stories to future generations.

Although we certainly disagree on the changes implemented to the flower fund program, I also do not agree with you that ABMC has “stepped away” from our obligations to the families of our fallen. In fact, I would argue that we have gone to great lengths to preserve and tell the story of the men and women we honor in our cemeteries. By building visitor centers, developing education resources, improving our outreach efforts and by growing interpretative programs at the cemeteries we are “stepping up” to our obligations and the feedback we are receiving is very positive. We endeavor to continue to improve our long-standing connection to you and your loved ones and have renewed our commitment to them by sharing their personal stories with a much larger audience through the interpretative and outreach tools available in this digital age.”

We understand the importance of remembering those who fell and remain interred overseas. That is our mission and we will always honor that sacred trust. The care with which we maintain our overseas cemeteries and the programs we have designed to ensure that the service and sacrifice of those we honor is never forgotten attest to that commitment. But we are not florists, and we do not belong in that private sector business.

Flora Decoration Photos FY 2019

Requestor Last Name	Decednt's Full Name (Last Name First)	Cemetery/Memorial	Date Request Received	MIA (Y or N)	Date of Flower Placement	Date Sent Out	Comments	Photo Sent
Gall	Pepe, Marion	MA	7/19/2018	N	10/16/2018	10/17/2018	Phone Request	Mailed/E-mailed
Huegel	Huegel, Herbert G.	MA	7/25/2018	N	10/10/2018	10/11/2018	Phone Request	Mailed
Becker	Monroe, Philip L	LO	8/6/2018	N	11/11/2018	11/21/2018	Web Request	Mailed
Becker	Monroe, Philip L	LO	8/6/2018	N	12/24/2018	12/24/2018	Web Request	Mailed
Kirwin	Mettler, Richard	MA	9/9/2018	N	10/1/2018	10/1/2018	Web Request	E-mailed
Rohrich	Roerich, Gustav	SM	10/1/2018	N	11/12/2018	11/20/2018	E-mail Request	E-mailed
Bundy	Edwards, Eugene W.	EP	10/2/2018	N	10/27/2018	10/30/2018	Web Request	Mailed
Eyler	Eyler, William H.	OA	10/7/2018	N	11/11/2018	11/21/2018	Web Request	Mailed
Gall	Pepe, Marion	MA	10/17/2018	N	11/12/2018	11/20/2018	E-mail Request	Mailed/E-mailed
Shaw	Hedahl, Ole E.	BK	10/18/2018	N	10/19/2018	??????	E-mail Request	Were not delivered
McMillian	Wehmeuller, Eugene L.H.	LX	10/22/2018	N	11/11/2018	11/20/2018	Web Request	E-mailed
Nary	Nary, Edward G.	MA	10/30/2018	N	11/12/2018	11/20/2018	E-mail Request	E-mailed
Bellitto	Tobis, Steve	FL	10/31/2018	N	11/12/2018	11/7/2018	E-mail Request	E-mailed
Kropp	Coffey, Robert F.	NO	10/31/2018	N	11/11/2018	11/21/2018	Phone Request	Mailed
Kropp	Coffey, Robert F.	NO	10/31/2018	N	12/24/2018	1/10/2019	Phone Request	Mailed
Stenehjem	Bjertness, Sigurd J.	ML	10/31/2018	Y	11/11/2018	11/21/2018	Web Request	Mailed
Oldani	Oldani, Charles T.	NO	11/1/2018	N	11/9/2018	11/9/2018	Phone Request	Mailed
Temte	Radcliff, Ernest G.	ML	11/2/2018	Y	11/22/2018	11/26/2018	Web Request	E-mailed
Sears-Miller	Pickering, Oscar	MA	11/5/2018	N	11/10/2018	11/20/2018	E-mail Request	E-mailed
Will	Will, Aloys J.	MA	11/7/2018	N	11/11/2018	??????	Phone Request	Were not delivered
Lee	Lee, Robert E.	LX	11/21/2018	N	12/8/2018	12/11/2018	Web Request	Mailed
Coran	Fontes, Eugene	HC	11/24/2018	N	12/13/2018	12/19/2018	Web Request	Mailed
McMillian	Wehmeuller, Eugene L.H.	LX	11/27/2018	N	12/24/2018	12/24/2018	Web Request	E-mailed
Teremy	Rogers, Norman J., Jr.	LO	12/6/2018	N	12/22/2018	12/24/2018	Web Request	Mailed
Stewart	Stewart, Robert J.	HC	12/7/2018	N	12/20/2018	12/24/2018	Web Request	Mailed

Bellitto	Tobis, Steve	FL	12/9/2018	N	12/24/2018	1/7/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Huray	Sadler, William H.	AR	12/9/2018	N	12/19/2018	12/24/2018 Web Request	E-mailed
Osborne	Osborne, John G.	EP	12/10/2018	N	12/20/2018	12/24/2018 Web Request	E-mailed
Wentsler	Tofil, John J.	ML	12/14/2018	N	12/19/2018	12/19/2018 Web Request	E-mailed
Weber	Wallace, Milton	LX	1/2/2019	N	1/25/2019	1/28/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Zamalloa	Gerke, Wright E.	NE	1/17/2019	N	2/2/2019	2/13/2019 Web Request	Mailed/E-mailed
Mann	McFarland, Dan	CA	1/18/2019	N	1/21/2019	1/22/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Wentsler	Tofil, John J.	ML	2/3/2019	N	2/14/2019	2/14/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Smith	Smith Frank J.	EP	2/7/2019	N	5/26/2019	6/7/2019 Web Request	Mailed
McMillian	Wehmeuller, Eugene L.H.	LX	2/15/2019	N	3/6/2019	3/6/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Lee	Lee, Robert E.	LX	2/16/2019	N	3/1/2019	3/1/2019 Web Request	Mailed
Lawson	Heath, Elmer B.	HC	2/22/2019	N	3/9/2019	3/11/2019 Web Request	Mailed
Bellitto	Tobis, Steve	FL	3/29/2019	N	4/19/2019	4/23/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Zamalloa	Gerke, Wright E.	NE	4/1/2019	N	4/21/2019	4/24/2019 Web Request	Mailed
Johnson	Larkin, Marx M.	NE	4/3/2019	N	4/13/2019	4/16/2019 Web Request	Mailed
Tornatore	Tornatore, Carmen T.	AR	4/11/2019	N	5/25/2019	6/7/2019 Phone Request	E-mailed
Maltais	Lavoie, Roland	EP	4/12/2019	N	5/26/2019	6/7/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Wiser	Wiser, Dallas W.	NE	4/14/2019	N	5/24/2019	5/27/2019 Web Request	Sent by cemetery
Doane	Doane, Luther E., Jr.	FL	4/19/2019	N	5/27/2019	6/7/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Scicchitano	Landi, Joseph F.	NO	4/25/2019	N	5/27/2019	5/30/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Finkel	Zajac, Marion S.	SR	4/26/2019	N	5/24/2019	6/7/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Heritage League	Ardennes Cemetery	AR	5/1/2019	All	5/25/2019	6/7/2019 E-mail Request	Mailed
Heritage League	Brittany Cemetery	BR	5/1/2019	All	5/26/2019	5/29/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Cambridge Cemetery	CA	5/1/2019	All	5/27/2019	6/10/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Epinal Cemetery	EP	5/1/2019	All	5/26/2019	6/8/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Florence Cemetery	FL	5/1/2019	All	5/27/2019	6/9/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Henri-Chapelle Cemetery	HC	5/1/2019	All	5/25/2019	5/28/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Lorraine Cemetery	LO	5/1/2019	All	5/26/2019	5/28/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Luxembourg Cemetery	LX	5/1/2019	All	5/25/2019	6/18/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Netherlands Cemetery	NE	5/1/2019	All	5/26/2019	6/8/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Normandy Cemetery	NO	5/1/2019	All	5/26/2019	5/27/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	North Africa Cemetery	NA	5/1/2019	All	5/27/2019	5/28/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed

Heritage League	Rhone Cemetery	RH	5/1/2019	All	5/26/2019	6/13/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Heritage League	Sicily-Rome Cemetery	SR	5/1/2019	All	5/24/2019	6/10/2019 E-mail Request	E-mailed
Thomson	Ekstrom, Carl F.	NO	5/6/2019	N	5/27/2019	5/30/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Elliott	Gunthner, Charles	MA	5/16/2019	N	5/24/2019	5/24/2019 Phone Request	Mailed/E-mailed
Kropp	Coffey, Robert F.	NO	5/16/2019	N	5/27/2019	5/30/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Kropp	Coffey, Robert F.	NO	5/16/2019	N	6/8/2019	6/11/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Oldani	Oldani, Charles T.	NO	5/20/2019	N	5/24/2019	5/30/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Williams	Buell, Hugo C.	NO	5/20/2019	N	5/27/2019	5/30/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Gober	Gober, Victor J.	LO	6/3/2019	N	6/14/2019	???????? Phone Request	Did not order
Davis	Davis, Philip A.	NO	6/6/2019	N	6/23/2019	6/24/2019 Phone Request	E-mailed
Gober	Gober, Victor J.	LO	6/17/2019	N	6/21/2019	6/21/2019 Phone Request	E-mailed
Caruso	Caruso, Gerardo W.	EP	6/24/2019	N	6/16/2019	7/24/2019 Phone Request	E-mailed
Krelis	Mandros, Peter Jr.	AR	6/27/2019	N	6/28/2019	7/22/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Oldani	Oldani, Charles T.	NO	6/27/2019	N	7/3/2019	7/22/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Mucciarone	Mucciarone, Anthony J.	NO	7/5/2019	N	7/27/2019	7/31/2019 Web Request	Mailed/E-mailed
Hawkins	Brantley, Isaac W.	NO	7/9/2019	N	7/3/2019	7/16/2019 Phone Request	E-mailed
Goodwin	Millar, Edward R.	BR	7/19/2019	N	8/8/2019	***** Phone Request	Did not receive
Gusler	Gusler, Leslie G.	RH	8/13/2019	N	8/17/2019	8/19/2019 E-mail Request	Mailed/E-mailed
Costa	Costa, Joseph Jr.	NO	8/21/2019	N	9/3/2019	9/19/2019 Web Request	Mailed
Mann	McFarland, Dan	CA	9/18/2019	N	9/19/2019	9/25/2019 Phone Request	Mailed
Schmitt	Stephen, Leonard	LO	9/20/2019	N	10/2/2019	10/2/2019 Web Request	E-mailed
Bundy	Edwards, Eugene W.	EP	9/30/2019	N	10/27/2019	10/31/2019 Web Request	Mailed

Flora Decoration Photos FY 2020

Requestor Last Name	Decednt's Full Name (Last Name First)	Cemetery/Memorial	Date Request Received	MIA (Y or N)	Date of Flower Placement	Date Sent Out	Comments	Photo Sent
Karney	Konon, Alfred	HC	10/17/2019	N	10/19/2019	10/21/2019	Phone Request	E-mailed
McMillian	Wehmueller, Eugene L.H.	LX	10/21/2019	N	11/11/2019	11/12/2019	Web Request	E-mailed
Elliott	Gunthner, Charles	MA	10/29/2019	N	11/8/2019	11/12/2019	Phone Request	Mailed/E-mailed
Piazza	Piazza, Emil R.	LO	10/30/2019	N	11/17/2019	11/18/2019	Web Request	E-mailed

Conley Mike

From: Conley Mike
Sent: Thursday, November 14, 2019 8:38 AM
To: 'Bekah.Bibb@mail.house.gov'
Cc: Philpot Christine
Subject: RE: Johnson

Ms. Bibb,

Chris Philpot, our CFO, forwarded your inquiry to me. While I don't know the particular circumstance of Ms. Johnson's visit, I can share a couple of observations that address her concerns.

On any given day, there may be hundreds and sometimes several thousand visitors who attend the daily flag ceremony at Normandy American Cemetery. In the past, tour groups would compete for the right for their customers to fold the flag. It became untenable and undignified, so we adopted a policy of allowing only World War II veterans or military members in uniform to participate in the folding of the colors. If there are no World War II veterans or military members in uniform in attendance, the flags are folded by our staff, most of whom are French nationals who share the respect for the sacrifice made to liberate France during the Second World War. All other veterans and visitors are invited to observe the ceremony.

Regarding the comment about being "prohibited from visiting the graves and walking among the headstones," we actually encourage visitors to walk among the graves, to personalize their visit while reflecting on the cost of freedom and what these U.S. graves on foreign soil represent. We have never had all of the plots closed off at one time, but we do regularly close plots due to wear and tear caused by heavy visitation or if they are oversaturated with rain. Tour companies often go to plots A through F, as they are close to the memorial; those plots get worn and fatigued so they may be roped off to allow the grass to recover. In fact, plots A through F are closed at present, but plots G through J are open to the public. Even when a section is roped off, however, we will escort Next of Kin and WWII veterans to visit the grave of a family member or comrade in arms interred within the closed section.

Perhaps Ms. Johnson visited the cemetery when the plots close to the memorial were roped off, and didn't realize that the plots beyond the chapel were open to visitors. Regardless of the reason for her disappointment, please share with Ms. Johnson our regret that she did not have the memorable experience at Normandy American Cemetery that we strive to provide for each of our visitors.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your constituent's concerns.

R / Mike

Michael G. Conley

Chief of Staff

American Battle Monuments Commission

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AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

From: Bibb, Bekah <Bekah.Bibb@mail.house.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2019 4:14 PM
To: Philpot Christine <philpotc@abmc.gov>
Subject: Johnson

Johnson, Kristina
(b) (6)

PARF Attached

Ms. Fant,

Our constituent, Kristina Johnson, recently took a trip to Normandy, France and has several concerns regarding the American Cemetery in Normandy. She found that the cemetery prohibits visitors from walking among the graves and headstones. Furthermore, American Military Veterans are not allowed to fold the American Flags after Taps. The American Flags are only folded by French Nationals. Ms. Johnson has been to Normandy before and understands that these are recent changes.

Would you please look into this matter and provide us with a reasoning for the two changes?

Thank you,

Bekah Bibb | Constituent Services Liaison
Office of Congressman Richard Hudson (NC-08)
225 Green Street, Suite 202, Fayetteville, North Carolina 28301
Phone (910) 997-2070 | Fax (910) 817-7202

Office of U.S. Representative Richard Hudson



Privacy Authorization Release Form

Authorization in Accordance with the 1974 Privacy Act

Due to the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974 (Title 5, Section 552A of the United States Code) permission in writing is required before making an inquiry on your behalf. Completing and signing this form authorizes U.S. Representative Richard Hudson to make inquiries to the appropriate officials on your behalf, in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act. I hereby authorize U.S. Representative or his representative to receive information on my behalf and discuss my records with the agency involved.

Name: (b) (6) Date of Birth: (b) (6)
Address: (b) (6)
City: (b) (6) State: (b) (6) Zip: (b) (6)
Cell Phone: (b) (6) Other Phone: ()
Home Phone: (b) (6)
Email: (b) (6)

Social Security Number: (b) (6) Case/Account/Inquiry Number _____
(Please provide the appropriate identification number pertaining to the assistance with which you are seeking our help.)

Have you contacted any other elected official regarding this case?
Yes/No (circle one) If so, who _____

Please describe the specific information you are requesting or the exact nature of the problem you are experiencing. Send copies of relevant information. **Please do not send originals.** Use extra paper if necessary.

During a recent trip to the American cemetery in Normandy, France visitors were prohibited from visiting the graves and walking among the headstones. And, in years past American military veterans were honored

Which federal agency does this involve? ABMC

SIGNATURE: Kristin Johnson Date: 6 Nov 2019

Please return the completed form to: U.S. Representative Richard Hudson/Casework

225 Green Street, Suite 202

Fayetteville, NC 28301

Phone: (910) 997-2070

by being allowed to fold the American flags after Taps. This is no longer allowed and the American flag is folded each day by French nationals who are employees.



AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

October 22, 2019

Mrs. Brenda S. McArthur

(b) (6)

Dear Mrs. McArthur,

On behalf of the American Battle Monuments Commission, I extend my deepest regrets for the treatment you and your family experienced while coordinating the inurement of your husband's ashes with his father's remains at our Corozal American Cemetery in Panama. There is no excuse for such treatment, which is counter to everything our Commission stands for in executing our noble mission of honoring service and sacrifice.

Mr. Sanfilippo's employment with the Commission has been terminated. No other family will be subjected to such hurtful and uncaring service. I apologize that such an emotional and difficult time for your family was made even more difficult by our former employee. There is nothing I can do to erase your experience and try to do better—we are given one opportunity to serve our customers in support of such life events, and we lost that opportunity with you and your son.

I deeply regret that this happened, Mrs. McArthur. I can only commit that our staff in Panama will learn from this incident, so that your husband's remains are forever properly cared for in a beautiful and respectful setting. And I hope that you are comforted to some degree by knowing that the source of your hurt is no longer entrusted with such responsibility.

Respectfully,

Michael G. Conley
Chief of Staff

(b) (6)

October 2, 2019

American Battle Monuments Commission
2300 Clarendon Blvd., Ste 500
ATTN: Mike Conley, Chief of Staff
Arlington, VA 22201

Reference: Interment of George Adam McArthur

Dear Sir:

During our recent experience in trying to inter my husband's (George Adam McArthur), ashes with his father, William David McArthur, at the Corozal Veteran's Cemetery in the Republic of Panama, we found your employee, Paolo Sanfilippo to be incompetent, inept, extremely rude and unprofessional.

On March 28, 2019, our son David McArthur began the process of requesting permission from the American Battle Monuments Commission for the interment of George's ashes with Armando Ruano. Pursuant to this request, we forwarded copies of George's DD214, his service card and the letter requesting burial permission to Mr. Ruano. Permission was granted and we were so notified by Mr. Ruano on May 21, 2019. David was informed by Mr. Ruano that Paolo Sanfilippo would be our point of contact in the future.

David contacted Mr. Sanfilippo requesting information on the procedures to complete the burial. On June 4, Mr. Sanfilippo requested the same information previously submitted which we provided. David also requested information as to what we needed to complete the process. Specifically, he stated "we would like to make arrangements for George's burial, but I am not sure where to start. Please advise and I look forward to hearing from you soon," Mr. Sanfilippo replied on June 12, 2019 that "apparently everything is in order. Only report in advance when you decide to come to Panama to perform the funeral." On June 13, David requested information as to documents required by immigration and customs to enter Panama. A copy of the reply is attached. Since there is a Panamanian Consulate in Tampa, I took the required documents to this office and had them processed.

It took some time to coordinate our travel to Panama, but on August 27, 2019, we informed both Mr. Ruano and Mr. Sanfilippo that we would like to perform the burial during the week of September 23. Mr. Ruano replied, including Mr. Sanfilippo on the email, that they were "ready whenever you are". He further stated that it would be necessary to fill out a couple of VA forms for the headstone and flag prior to the ceremony. He stated that it would only take 10-15 minutes to complete. He further stated that we should call Mr. Sanfilippo to coordinate the details. Mr. Ruano had previously informed us that he would not be in country during this time. Mr. Sanfilippo informed us we could have any day we wanted, Monday through Friday. We arranged to visit him on September 23 to complete the paperwork and have the burial with Father Rios on Tuesday the 24th.

We arrived at his office at approximately 1:00 p.m., on Monday, September 23, 2019. Upon introducing ourselves, Mr. Sanfilippo asked where we were from. When I replied I was originally from Alabama, but had spent most of my life in Panama, he asked, "so are you a redneck, and do you have a Confederate flag"? While I found this rude and unprofessional, we simply disregarded the comments as we wanted

to finish the paperwork and bury my husband with the honor due him. We provided the Death Certificate and Notarized Cremation certificate, which had been certified and verified by the Panamanian Consulate in Tampa. He requested copies of the DD214, copy of George's cedula (Panamanian Identification card), Certificate of Service and Identification card, all of which we had previously provided. We provided all of the above documents again and were disappointed at the fact that he had not even started the process of making the arrangements for this service until we arrived Monday afternoon at the Cemetery. While we were waiting on him to finish up, he made a call to someone with the Honor Guard asking if they were available to perform the ceremony on the following day. It was obvious at that point that absolutely nothing had been done in preparation for this internment. Finally, after two hours, we were informed that everything was set.

The ceremony was arranged for Tuesday, September 24, at 10:00 a.m. When we arrived at 9:30 a.m., I was asked by Mr. Sanfilippo if I had the Panamanian Certificate of Permission to bury my husband. This was the first we were told of this requirement. Since we did not have this, we were informed by Mr. Sanfilippo that we could not bury my husband that day. Rather than inconvenience our guests and the priest, we went ahead and let the priest perform the blessing of the urn and burial site. The ceremony was conducted inside the Chapel due to inclement weather. Mr. Sanfilippo's desk is located within the chapel seating area and he disturbed the prayer proceedings twice by walking back and forth thru the Chapel slamming doors on his way in and out along with shuffling thru papers at his desk. His actions showed a total lack of respect and disregard as to what was taking place in the Chapel. After the priest had finished his prayers, Mr. Sanfilippo suspended the burial proceedings. At this point, my son asked him where or who we would need to contact in order to acquire the missing burial certificate. It was then that my son and I realized Mr. Sanfilippo had no clue what documents were needed, or where and/or how to acquire them. He made several phone calls and eventually asked my son to follow him in his assigned vehicle to a cemetery nearby, in order for my son to talk with a funeral director that owns a funeral parlor in downtown Panama City. The funeral director guided my son thru the process of acquiring the burial certificate. I won't go over all the details that were associated with the process, but we were able to get the certificate after three days of visiting several different Panamanian Government Institutions. All of this paperwork could have been completed much earlier had we known of the requirement.

We were finally able to bury my husband with no one in attendance except my son and I and three of the groundskeepers on Thursday afternoon. The groundskeepers are true gentlemen and treated us with more kindness and respect than Mr. Sanfilippo. They expressed their condolences and apologized profusely for the way the burial was handled. There was no honor guard and no flag ceremony and not even a hint of an apology or a sign of remorse for what had taken place from Mr. Sanfilippo.

My son was not able to attend the celebration of life we had planned, nor were we able to visit with George's brother who is 91 years old and lives in the interior of the country which is over a 5 hour drive each way from the city. We were also forced to stay in the hotel for an additional time, incurring additional costs which were not planned.

My father was a 20- year veteran of the U.S. Army. Our granddaughter is a 1st Lt. in the Marine Corp after graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy. I worked for the U. S. Army and the Special Operations Command for over 20 years. My son has also worked for the military as a civilian overseas for many years. We are a patriotic family that believes in service to our country. My husband served honorably and with dignity. He also dedicated 40 years to the Panama Canal, completing his tour as the Superintendent of Miraflores and Pedro Miguel Locks. He received the Panama Canal Honorary Public

Service Award for his support and dedication to the youth of the Canal Zone. He was due the respect of an Honor Guard Ceremony and presentation of a flag in the presence of his friends and family. The flag was intended to be given to our granddaughter. Instead, he was not only denied this respect, but the actions of Mr. Sanfilippo disrespected the Corozal Veteran's Cemetery and the brotherhood of fallen soldiers. In our opinion, he is not worthy of this detail as it is perfectly clear that this individual does not have the appropriate skills and does not maintain the capacity to understand the gravity of this position. Under no circumstances should a service member, spouse, or immediate family member have to experience something like this.

I await your response.

With Respect,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Brenda S. McArthur".

Brenda S. McArthur
Widow of George A. McArthur

Cc: U.S. Embassy, Republic of Panama
Veteran's of Foreign Wars

Branda McArthur

From: David McArthur (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, June 18, 2019 9:50 AM
To: mom
Subject: Fw: Returning Cremated remains to Panama for burial

Hi Mom,

Here's what you will need to take to the consulate/embassy. The original death certificate will need to be translated into spanish and notarized by the consulate. They only take money orders as payment. And last but not least they will need a postage paid self addressed envelope in order to send back the doc's once they do their thing.

Hope this helps,

From: Paola Castro <pcastro@embassyofpanama.org>
Sent: Friday, June 14, 2019 7:05 PM
To: David McArthur
Subject: RE: Returning Cremated remains to Panama for burial

TRANSPORTATION OF HUMAN REMAINS -

<https://www.embassyofpanama.org/transportation-of-human-remains-1>

REQUIREMENTS

Embalmed:

Original documents are required:

- Original Death certificate
- Original Health certificate.
- Notarized embalmment certificate
- The Consular Fee is \$30.00 per document, payable by money order made out to the Consulate of Panama.
- Send a self-addressed pre-paid envelope to return your documents.

Cremated:

Original documents are required:

- Original Death certificate
- Notarized cremation certificate
- The Consular Fee is \$30.00 per document, payable by money order made out to the Consulate of Panama.
- Send a self-addressed pre-paid envelope to return your documents.

Please send your documents to the following address:

**CONSULADO DE PANAMA
2862 MCGILL TERRACE, N.W
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008**

Conley Mike

From: Conley Mike
Sent: Wednesday, July 03, 2019 9:08 AM
To: 'Chase_Kratochvil@fischer.senate.gov'
Subject: RE: Floral Program

Good morning, Chase.

Chris Philpot, our CFO, forwarded to me your inquiry on behalf of your constituent Mary Pace. Ms. Pace wrote to you with concerns about the closure of the ABMC Flower Fund program. We closed the that program five years ago. You asked that we “provide a response as to the reasoning besides the availability of commercial florists.” That’s difficult, as the availability of commercial florists within the international marketplace is what made closure of the program possible and appropriate. We appreciate and respect Ms. Pace’s desire to honor her father’s service. That is our mission, so the opinions and concerns of the next-of-kin of service members whose graves we care for are very important to us. However, Ms. Pace’s ability to have flowers placed at her father’s grave has not changed; we simply are no longer a middleman in that process.

When the Flower Fund program began after World War II, it provided a way for families to place flowers at our overseas graves when no better alternatives were available, such as e-commerce. Those who chose to participate in our program paid us to order the flowers, and those payments passed through us to the commercial florists. We used thousands of man-hours to process the orders and manage the program. This included the related processing of mail, invoices, checks, photographs, and correspondence, along with the actual placement of the floral arrangements at our gravesites. It’s important to understand that the opportunity to place flowers at the gravesites in our overseas cemeteries, including North Africa American Cemetery, has not gone away. We simply placed that process in the hands of the professionals who can provide this service much more efficiently and quickly than we could. Americans now order flowers directly from florists, without having to wait for us to assist them and process their orders—and many were doing so already before we ended our program. In some cases, florists place the flowers at the grave; in others, the flowers are delivered to the cemetery and our cemetery staff place the flowers at the grave. A list of available florists is posted on our website, and we update that list as we learn of more florists. The instructions and florist contact information we provide can be found at <https://www.abmc.gov/about-us/our-services/order-floral-decoration>. You’ll note on that page that direct next-of-kin, such as Ms. Pace, may request a photo of their floral order in place; we continue to provide that service at no charge.

Placing and processing individual commercial floral orders is simply not inherently governmental. It is a service that can be provided much more efficiently and effectively by private sector florists, so we removed ourselves from the financial transaction while continuing to offer a convenient portal to international florists through our website. In doing so, we remain an avenue for those who desire to decorate the graves of their loved ones and will continue to assist in all ways appropriate. The only thing that has changed, and has been policy since 2015, is that we no longer collect the money and place the orders on behalf of the requestors.

I assure you that ABMC’s commitment to the men and women we honor is stronger than ever. We remain passionately dedicated to serving the next-of-kin, to telling the story of why our overseas cemeteries exist, and to honoring and interpreting the lives and sacrifices of the Americans whose memory and resting places have been forever entrusted to us.

Thank you for sharing Ms. Pace’s concerns with us. And best wishes for a Happy 4th of July holiday!

R / Mike

Michael G. Conley
Chief of Staff

American Battle Monuments Commission
2300 Clarendon Boulevard | Arlington, VA 22201-3367 | T 703-696-6778
www.abmc.gov | [Join us on Facebook](#)



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

From: Kratochvil, Chase (Fischer) <Chase_Kratochvil@fischer.senate.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 2, 2019 4:13 PM
To: Philpot Christine <philpotc@abmc.gov>
Subject: RE: Floral Program

To Whom It May Concern:

Our office was contacted by one of Senator Fischer's constituents, Mrs. Mary Ann Lazio-Otte. Mrs. Lazio-Otte's father, Tony J. Lazio, is interred at the North Africa American Cemetery and Memorial. However, and previously, the Otte family was advised that the floral program was ended with you folks. Could you please provide a response as to the reasoning besides the availability of commercial florists?

Regards,

Chase Kratochvil
Office of United States Senator Deb Fischer
11819 Miracle Hills Drive, Suite 205
Omaha, NE 68154
402-391-3411 (phone)
402-391-4725 (fax)
Chase_Kratochvil@fischer.senate.gov



U.S. SENATOR DEB FISCHER CONSTITUENT SERVICES REQUEST FORM

Personal Information

Name: Mary Ann Lazio - Otte Date of Birth: _____
Address: (b) (6) City/State/Zip: (b) (6)
Phone: (b) (6) Email: _____

Additional Information

Veterans Claim No: _____ Medicare Claim No: _____
Immigration A# or Receipt #: _____

Third Party Proxy Designation (Optional)

If you want another individual to be involved in your case, indicate below. Include Power of Attorney if applicable:

Name: Mary Pace Relationship to Individual: Saunder County Veterans Service Officer
Address: (b) (6) City/State/Zip: (b) (6)
Phone: (b) (6) Email: (b) (6)

Please briefly state your request for assistance, including any agencies or elected offices you have contacted:

My Dad's name is Tony Lazio, who was KIA during World War II and is buried at the North American Cemetery in Tunisia, North Africa. In the past our government supported the funeral program for our overseas veterans which no longer exists. Would you please look into this program for myself and the many other AWON (American World War II Orphans Network) members. My second request is if you could help in my effort to have my Dad memorialized at the Omaha National Cemetery with a plaque. They have a wall there for that special purpose. My third request is to help locate my Dad's DD214 and his Birth Certificate.

Disclosure Authorization

The Privacy Act of 1974 prohibits the government and private entities under contract to administer government programs from revealing information from the personal files of individuals without the express permission of the person involved. Disclosure of personal records to a United States Senator who is acting on behalf of a constituent is prohibited unless the individual to whom the record pertains consents. I, the undersigned, hereby authorize Senator Deb Fischer and her staff to receive information pertinent to my request for assistance indicated above.

NAME (please print): Mary Ann Lazio - Otte

SIGNATURE: Mary Ann Lazio - Otte

DATE: April 4, 2019

Return Information:

U.S. Senator Deb Fischer, Attn: Chase Kratochvil
11819 Miracle Hills Dr., Suite 205
Omaha, NE 68154

Phone: (402) 391-3411
Fax: (402) 391-4725
Email: Chase_Kratochvil@fischer.senate.gov



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

December 15, 2014

(b) (6)

Dear Rolland Otte,

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) honors the service, achievements, and sacrifices of our fallen. Our mission is one of the most hallowed within the U.S. federal government. Since its creation by Congress in 1923, ABMC has embraced a variety of programs and services to commemorate America's war dead in a manner that is respectful of those we honor and the family members who suffered the loss of a loved one in service to their country. As you would expect, we continually evaluate our programs and services to ensure that we are doing our best to keep the memory of our fallen alive, in a manner that effectively uses the resources provided to us.

As we approach the Centennial of World War I and the 75th anniversary of World War II, it is time to discontinue one of those services: the ABMC Floral Fund Program. There was a time when this program provided an important service to the next of kin, given the difficulty following the world wars of ordering floral arrangements for placement at our overseas cemeteries. In today's international commerce environment, however, that is no longer the situation. Accordingly, as of April 1, 2015, ABMC will close its Floral Fund Program and will no longer process floral orders.

After that date you still will be able to have flowers placed within ABMC cemeteries, but your orders must be placed directly with a florist, not through ABMC. A list of florists that offer international deliveries is enclosed.

We are aware that many families want flowers placed on Memorial Day 2015. That is why we are delaying closure of the program until April, to allow us to process those orders in time for Memorial Day.

For all orders placed with ABMC prior to April 2, the last day for placement of arrangements will be June 1, 2015.

While the ABMC Floral Fund Program is closing, our commitment to honor the men and women buried and memorialized overseas is unwavering. With this commitment in mind, we will focus our efforts on telling the story of your loved one to ensure that their sacrifice is never forgotten. I ask that you consider sending us information and photos that we can share with the American public through our outreach efforts via the internet and public programs at the cemeteries. The more we know about those we honor, the more we can teach the visiting public. If you are willing to share information, please send that information to:

American Battle Monuments Commission
Attn: Alan Amelineckx
2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22201
Amelineckxa@abmc.gov
703-696-6412

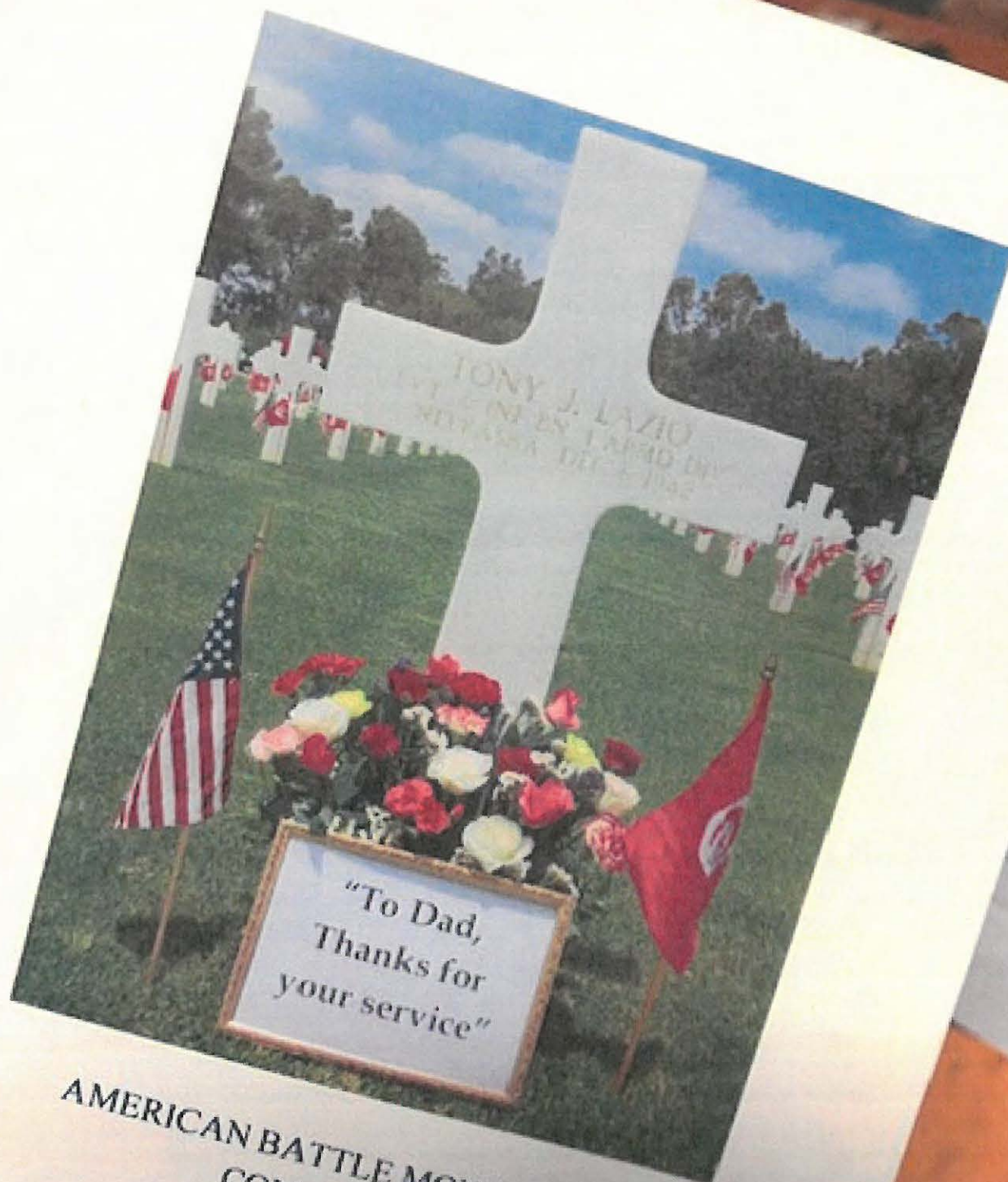
Our staff throughout the world continues to work tirelessly to care for the hallowed grounds where our fallen rest. Our first chairman, General John J. Pershing, promised that "Time will not dim the glory of their deeds." Thank you for your understanding as we work to fulfill his promise.

With my best regards,



Robert J. Dalessandro

Deputy Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS
COMMISSION
Overseas Operations Office
92380 GARCHES - FRANCE



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

Office of the Secretary

April 30, 2019

Dr. R. Felton

(b) (6)

Dear Dr. Felton,

This letter responds to your letter of March 10, 2019, in which you expressed concerns regarding renovations planned for the American Battle Monuments Commission quarters at (b) (6) the removal of the hedge along the front boundary; and your interactions with Mr. Angelo Munsel, our Brookwood American Cemetery superintendent and the occupant of these quarters. As Secretary and CEO of the Commission, I take a personal interest not only in our operations but also in the stewardship of our properties and the relationships our staffs maintain in their communities.

Regarding the interior renovations of the quarters, you are aware that we received all of the proper permits to plan for an interior renovation of the U.S. government-owned home that the Munsel family occupies, and we have submitted the requests for building permits. The modest internal renovation to the quarters is to create a more comfortable living environment for current and future American families. The plans provide additional storage closets/wardrobes, a more open floor plan, and a veranda, all of which we have found to be more practical for any size American family that will occupy these quarters. We believe it is important to invest in our employees and their families, and to provide them with practical and comfortable living quarters that meet U.S. standards as close as possible.

My Overseas Operations staff has reviewed the plans closely. Our Engineers believe the veranda and window renovations will provide you with additional privacy. The present drawings have a modest 150-centimeter expansion of the rear facade, and the bedroom windows located on the first floor have been centered, which will reduce the family's visibility of your property from inside their home. The veranda will have no impact on your privacy, since it will provide the same visibility as that of any garden view.

Regarding the front boundary hedge, it is not our intention to remove any of the hedging plants on your property during the landscaping of the front garden. Our intention is only to update

and refresh the plant material within our own boundary line. We consulted and hired the services of a local landscaping company whom we trust; they are well versed on regulations within the United Kingdom as to what can and cannot be done.

Finally, regarding your interactions with Mr. Munsel, his supervisor has discussed your concerns and complaints with him, emphasizing the importance of establishing and maintaining good neighborly relations. I appreciate very much your bringing this to my attention; our superintendents represent not only our Commission but also the American people as they administer the sacred burial grounds of American war dead.

If you wish to discuss this further, please contact Mrs. Tina Young, our Director of Cemetery Operations, at youngc@abmc.gov or via telephone at +33(0) 140752756, or Mr. Oliver Villalobos, Deputy Director of Cemetery Operations, at villaloboso@abmc.gov or via telephone at +33 (0)1 40 75 27 52.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,



William M. Matz

Cc: Tina Young, ABMC Director of Cemetery Operations

Dr R D Felton

(b) (6)



Civic Offices
Gloucester Square
Woking
Surrey GU21 6YL
Telephone (01483) 755855
Facsimile (01483) 768746
DX 2931 WOKING
Email wokbc@woking.gov.uk
Website www.woking.gov.uk

12 April 2019

THIS IS NOT A CIRCULAR

Dear Dr Felton

NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATION LETTER – APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Reference: (b) (6)

Application Type: Householder

Proposal: Proposed two storey and single storey rear extensions

Location: (b) (6)

I write to advise you that the Local Planning Authority has determined the above application as detailed below:

Decision: Permitted

The decision was issued on: 12 April 2019

A copy of the decision notice will be available online within three working days from the date of this letter.

Once the details are available online you can view them at <http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/publicaccess>* or at the Civic Offices between 9am and 4.45pm, Mondays to Fridays (Bank Holidays excluded) at one of our public terminals.

A member of our Customer Service Team will be available to assist you. Please bring this letter with you as it contains the application number.

If you have any queries please contact the officer dealing with this application, William Flaherty on 01483 74 3457 quoting the planning application reference (b) (6)

Yours sincerely,

Douglas Spinks
Deputy Chief Executive

(b) (6)

10th March 2019

David Urban, Chairman
American Battle Monuments Commission
Courthouse Plaza II, Suite 500
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201
United States of America

Dear Sir,

Residential planning application reference: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Mr A. Munsel, Superintendent, ABMC Brookwood Cemetery.

I live next door to (b) (6) referenced above, and I have lodged an official objection on Woking Borough Council's portal to the above planning application. I would like to express my disappointment with Mr Munsel's apparent lack of courtesy by not mentioning the application to me as his immediate neighbour most impacted by the scale of the planned alterations.

The application represents a large extension spanning the rear of the property, including modifications to all floors and the roof, and it will have a significant negative impact on the outlook from my garden. However, the application did not include an evaluation of the effect of the obtrusive design on the enjoyment of my family. In such situations, although not a legal requirement, it would have been a simple courtesy for Mr Munsel to give me an opportunity to discuss the impact with him before he submitted the plans to the local authorities.

After reviewing the planning documents, I was surprised that such a design would be considered in the interests of ABMC, since it reduces the number of bedrooms from 4 to 3, and removes the downstairs study room in favour of larger entertainment and dining areas. Although the ground floor and first floor areas will be increased, the value of houses in the UK is determined primarily on the number of bedrooms and provision of a separate space for work or study for professional families. For example, based on official Land Registry data for this area, a typical 4 bedroomed house is valued at £650,000, whereas a 3 bedroomed house reduces to £450,000.

Overall, the new design personalises the layout for Mr Munsel's family, providing additional entertainment space, and large bedrooms for his 2 grown-up children. Notwithstanding a potentially poor investment decision, with building alteration costs and a reduction in the value of the property, it is particularly disappointing that such personalisation is permitted

for temporary residents from ABMC, versus the permanent impact that it will have on my property and family, and potentially to the subsequent occupiers from ABMC.

Mr Munsel's disregard for us as neighbours goes back to the first day he arrived. After inviting himself into our home, he took the liberty of walking throughout the downstairs and upstairs rooms making comments about how small and inadequate he considered the living spaces. I have a family with 3 children, and his comments were immensely insensitive and unwelcome, and made an unfortunate first impression. In addition, in November, he told my wife that he was going to remove the hedge running along the front boundary between our properties. For your record, I would consider any such act equivalent to criminal damage and I reserve the right to legal remedy.

I have lived here for almost 10 years, and based on conversations with other close neighbours, I believe neighbourhood relations and regional integration have deteriorated following Mr Munsel's arrival, and his conduct falls below what I had come to expect for an office of ABMC.

I would welcome your comments and an open dialogue regarding the proposed planning application for (b) (6) and, with respect, I request that ABMC encourages Mr Munsel to take a more neighbourly outlook.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dr. R. Felton', written in a cursive style.

Dr. R. Felton



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

August 6, 2018

Mrs. Barbara A. Carlson

(b) (6)

Dear Mrs. Carlson:

Your April 16, 2018 letter to the President was recently forwarded to the American Battle Monuments Commission for respond. You asked that the President reinstate the Floral Fund Program that ABMC discontinued in 2015.

We appreciate very much the sentiments expressed in your letter to the President, but we have found no reason over the past three years to resume ABMC's order-processing role in the program. First and most importantly, the ability to place flowers at ABMC's overseas cemeteries has not changed; we simply took ourselves out of the ordering process. Our web-based interface with commercial florists has been systematically improved for those desiring to decorate the final resting place of their loved ones. We remain, indeed, your first contact with your loved one and as such have provided a list of reputable international florists, with their contact information, for purposes of placing flowers on your brother's grave. Last month we personally tested the links to the commercial florists listed on our website and, in just a few minutes, we were able to place flowers at any ABMC European cemetery.

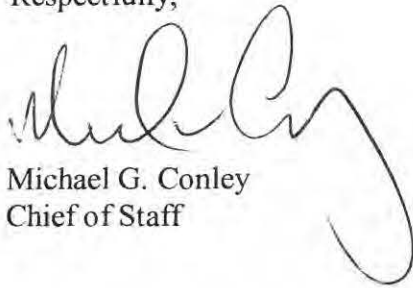
The Administration has been clear that federal agencies are to look for opportunities to eliminate or restructure services that can be performed better by the private sector. Placing and processing individual commercial floral orders is simply not inherently governmental. This service can be provided much more efficiently and effectively by commercial florists, so we removed ourselves from the financial transaction while continuing to offer a convenient portal to international florists through our website. In doing so, we remain an avenue for those who desire to decorate the graves of their loved ones and will continue to assist in all ways appropriate. The only thing that has changed, and has been our policy since 2015, is that we no longer accept your payment and place the order for you.

We understand the importance of remembering those who fell and remain interred overseas. That is our mission and we will always honor that sacred trust. The care with which we

maintain our overseas cemeteries and the programs we have designed to ensure that the service and sacrifice of those we honor is never forgotten attest to that commitment.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with the President and for your continued personal commitment to honoring our fallen men and women resting or memorialized overseas.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael G. Conley', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Michael G. Conley
Chief of Staff

(b) (5)



From: Horning, Daniel M. EOP/WHO [<mailto:Daniel.M.Horning@who.eop.gov>]
Sent: Friday, July 06, 2018 3:05 PM
To: Nosal Timothy
Cc: Henry, Richard R. EOP/WHO
Subject: Barbara Calson 20180612-16465026

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached letter. When you respond to the writer, please provide us with a copy and we will close this out. Should you choose not to provide a copy, please let us know the reason and we will then also close this case out.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Dan

Dan Horning
Associate Director, Agency Liaison
Office of Presidential Correspondence
Mobile: 202-881-7721 (no text)

ALM

April 16, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In May of 1944 my brother, Pvt. Joseph Rey, was killed in action during the push to Anzio and is interned in the American-Rome Cemetery in Florence, Italy. He was 19 years old from New York. I first learned that I had a half-brother while developing our family tree; he was never spoken of by the family. At the time of this discovery, my parents were deceased. A military history buff discovered my brother's resting place and introduced me to the ABMC and the Floral Fund Program. In 1996 I began annual requests to have flowers placed on Joseph's grave on his birthday and they, in turn, sent me a card with a photo of the flowers upon his gravesite. I've enclosed one of those cards.

In December 2014 I received the attached correspondence from the ABMC advising me that they would be closing the Floral Fund Program and would no longer process floral orders. My heart sank. They said orders must be placed directly with a florist, not through the ABMC. I checked out the florists on the Internet and found the process less than desirable.

It is difficult to put into words how one feels with a brother buried thousands of miles away and the only way that you have to express that you love and remember him taken away from you.

Mr. President, I am asking that this fund be reinstated, not only for myself, but for other families as well. These men and women gave their lives for our freedom and the least we can do for them is to honor and remember them in this small way.

Respectfully yours,

Barbara A. Carlson

Mrs. Barbara A. Carlson

(b) (6)

Enclosures 2

SICILY ROME AMERICAN CEMETERY & MEMORIAL



PVT JOSEPH REY

Name

C

6

8

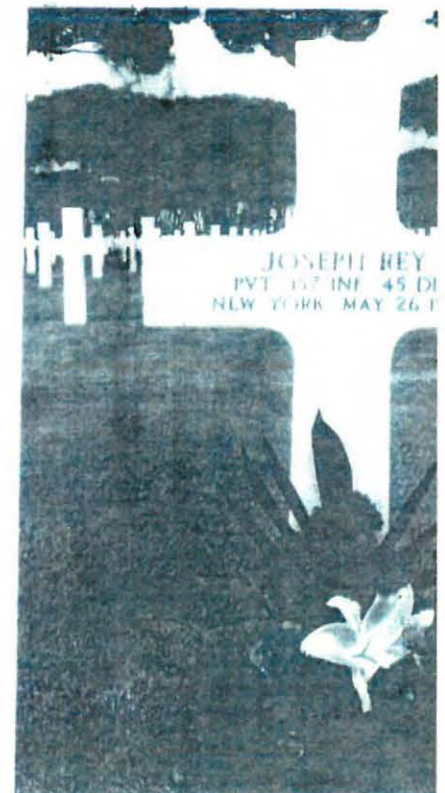
Plot

Row

Grave

26 October 2012

Date of Decoration



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMEN
OVERSEAS OPERATIO
GARCHES



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

December 15, 2014

Barbara A Carlson

(b) (6)

Dear Barbara Carlson,

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) honors the service, achievements, and sacrifices of our fallen. Our mission is one of the most hallowed within the U.S. federal government. Since its creation by Congress in 1923, ABMC has embraced a variety of programs and services to commemorate America's war dead in a manner that is respectful of those we honor and the family members who suffered the loss of a loved one in service to their country. As you would expect, we continually evaluate our programs and services to ensure that we are doing our best to keep the memory of our fallen alive, in a manner that effectively uses the resources provided to us.

As we approach the Centennial of World War I and the 75th anniversary of World War II, it is time to discontinue one of those services; the ABMC Floral Fund Program. There was a time when this program provided an important service to the next of kin, given the difficulty following the world wars of ordering floral arrangements for placement at our overseas cemeteries. In today's international commerce environment, however, that is no longer the situation. Accordingly, as of April 1, 2015, ABMC will close its Floral Fund Program and will no longer process floral orders.

After that date you still will be able to have flowers placed within ABMC cemeteries, but your orders must be placed directly with a florist, not through ABMC. A list of florists that offer international deliveries is enclosed.

We are aware that many families want flowers placed on Memorial Day 2015. That is why we are delaying closure of the program until April, to allow us to process those orders in time for Memorial Day.

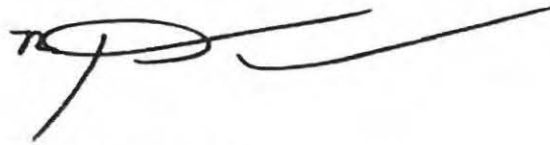
For all orders placed with ABMC prior to April 2, the last day for placement of arrangements will be June 1, 2015.

While the ABMC Floral Fund Program is closing, our commitment to honor the men and women buried and memorialized overseas is unwavering. With this commitment in mind, we will focus our efforts on telling the story of your loved one to ensure that their sacrifice is never forgotten. I ask that you consider sending us information and photos that we can share with the American public through our outreach efforts via the internet and public programs at the cemeteries. The more we know about those we honor, the more we can teach the visiting public. If you are willing to share information, please send that information to:

American Battle Monuments Commission
Attn: Alan Amelinckx
2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22201
Amelinckxa@abmc.gov
703-696-6412

Our staff throughout the world continues to work tirelessly to care for the hallowed grounds where our fallen rest. Our first chairman, General John J. Pershing, promised that "Time will not dim the glory of their deeds." Thank you for your understanding as we work to fulfill his promise.

With my best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Dalessandro', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

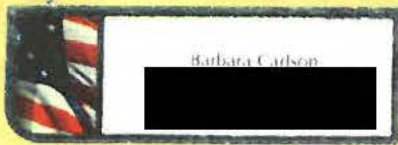
Robert J. Dalessandro

Deputy Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission

Florists Offering International Deliveries*

1-800-Flowers	http://www.1800flowers.com or 1-800-356-9377
Arena Flowers	http://www.arenaflowers.com
Flora200	http://www.flora2000.com or 1-800-456-1797
Flora Queen	http://www.floraqueen.com
From You Flowers	http://www.fromyouflowers.com or 1-800-838-8853
FTD	http://www.ftd.com/ or 1-800-736-3383
iFlorist	http://www.iflorist.co.uk
Interflora	https://www.fleurop.com/ or 1-888-630-4438
Pro Flowers	http://www.proflowers.com or 1-800-580-2913
Serenata Flowers	http://www.serenataflowers.com
Teleflora	http://www.teleflora.com or 1-800-835-3356

* The listing of florists does not constitute an endorsement of them by the U.S. Federal Government in regard to any product or service.



President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

485

APR 24 2018

QC✓#012

✓#034



Conley Mike

From: Dalessandro Robert SES
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2018 3:48 PM
To: 'Rondy Elliott'; Matz William, Secretary; Nosal Timothy; Wessels John SES
Cc: bob holliday; Susan Hadler; Rik Peirson
Subject: RE: Corrected attachment

Dear Rondy,

The Secretary asked me to respond to your emailed letter of 3 July 2018, on his behalf. We appreciate very much the thought that went into your most recent communication. However, much of what you propose via a website is already in place, and the elements that are not, we have looked into previously. Some of your specific suggestions are simply not appropriate for a government agency to undertake in competition with the private sector.

ABMC has systematically improved our web-based interface for those desiring to decorate the final resting place of their loved ones. We remain, indeed, your first contact with your loved one and as such have provided you a list of reputable international florists with their contact information, for purposes of placing flowers on your loved ones graves. I personally tested the floral ordering process through our website. In a matter of minutes, I was able to place flowers at any ABMC European cemetery. I had no problem and the order was processed immediately.

The agency will not consider redesigning our website to accommodate accepting personal credit cards or Paypal to process orders executed by a third-party vendor. We have clear guidance from the Administration to eliminate or restructure services that can be performed better by the private sector. Placing and processing individual commercial floral orders is simply not inherently governmental. This service can be provided much more efficiently and effectively by commercial florists, so we removed ourselves from the financial transaction while continuing to offer a convenient portal to international florists through our website. In doing so, we remain an avenue for those who desire to decorate the graves of their loved ones and will continue to assist in all ways appropriate. The only thing that has changed, and has been policy since 2015, is that we no longer place the order.

I understand your point about remembering our fallen. That is our mission and ABMC will always honor that sacred trust. The care with which we maintain our overseas cemeteries and the programs we have designed to ensure that the service and sacrifice of those we honor is never forgotten attest to that commitment.

Thank you again for sharing your suggestions with us, and for your continued personal commitment to honoring our fallen men and women resting in our overseas cemeteries.

Best regards,

Rob

Robert J. Dalessandro
Deputy Secretary

American Battle Monuments Commission
Courthouse Plaza II, Suite 500
2300 Clarendon Blvd



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

"Time will not dim the glory of their deeds."

General of the Armies John J. Pershing

Learn More at: www.abmc.gov

From: Rondy Elliott (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 03, 2018 12:23 PM
To: Matz William, Secretary; Dalessandro Robert SES; Nosal Timothy; Wessels John SES
Cc: bob holliday; Susan Hadler; Rik Peirson
Subject: Corrected attachment

All--

I have not been able to find in my "sent mail" the corrected email I sent this morning (very shortly after mailing the first) which contains the final draft of the letter that was intended for you at the ABMC.

So, with apologies, I am trying again. THIS is the letter you should receive from us with our proposal for a solution to the 'first contact' problem.

Thank you.
Rondy Elliott

Major General William Matz , Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission
Colonel (Ret.) Robert Dalessandro, Deputy Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission
American Battle Monuments Commission
2300 Clarendon Avenue, #500
Arlington, VA 22201

July 3, 2018

Dear Sirs,

We have received your letter in response to the meeting last Wednesday morning at the ABMC headquarters. I want you to know, that although the message came across differently at times, we realize that you did not "drop" the flower program. **Most of us realize that you only changed the first step, such that the ABMC is no longer involved in the ordering process.**

So you will know who is writing this letter, I am the one who was the last to tell her father's story. I'm afraid I didn't do a very polished job of it, since we had run out of time and I felt pressured. I hope you picked up the main points, and that you like my article in American Heritage magazine from May-June of 1994.

In re-examining and consolidating our ideas about this whole thing, we realize that what we are basically hoping for is that the **ABMC remain the first contact for those of us wishing to lay flower on their loved one's graves.** We gave several reasons why this is so important to us—that an agency of the government for which our dads died be our first go-to. The symbolism of this seems obvious to us, and we hope, now, to you.

You are no doubt familiar with the oft mentioned adage, that says, "Don't complain to an entity, an institution, a group, etc. about something you don't like without offering them a solution." Well, in debriefing after the interview, I think I may have hit upon just that. It's so simple I can't believe it took all this time to come up with it. The rest of the team is in agreement, and on their behalf, I now present this to you for your consideration.

The ABMC has a website—a very nice one. Across the top, as with most websites, there is a list of links one can follow to learn or do more—"About Us," "Search Burials," "Education Resources," etc. **You add a "secure" one that says "DECORATE A GRAVE."** The person clicks on that link which takes them to a list of cemeteries. He or she clicks on the cemetery in which their loved one is buried. Then the names of one or two local florists come up on the next page. The person picks one. This takes you

then to an online form which you fill out stating name of person, grave location, and date wanted to lay flowers, the cost in American dollars, etc., maybe a message that can be written on a card that is impervious to weather. As is done by thousands of businesses all over the world, one can then enter their credit card information or Pay Pal account. Things proceed without any problems with language barriers or currency conversions. The currency conversion is on your receipt when you get your bill from the credit card company, as is done all the time when making a purchase in a foreign country .

You no doubt have a skilled webmaster who will know how to set this up. The exact steps may not be chronologically the way I explained them, but the webmaster can deal with these small details.

There is one other item and that is that the ABMC needs to negotiate fixed prices with the florists involved. That is a necessary part of this. As we may have mentioned, the prices for grave decorations have been very much inflated since the new system of ordering was put in place. We would still be victim to this unless there is some kind of agreement with the ABMC as to cost. Granted, these would be different in different countries. They just need to be set, so that American families are protected. They could of course be reviewed every couple years to consider inflation.

I'm sure that everyone involved would like to get this problem solved as a win-win situation for all concerned. If you feel this is a viable solution, let's discuss putting it into place as soon as possible. Then we'll get out of your hair and be happy. We are already happy with 99% of what the Commission is doing. It's just this ONE little thing—we want the ABMC to be the place we go to first, it's the only way it makes sense, and we would like to send our children and grandchildren to an agency of the government for which our fathers died, not someone who is primarily a businessperson.

If such a plan is implemented, I would imagine it would cost the ABMC little, if any money. We would also assume that the other aspects of floral decoration would remain the same as always.... cemetery staff places the arrangement, takes a picture and sends it to the next of kin. Also on that website link there should be an indicator as to how long prior to the date of floral placement the order should be sent.

What is your reaction to this proposal?

Sincerely, with gratitude to you for all you do, and always, In Their Memory,

Rondy Elliott

Daughter of Corporal Frank M. Elliott

KIA 6/6/44 Interred in the Normandy American Cemetery

(b) (6)

Bob Holliday

Son of Captain Karl O. Holliday

KIA 4/13/45 Interred in the Netherlands American Cemetery

(b) (6)

Susan Johnson Hadler

Daughter of Second Lieutenant David S. Johnson

KIA 4/12/45 Memorialized on the Wall of the Missing, Luxembourg American Cemetery

(b) (6)

Rik Peirson

Son of First Lieutenant John S. Peirson

KIA 12/25/44 Interred in the Henri Chapelle American Cemetery

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



From: Rondy Elliott (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, July 03, 2018 8:09 AM
To: Matz William, Secretary
Cc: (b) (6); Rik Peirson; Susan Hadler; Dalessandro Robert SES; Wessels John SES; Nosal Timothy
Subject: Re: ABMC Flower Fund

Dear General Matz, Colonel Dalessandro, and others on the ABMC staff,

Thank you for your well-considered and timely reply to the matters discussed in our meeting last Wednesday, June 27, in the ABMC Headquarters in Arlington. It certainly indicates that you paid close attention to our concerns and that you, while disagreeing about some parts of the dialogue, basically understand what we consider to be an issue.

In the interest of time and unnecessary wordiness, I direct your attention to an attachment to this email. We hope you will agree that there is a solution to this problem that will be acceptable to all of us. The others on our team, of course speaking for the thousands of WWII children who lost their father in this war and who have fathers buried in overseas cemeteries, have agreed that I may send this response.

Sincerely,

Rondy Elliott

(b) (6)

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the content of the email, starting below the name 'Rondy Elliott' and ending above the date and sender information.

On Mon, Jul 2, 2018 at 2:51 PM Matz William, Secretary <matzw@abmc.gov> wrote:

Dear Rondy, Susan, Bob, and Rik:

I want to personally thank you for taking the time to meet with me last week. I especially enjoyed learning about your experiences and your fathers' heroic service during World War II. What an example of the indomitable sense of duty, honor, and courage demonstrated by that generation.

Thank you also for sharing your perspective on the former ABMC flower fund program which was closed in 2015. In transitioning from that, I believe that ABMC is moving in the right direction in developing interpretative and educational outreach programs which we use to tell your fathers' stories to future generations.

Although we certainly disagree on the changes implemented to the flower fund program, I also do not agree with you that ABMC has "stepped away" from our obligations to the families of our fallen. In fact, I would argue that we have gone to great lengths to preserve and tell the story of the men and women we honor in our cemeteries. By building visitor centers, developing education resources, improving our outreach efforts and by growing interpretative programs at the cemeteries we are "stepping up" to our obligations and the feedback we are receiving is very positive. We endeavor to continue to improve our long-standing connection to you and your loved ones and have renewed our commitment to them by sharing their personal stories with a much larger audience through the interpretative and outreach tools available in this digital age.

As promised, I have asked our Director of Cemetery Operations to look into the floral companies posted on our website who do not have English speaking staff members (see attachment). We will do our best in resolving that issue. We have seen improvements in online ordering during the transition period. One florist, *Florist American Cemetery*, located in France, serves all of our cemeteries in Europe. This company offers both a French and English option for their website. Another florist, *'t Anemoontje*, in the Netherlands, has their website translated directly into English. In both cases, the variety of wreaths and floral decorations available has increased since ABMC moved away from the old flower fund program.

I reviewed the packet of letters that you left with me following our meeting. I asked my staff to review the correspondence as well. With rare exception, few of those individuals ever contacted ABMC. My staff noticed that one of the common complaints was the difficulty with obtaining a photograph of the flowers at the gravesite. We do have a staff member whose additional duty is to process these photo requests, Mrs. Carol Tyler. Carol is available to assist with obtaining floral placement photos and anyone can contact her through www.ABMC.gov, by phone (703-696-5177) or by direct e-mail (tylerc@abmc.gov). She can and has resolved issues relating to photo requests.

Carol can also assist if someone is having difficulty ordering flowers. If needed, Carol can contact one of the French speakers within the ABMC staff, who, in turn, can provide assistance. The ABMC webpage dedicated to ordering flowers is clear, "If you experience problems trying to order flowers, please visit the [Contact Us](#) page and submit a message. Someone from the ABMC staff will respond and work with you to ensure your order is placed."

Several of the documents that you provided in the packet imply that it is no longer possible to order flowers for placement in an ABMC cemetery. Let me make this clear, it has always been possible to have flowers placed within an ABMC cemetery and loved ones of those interred are ordering flowers and having them placed at gravesites every week. When requested, ABMC will provide a photo of those flowers. The only part of the process that has changed is that ABMC no longer orders the flowers. Loved ones like yourself, order the flowers as is done in all other American military cemeteries to include Arlington National Cemetery.

We remain committed to this change as much as feasible and will continue to assist those who desire to remember our nation's fallen.

My warmest regards,

Bill

William M. Matz

Secretary

American Battle Monuments Commission



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

November 16, 2015

Howard S. Baer, Col USAF (Ret)

(b) (6)

Dear Colonel Baer:

I am responding to your letter to the President in regards to the ABMC Flower Fund program. We received the letter from the White House on Tuesday, November 10.

Tim Nosal is a retired Navy lieutenant commander and a combat veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I am a retired Air Force colonel. I have been with the agency 19 years, after spending 25 years in uniform. Both of us have been involved in managing the Flower Fund program. We fully understand service, sacrifice and loss, and we share your passion for commemorating and remembering that sacrifice. I also understand the emotions that inspire reactions to decisions with which we disagree, so I will attempt here to provide the context for the decision our agency made to redirect the Flower Fund program. We have no record of you contacting our office previously. If this is repetitive, I apologize.

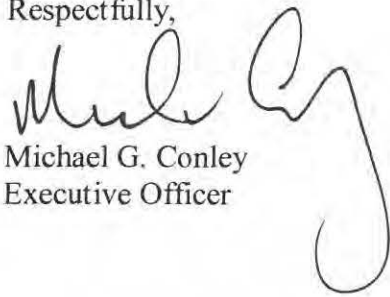
When the Flower Fund began after World War II, it provided a way for families to place flowers at overseas graves when there were no alternatives available. Today, however, commercial florists process and place floral orders much more quickly and efficiently than we are able to do. Many of our visitors were taking advantage of the services offered by the floral industry well before we changed our program. Our intent was not to slight anyone or any group. In fact we continue to provide direct next-of-kin, at no cost to them, a photograph of graveside floral placements ordered through commercial florists. (Direct next-of-kin are defined as a spouse, sibling or child of the deceased.)

Concurrently, visitor feedback in recent years informed us that younger Americans lacked the understanding of why and under what circumstances our fallen had made the ultimate sacrifice, and that, if we are to properly honor our nation's war dead, we needed to do a much better job of providing historical context to visitors and students. That is now a strategic focus of the Commission. ABMC was created to perpetuate the memory of our fallen heroes. That is our purpose.

We are not florists. Our federal agency should not compete with the commercial floral industry, which is trained and equipped to service customers with much less lead time and with the added convenience of electronic payment. So while the ABMC Flower Fund Program is changing, ABMC's commitment to honoring the men and women buried and memorialized overseas is unwavering. We continue to direct our efforts to fulfilling the promise of our first chairman, General John J. Pershing, that "time will not dim the glory of their deeds."

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael G. Conley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "y" at the end.

Michael G. Conley
Executive Officer

From: Howard S. Baer

Submitted: 5/28/2015 11:00 AM EDT

Email: (b) (6)

Phone:

Address:

Message: Dear President Obama, I am writing to express my disappointment in you allowing the "Flower Fund" used to honor deceased veterans interred on foreign soil to be shut down. The comments made by the American Battle Monuments Commission spokesman, Tim Nosal, border on being disrespectful to the American war dead of WWII. He seemed to indicate that assisting a war widow was too time consuming. Maybe it was too time consuming for those men and women to answer their country's call. Maybe if the employees of this agency spent less time on social media they would find the time to assist the widows of America's war dead. Mr. Nosal conveyed the impression that his and his co-workers time was way too valuable to assist those who may not know how to order flowers in a foreign country. I urge you to find the funds to continue this program and to relieve Mr. Nosal of his position as a spokesman for this government agency. He is the epitome of a heartless bureaucrat. Perhaps you could serve one less shrimp at the State Dinner for the leader of the country who caused the death of many of these veterans and put the money to keeping the Flower Fund. Regards, Howard S Baer, Colonel, USAF (Ret)



AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

October 5, 2015

Louis P. Kartsonis, M.D.

(b) (6)

Dear Dr. Kartsonis:

I am writing in response to your letter expressing concern about the closure of Normandy American Cemetery on the day of your tour group's visit. I regret that you missed the opportunity to visit the cemetery, and that you were not given a more complete explanation other than "power issue."

A transformer tower that provides electricity to the cemetery collapsed on the night of September 8th. All cemetery facilities were without electricity and the high voltage line had fallen, which was potentially dangerous to visitors and staff. The site was closed until the French electrical company could secure the line and restore power with generators, as the tower had to be rebuilt. The cemetery was not able to re-open to the public until 9:00 am on September 10th.

I'm sorry that the individual you met at the gate did not convey the seriousness of the issue, so your group would have better understood why we could not grant access.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael G. Conley", with a long, sweeping flourish extending from the bottom right.

Michael G. Conley
Executive Officer

Louis P. Kartsonis, M.D.

OPHTHALMOLOGY
Diplomate, American Board of Ophthalmology

Office:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

September 15, 2015

Mr. Michael Conley
American Battle Monuments Commission
Courthouse Plaza II, Suite 500
2300 Clarendon Blvd
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: American Cemetery-Normandy

Dear Mr. Conley:

I'm writing to ask why the American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer was closed on September 9th. I was one of 19 Americans taking an all-day tour of Normandy on the 9th. When our tour bus arrived at the cemetery, we were met at the gate by personnel who said the cemetery was closed until further notice. No explanation was given. A handwritten note on the gate stated there was a "power" issue.

To say there was disappointment would be a monumental understatement. Some of us had one day to visit this hallowed ground and will probably never return. The courtesy of an explanation would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Lou Kartsonis

Louis P. Kartsonis, M.D.

Conley Mike

From: Conley Mike
Sent: Wednesday, July 18, 2018 12:54 PM
To: 'Nicole.Vandal@mail.house.gov'
Cc: Philpot Christine; Nosal Timothy (nosalt@abmc.gov)
Subject: RE: WWII Memorial Missing Words?
Attachments: FDR quote.doc; FDR speech.doc

Nicole,

Thanks for sending this to us for response. It has been a few years since I've had to respond to this hoax, which reappears from time to time over the years.

The origin of the hoax goes back to the memorial's opening 14 years ago, in 2004. Our standard response is attached. In short, the sentence the woman is purported to be reading isn't inscribed on the memorial. I've also attached a copy of President Roosevelt's speech so you can see both sentences in context.

Thanks again for the opportunity to clarify this issue for your constituent.

Respectfully,
Mike

Michael G. Conley

Chief of Staff
American Battle Monuments Commission
2300 Clarendon Boulevard | Arlington, VA 22201-3367 | T 703-696-6778
www.abmc.gov | [Join us on Facebook](#)



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

From: Vandal, Nicole [<mailto:Nicole.Vandal@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 18, 2018 12:00 PM
To: Philpot Christine
Cc: Hodgkins, Holly
Subject: WWII Memorial Missing Words?

To Whom It May Concern,

Recently Congressman McGovern's office received an inquiry about the new WWII Monument. The constituent describes that on the monument there are words missing from President Roosevelt's Pearl Harbor speech that is engraved. The words that are supposedly missing are "So help us God". The attached file is the original inquiry.

Please let us know if these words are in fact missing and if so what we can do about this.

Thank you,

Nicole Vandal

Congressional Intern

Congressman Jim McGovern | MA-02

12 East Worcester Street, Suite 1

Worcester, MA 01604

(O)508.831.7356 | (F) 508.754.0982

McGovern.House.Gov

Updates from Rep. Jim McGovern



**Statement of the
American Battle Monuments Commission
in response to the FDR
WWII Memorial Inscription Inquiry**

As is so often the case in reports that become widespread, criticism of editing FDR's famous 'Date of Infamy' speech inscription on the National World War II Memorial is unfounded.

The line in the speech that some mistakenly claim was edited – "With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounded determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph, *so help us God*" – is not inscribed on the memorial.

The sentence that is inscribed – "No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people, in their righteous might, will win through to absolute victory" – appears earlier in FDR's speech and is used in its entirety.

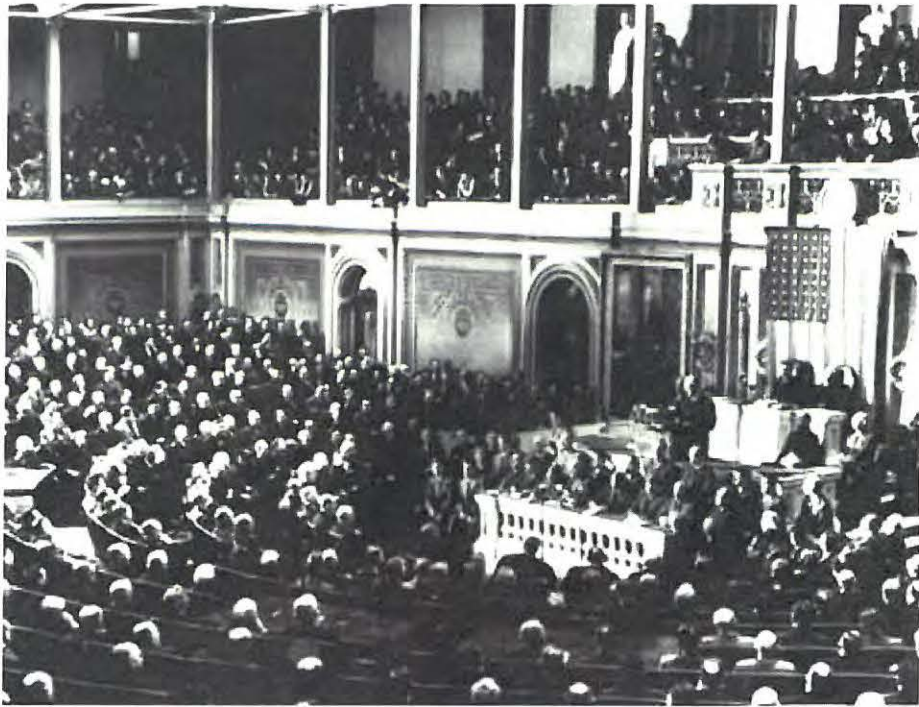
The inscribed sentence was selected because its phrasing – "No matter how long it may take us to overcome *this premeditated invasion...*" – directly relates to the rest of the carved inscription, which commemorates the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The complete inscription in the memorial reads as follows:

PEARL HARBOR

DECEMBER 7, 1941, A DATE WHICH WILL LIVE IN INFAMY...NO MATTER
HOW LONG IT MAY TAKE US TO OVERCOME THIS PREMEDITATED INVASION,
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, IN THEIR RIGHTEOUS MIGHT,
WILL WIN THROUGH TO ABSOLUTE VICTORY

Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation



delivered on December 8, 1941

[Audio mp3 of Address](#)

[Audio mp3 Stream of Address](#)



[click for pdf](#)

[AUTHENTICITY CERTIFIED: Text version below transcribed directly from audio. (2)]

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:

Yesterday, December 7th, 1941 -- a date which will live in infamy -- the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its government and its emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.

Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in the American island of Oahu, the Japanese ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to our Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. And while this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or of armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time, the Japanese government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday, the Japanese government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night, Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night, Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night, Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night, the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

And this morning, the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation.



As commander in chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. But always will our whole nation remember the character of the onslaught against us.

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7th, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese empire.



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

August 9, 2018

(b) (6)

Dear Mrs. (b) (6)

Your June 30, 2018 e-mail to the President was recently forwarded to the American Battle Monuments Commission for a response. You expressed to the President your concerns about the management of Lorraine American Cemetery.

Thank you for expressing your concern describing your experiences at both Lorraine and Cambridge American Cemeteries.

What you experienced at Lorraine American Cemetery is not normal and far out of the ordinary. I shared your e-mail with our Cemetery Operations staff. They will look into your concerns and address this with the cemetery staff at Lorraine. Please accept my apologies. We will do what we can to ensure this doesn't happen again.

Your visit to Lorraine should have been much like your visit to Cambridge. Each of our cemeteries has an American Superintendent managing the site. The majority of the Superintendents are veterans and many are retired including the Superintendents of both Lorraine and Cambridge.

As you learned from your visit to Cambridge, we understand the importance of remembering those who fell in World War II and remain interred overseas. That is our mission and we will always honor that sacred trust. The care with which we maintain our overseas cemeteries and the programs we have designed to ensure that the service and sacrifice of those we honor is never forgotten attest to that commitment.

ABMC is committed to preserving the memory of those we honor. In this effort, we are in the process of designing a visitor centers for several of our cemeteries and we are developing classroom materials for teachers that will bring the memories off the men and women overseas into American classrooms. If you wish to contribute to these efforts, we are actively seeking information about the people buried in our cemeteries. We are especially looking for photos to add to the website. For more information about the cemeteries under our care and the men and women we honor, please visit www.abmc.gov or www.abmceducation.org.

Once again thank you for sharing your concerns with the President. I also want to thank you for your continued personal commitment to honoring your uncle, your cousin, and the many other men and women resting or memorialized overseas.

Should you have any further concerns in this regard, please feel free to contact me direct at 703-696-6789 or by e-mail nosalt@abmc.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Nosal', with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

Timothy A. Nosal
Chief of External Affairs



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

17 December 2016

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
3335 S. Airport Rd. W
Suite 6B
Traverse City, MI 49684

Dear Senator Stabenow:

Your query to the American Embassy in France was forwarded to our office for response. This is in reference to the query filed by Mr. (b) (6)

Although the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) has military antecedents, we are a civilian agency reporting under the Executive Branch and therefore, are not part of the Department of Defense. As with other non-military U.S. agencies we operate under the authority of the Department of State on foreign soil and in this particular situation under the U.S. Ambassador in Paris, France.

The U.S. service members buried in the ABMC cemeteries are located on land which has been given to the United States in perpetuity as a gift from the host nation to the United States. The ABMC cemeteries to include Normandy American Cemetery are all on land administered by the U.S. through a treaty between the nations. However, this territory remains sovereign host nation soil.

The State Department State provides security in cooperation and coordination with local law enforcement authorities. In the case of our cemeteries in France, this is under a Local Guard contract administered by the US Embassy in Paris. The guard force is made up of trained French personnel who provide security at our sites throughout France. Therefore, the U.S. military does not have the authority or jurisdiction to perform any security functions or police actions on any of our cemeteries located on foreign soil.

I hope that you will find this information useful and please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 703-696-6789 or by e-mail at nosalt@abmc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy A. Nosal".

Timothy A. Nosal
Chief of External Affairs

Nosal Timothy

From: Young Christine
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2016 12:11 PM
To: Nosal Timothy; Conley Mike
Cc: Radford Justin; Torrence Gerald
Subject: Fw: Inquiry Submission for (b) (6) (Intranet Quorum IMA00348588)
Attachments: sbidlack.pdf; IQFormatFile.txt

Tim/Mike,

This inquiry came VFR direct front he Consular section at the Embassy. Justin and I provided John with a draft response which he will forward in a separate email to both of you since HQ tracks the Congressional Inquiries.

Thank you,

Tina

From: Duvernois Frederique
Sent: Wednesday, December 7, 2016 4:01 AM
To: Wessels John SES; Young Christine; Radford Justin
Subject: FW: Inquiry Submission for (b) (6) (Intranet Quorum IMA00348588)

John, Tina and Justin,
The consular section just forwarded this to us.
Thanks,
Frédérique

From: ConsularParis, Paris [<mailto:ConsularParis@state.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2016 9:37 AM
To: Duvernois Frederique
Subject: FW: Inquiry Submission for (b) (6) (Intranet Quorum IMA00348588)

For your attention.
Thank you.
Agnes d'Aboville

Official - SBU
UNCLASSIFIED

From: Office of Senator Stabenow (imailagent) [<mailto:services@stabenow.senate.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2016 10:26 PM
To: ConsularParis, Paris
Subject: Inquiry Submission for (b) (6) (Intranet Quorum IMA00348588)

United States Senate

731 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2204

December 6, 2016

Consular Officer
U.S. Consulate in Paris
2, Rue Saint-Florentin
75382 Paris, Cedex 08

Dear Consular Officer,

I am writing on behalf of (b) (6), who contacted me regarding clarification of security and contracting for security at American Battle Monuments Commission cemeteries in France.

I have included background information I received about this issue. I would appreciate your review and response to these questions or concerns.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact JoAnn Papenfuss in my Northern Michigan Office at 231-929-1031. You can respond by emailing Services@Stabenow.Senate.gov. If you are not able to email your response, you may fax it to 231-929-1250 or send by postal mail to 3335 S Airport Rd W, Suite 6B, Traverse City, MI 49684.

Thank you for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Authorization Form

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow

RECEIVED
DEC 08 2016

BY: *[Signature]*

Senator Stabenow and members of her staff have my full authorization and permission to receive and review any information contained in my file and/or forward any correspondence I have sent them:

PLEASE PRINT AND SIGN THIS DOCUMENT		
Please print full name: <i>If you are married, use your legal name (i.e.: Mary Ann Smith, not Mrs. John Smith)</i>		
(b) (6)		
Address: (b) (6)		
City: (b) (6)	State: (b) (6)	Zip: (b) (6)
Cell phone: (b) (6)	Home phone: (b) (6)	
Work phone: (Retired)	Fax:	
Email: (b) (6)		
Legal signature: (b) (6)		
ID or claim # (if applicable):		
Description of problem (please attach additional documents if necessary):		
<p>Senator Stabenow:</p> <p>It has come to my attention that the United States Military Cemetery at Omaha Beach, Normandy, France, is guarded by a private security company. I received this information from a friend and Vietnam Veteran (Bronze Star) after he recently returned from visiting this sacred place.</p> <p>According to my information, our Cemetery is guarded by a U.K.-based security multinational company, called "G4S." I would like to know if this can possibly be true. If so, this is very disturbing. As the proud father of an active-duty prior-enlisted Naval Officer aboard the Wasp Class Amphibious Assault Ship, USS Makin Island (LHD-8), with deployments to Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf, I find this hard to believe. If it is true, it is an outrage. Our hallowed World War Two cemeteries should be guarded by United States Military troops, not foreign nationals.</p> <p>I am requesting that you look into this matter and provide me with clarification.</p> <p>Thank you very much.</p> <p>(b) (6)</p>		

You can return this signed authorization form via e-mail to: services@stabenow.senate.gov



AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

February 3, 2016

The Honorable Mark Kirk
230 South Dearborn Street
Suite 3900
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Senator Kirk:

Thank you for contracting the American Battle Monuments Commission. This letter is in response to your January 8, 2016 correspondence with our office. I apologize for not providing a complete response sooner.

The situation at Clark Veterans Cemetery which your constituent contacted you about was resolved in late 2014. In the fall of 2014, the Clark Development Board halted U.S. veteran burials at Clark. The stoppage was temporary and U.S. Embassy in Manila was able to resolve the issue. Burials of eligible American veterans have been taking place in Clark Veterans Cemetery since late 2014.

Should you or your constituent have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 703-696-6789 or nosalt@abmc.gov.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Nosal
Chief, External Affairs

United States Senate

January 8, 2016

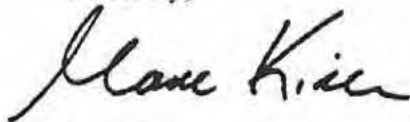
Ms. Christine Fant
Director of Finance
American Battlements Commission
Courthouse Plaza 2, Suite 500
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Fant:

I am writing on behalf of my constituent, (b) (6). I previously sent an inquiry on September 29, 2014 and April 24, 2015. I would appreciate your providing a status report on Mr. (b) (6)'s concerns with Clark Cemetery located on the former USAF Clark Base in the Philippines.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please direct your reply to my Chicago office. If you have any questions, please contact Edward Kelly at 312-886-3506.

Sincerely,



Mark Kirk
U. S. Senator

MSK:epk

United States Senate

September 29, 2014

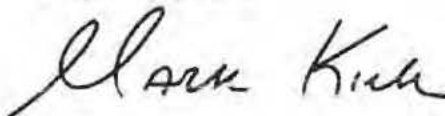
Ms. Christine Fant
Director of Finance
American Battle Monuments Commission
Courthouse Plaza 2, Suite 500
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Fant:

I am writing on behalf of my constituent, (b) (6) of Springfield, Illinois, regarding his concerns with Clark Cemetery located in the former USAF Clark Base in the Philippines. Attached is a copy of my constituent's correspondence.

I would appreciate your review of this matter. Any information you can provide would be welcomed. Thank you for your attention to Mr. Brown's concerns. Please direct your reply to Edward Kelly in my Chicago office.

Very truly yours,



Mark Kirk
United States Senator

MSK:epk

E-Mail Viewer

[\[Message \]](#) [\[Details \]](#) [\[Attachments \]](#) [\[Headers \]](#) [\[Source \]](#)[\[HTML\]](#)

From: (b) (6)
Date: 9/29/2014 4:28:37 AM
To: "webmail@kirk-iq.senate.gov" <webmail@kirk-iq.senate.gov>
Cc:
Subject: Clark Cemetery Philippines

<IP>120.29.96.178</IP>
<APP>SCCMAIL
<PREFIX>Mr.</PREFIX>
<FIRST>(b) (6) T</FIRST>
<LAST>(b) (6) AST</LAST>
<ADDR1>(b) (6) </ADDR1>
<CITY>(b) (6) </CITY>
<STATE>(b) (6) ATE</STATE>
<ZIP>(b) (6) </ZIP>
<PHONE>(b) (6) </PHONE>
<EMAIL>(b) (6) </EMAIL>
<MSG> Sir,

First, I grew up in (b) (6) I left (b) (6) in (b) (6) serve in the military, which I did so honorably and retired in 2005. I remained overseas after my military career.

My concern is Clark Cemetery located in the former USAF Clark Base, Philippines. Recently the cemetery finally came into the control of the American Battle Monuments Commission, which was supposed to be a good thing.

As of last month, the folks that manage the property, Clark Development issued a notice that there will be no burials until further notice. Not only is this a travesty to Filipino Scouts who are also being buried there, it is a grave injustice to American Vets that are residing here.

We currently have Veterans that have passed away since this outrageous decree and they are being kept (held hostage) at various funeral homes throughout the area or have been buried in local memorial lots, which if the lot is not paid in full or the family opts for yearly payments, which would mean sooner or later that vets remains would be removed and sent to the local garbage site. Yes, it is true and that is how business is conducted here.

If possible, can you have someone raise a ruckus about this? We can't be held hostage by the Philippines when we are doing are part by providing them with aid and military assistance. It is completely unacceptable how the Philippines treat their own Veterans and our American veterans, by some under the table dealings requesting monies or whatever? Remember, the VA OPC located in Manila was not built for the American Vet, it was built for the Filipino Vets who served in WWII. Americans are just lucky for it being here and I myself am extremely grateful for it.

On a two closing separate notes, your drop down Prefix menu is out of whack in listing military

ranks. Might want to have your data folks take a look and correct it. And, I now reside here in the Philippines. I'm still a loyal Illini fan, regardless of where I hang my hat, but most importantly...I am a American Vet.

Semper Fidelis,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

MSG>

<ISSUE>CASE.VET</ISSUE>

<REFERER>http://www.kirk.senate.gov/?p=federal_agency_help</REFERER>

</APP>

[Close]

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1308

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

U.S. SENATE
JAN 27 2016
PM 3:11

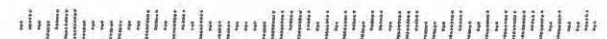
Clara Kirk
U.S.S.

RECEIVED
JAN 27 2016
U.S.

Ms. Christine Fant
Director of Finance
American Battlements Commission
Courthouse Plaza 2, Suite 500
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201



2220183967 0009





AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

September 15, 2016

The Honorable Bill Nelson
226 East Robinson St. Suite 410
Orlando, FL 32801

Dear Senator Nelson:

Thank you for contacting the American battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). This letter is in reference to the query filed by Mr. (b) (6)

The monument in questions was a gifted to the United States by the local community surrounding the Normandy American Cemetery in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the D-Day landings. The monument represents the appreciation of the community liberated by the Armed Forces of the United States in 1944 and is a token of gratitude to the men and women who rest in the cemetery today. When the monument was constructed, a typographical error was accidentally inserted into the text. Please understand there was no intent to offend or disrespect those that the monument honors.

The superintendent of Normandy American Cemetery has removed the monument and is endeavoring to determine how to best make the correction.

Should you have further questions in this regard, please feel free to contact me by phone at 703-696-6789 or by e-mail at nosalt@abmc.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Nosal
Chief of External Affairs



AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

September 15, 2016

The Honorable Bill Nelson
226 East Robinson St. Suite 410
Orlando, FL 32801

Dear Senator Nelson:

Thank you for contacting the American battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). This letter is in reference to the query filed by Mr. (b) (6)

The monument in questions was a gifted to the United States by the local community surrounding the Normandy American Cemetery in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the D-Day landings. The monument represents the appreciation of the community liberated by the Armed Forces of the United States in 1944 and is a token of gratitude to the men and women who rest in the cemetery today. When the monument was constructed, a typographical error was accidentally inserted into the text. Please understand there was no intent to offend or disrespect those that the monument honors.

The superintendent of Normandy American Cemetery has removed the monument and is endeavoring to determine how to best make the correction.

Should you have further questions in this regard, please feel free to contact me by phone at 703-696-6789 or by e-mail at nosalt@abmc.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Nosal
Chief of External Affairs



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

BILL NELSON
FLORIDA

9/14/16
Quinn

August 31, 2016

American Battle Monuments Commission
Courthouse Plaza 2, Suite 500
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find enclosed correspondence I received from one of my constituents. It involves an important matter under the jurisdiction of your agency.

Your review and response to the issues raised would be greatly appreciated. Please send your correspondence directly to my office and reference (b) (6) for our records. I look forward to a response at your earliest convenience and thank you in advance for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

Bill Nelson

BN/ds
177709-2CM

Enclosure

Please complete the sections that apply to your case.

Military or Veteran's Issues

Military ID/VA ID/Other ID Number _____ Sponsor's ID / SSN _____
Rank / Unit _____ Duty Station _____

Immigration Issues

Receipt Number _____ Alien Registration Number A - _____
Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____
Type of Application Filed _____

Social Security Administration Issues

Type of file claimed?

Initial Claim	Date Filed _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pending	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
Reconsideration	Date Filed _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pending	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
ALJ Hearing	Date Filed _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pending	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
Appeals Council	Date Filed _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pending	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied

Case Details

Please briefly explain your problem. (In writing, provide my office with a detailed account. Include any additional relevant correspondence that you have initiated or received concerning your problem.)

Please state how you would like Senator Nelson to help you.

While we were at the American cemetery at Colleville I took a picture of the sign as you enter. Didn't notice at the time but while looking through them I noticed a misprint. Thought maybe you could get some motion on it?? Tried the American Battle Monuments Commission last week (no response) and sent an email to VFW the other day. They replied to try the cemetery directly.

The sign "The Longest Night" says:

Visitor

Look how many of them there were

Look how young they were

They died for your freedom

Hold back your tears and keep silent.

Felty certain it should say "Look how young they were"??

Seems a bit disgraceful and disrespectful.

Will gladly send photo

Consent For Release Of Information/4.25.05

BILL NELSON
FLORIDA

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-0905



Consent For Release Of Information

The Privacy Act of 1974 requires that written consent be obtained from the constituent before information can be disclosed from a government agency's record. So that I can legally act on your behalf, please complete and sign the following statement and return it to me. *This form is available to the public free of charge.*

Please note, if you are inquiring on behalf of someone, that person must sign the release.

Today's Date 8/19/2016 Social Security Number (b) (6)

☒ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐ Dr. (b) (6) First (b) (6) Middle (b) (6) Last

Mailing Address (b) (6)

Home Phone (b) (6) Cell Phone (b) (6) Work Phone _____

Date of Birth (b) (6) E-mail Address (b) (6)

I hereby authorize Senator Nelson or his representative to make inquiries into my personal records and or files, and to obtain information about me pertaining to my request for assistance.

Signature (b) (6) For The Attention Of _____

Please return form to:

By Mail:

Office of Senator Bill Nelson
225 East Robinson Street, Suite 410
Orlando, Florida 32801

By Fax:

Fax: (407) 872-7165

Questions:

Telephone: (407) 872-7161
Toll-Free in Florida Only:
(888) 671-4091

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

IT: ☐ Yes ☐ No IT # _____ (Caseworker Only) Cross Reference Name _____

Referral: ☐ FTL ☐ FTM ☐ JAX ☐ MIA ☐ ORL ☐ TAL ☐ TPA ☐ WPB ☐ BN ☐ GN ☐ PM ☐ BS

Web Tracking # 8256148

PLEASE COMPLETE PAGE 2 OF THIS FORM

THE AMERICAN CEMETERY AT COLLEVILLE. THE LONGEST NIGHT

At the top of the plateau overlooking Omaha Beach, gently sloping down to the sea, whence came the liberators, this plot of French soil has been given over in perpetuity to the United States. Here lie nearly 10,000 soldiers.

On a low wall, around the monument, figure the names of the 1,557 soldiers whose bodies were never found.

VISITOR,

Look how many of them there were
Look how young they were
They died for your freedom
Hold back your tears and keep silent.

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Bill Nelson

U.S.S.





AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

February 12, 2015

The Honorable Mark R. Warner
919 East Main Street
Suite 630
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Senator Warner:

I am responding to your recent letter on behalf of our Chairman, General McPeak. The letter was in regard to concerns expressed by Ms. Jean Reid about the closing ABMC flower fund program.

When the Flower Fund program began after World War II, it provided a way for families to place flowers at overseas graves when there were no other alternatives available. Today, commercial florists process and place floral orders much more quickly and efficiently than we ever could. Many of our visitors already take advantage of the services offered by the floral industry. The opportunity to place flowers in our overseas cemeteries is not going away; it is simply time for the ABMC staff to refocus. The decision to close the floral program was a difficult one. After discussion with staff and senior management, our Commissioners decided to close the program.

Our focus is shifting where it belongs - - preserving the memories of our fallen. Visitor feedback in recent years informed us that younger Americans lacked the understanding of why and under what circumstances our fallen had made the ultimate sacrifice. We realized we needed to provide context to properly honor our nation's war dead.

Coupled with increases in visitation, we are obligated to adapt to meet the needs of our visitors. As such, ABMC is growing its interpretation program; we are building one similar to the National Park Service, an organization dedicated to public history education/awareness. Several years ago, we opened a visitor center at Normandy, which greatly enhanced the visitor experience. Last year, we opened visitor centers at Pointe du Hoc, Cambridge, and Sicily-Rome. Future visitor centers are in progress for Flanders, Meuse-Argonne, and Manila, along with a smaller visitor center or "contact station" at our Chateau-Thierry Monument.

In addition, we are training our staff on how to present information to the visiting public on those we honor. In essence, they are learning techniques and methods to better ensure that *"time will not dim the glory of their deeds."*

You may have noticed that we solicited information on the fallen from family members in our Floral Program letter. We plan to use this information to inspire and educate a new generation of Americans. We are using these resources via the website and via our social media channels to put a face and story to the memory of those buried and memorialized at our sites. These biographies and photos will put campaigns and battles into perspective for our online users.

I can assure you that ABMC's commitment to the men and women we honor is stronger than ever. Our zeal to tell the story of why America's overseas cemeteries exist and to tell the story of the achievements and sacrifice of America's armed forces is unwavering.

Our intent is not to slight anyone or any group by closing the flower fund. ABMC was created to perpetuate the memory of our fallen heroes. I hope that you can understand why we came to this important decision and why we must refocus our efforts.

Please feel free to contact me directly with further concerns or contact my lead, Alan Amelinckx at 703-696-6412 (amelinckxa@abmc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Timothy A. Nosal', with a stylized, flowing script.

Timothy A. Nosal
Director of Public Affairs



AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

Office of the Secretary

February 20, 2015

The Honorable David Young
515 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1503

Dear Congressman Young:

This letter is in response to the inquiry forwarded to our office on behalf of your constituent, Bob Holliday. When the Flower Fund program began after World War II, it provided a way for families to place flowers at overseas graves when there were no other alternatives available. Today, commercial florists process and place floral orders much more quickly and efficiently than we ever could. Many of our visitors already take advantage of the services offered by the floral industry. The opportunity to place flowers in our overseas cemeteries is not going away; it is simply time for the ABMC staff to refocus. The decision to close the floral program was a difficult one.

Our focus is shifting where it belongs - - preserving the memories of our fallen. Visitor feedback in recent years informed us that younger Americans lacked the understanding of why and under what circumstances our fallen had made the ultimate sacrifice. We realized we needed to provide context to properly honor our nation's war dead.

Coupled with increases in visitation, we are obligated to adapt to meet the needs of our visitors. As such, ABMC is growing its interpretation program; we are building one similar to the National Park Service, an organization dedicated to public history education/awareness. Several years ago, we opened a visitor center at Normandy, which greatly enhanced the visitor experience. Last year, we opened visitor centers at Pointe du Hoc, Cambridge, and Sicily-Rome. Future visitor centers are in progress for Flanders, Meuse-Argonne, and Manila, along with a smaller visitor center or "contact station" at our Chateau-Thierry Monument.

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Our intent is not to slight anyone or any group by closing the flower fund. ABMC was created to perpetuate the memory of our fallen heroes. I hope that you can understand why we came to this important decision and why we must refocus our efforts.

Although employees or organizations of the federal government are not allowed to endorse products or services of commercial vendors, we are aware that there is a local English-speaking florist located near Netherlands American Cemetery who we have worked with in the past. Their contact information is: Anemoontje (name of flower shop) Clermontstraat 5, 6269 CE Margraten, NL (address), 00 31 458 9199 (phone number), anemoontje@home.nl (website). Their advertised price for a floral decoration is \$40.00 US.

Please feel free to contact me directly with further concerns or contact my lead, Alan Amelinckx at 703-696-6412 (amelinckxa@abmc.gov).

Godspeed!

Most respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Cleland', with a stylized, cursive script.

Max Cleland



AMERICAN BATTLE
MONUMENTS COMMISSION

March 20, 2015

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you for contacting the American Battle Monuments Commission. Before I answer your questions, I want to explain how we arrived at the decision to close the Floral Program.

For the past several years, we have received many requests from the public to start accepting credit cards to process floral orders – security and convenience were the primary reasons. Our cemetery superintendents also asked us to look into this. In April 2014, ABMC released a new website. With its launch, we started to look into the feasibility of using pay.gov. We learned there would be no way for ABMC to start accepting credit cards without closing the system as it now is structured and redeveloping an entirely new program. That led to a discussion about the costs involved, which in turn had us asking, “why are we doing this?”

When the Flower Fund program began after World War II, it provided a way for families to place flowers at our overseas graves when no better alternatives were available, such as e-commerce. Today, in our global e-commerce environment, commercial florists process and place floral orders much more quickly and efficiently than we can.

As we explored the history of ABMC’s floral fund program, we realized ABMC is in a period of transition. We are transitioning from an agency of bereavement to an agency of commemoration and education. The population with a direct memory of World War II is dwindling, while the population of those with little understanding of the war is growing.

As ABMC nears its centennial anniversary in 2023, our focus is shifting to where it belongs: preserving the memories of our fallen. Many younger Americans lack the historical understanding and context of why our fallen made the ultimate sacrifice. Without an awareness of that history and the personal stories of those who fought and died in America’s wars, the collective memory of these heroic Americans will be lost. It is our duty to the nation to ensure that the memory of those we honor remains alive and relevant. To do so, we plan to invigorate and expand our historical and interpretive programs so that we can better educate Americans about this important part of our national heritage and identity.

We solicited information about the fallen from family members in the letter that announced the closing of the ABMC Floral Program. We plan to use this information to inspire and educate a new generation of Americans. Through our website, our social media channels, and our historical

and interpretive projects, we are using these resources to put a face and story to the memory of those buried and memorialized at our sites. These biographies and photos will put campaigns and battles into better perspective for various audiences.

I assure you that ABMC's commitment to the men and women we honor is stronger than ever. We remain passionately dedicated to serving the next-of-kin, to telling the story of why our overseas cemeteries exist, and to honoring and interpreting the lives and sacrifices of the Americans whose memory and resting places have been forever entrusted to us. Our commitment to those we honor and their families is unwavering. It's time for ABMC to get out of the flower business and let the professionals provide that service—our focus is shifting to historical interpretation.

Responses to your specific question are given below. If you wish to discuss this further, please feel free to give me a call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Nosal', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Timothy A. Nosal
Chief of Public Affairs



AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

March 20, 2015

The Honorable James Lankford
Suite SD-B40C Dirksen Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lankford:

Thank you for contacting the American Battle Monuments Commission. Before I answer your questions, I want to explain how we arrived at the decision to close the Floral Program.

For the past several years, we have received many requests from the public to start accepting credit cards to process floral orders – security and convenience were the primary reasons. Our cemetery superintendents also asked us to look into this. In April 2014, ABMC released a new website. With its launch, we started to look into the feasibility of using pay.gov. We learned there would be no way for ABMC to start accepting credit cards without closing the system as it now is structured and redeveloping an entirely new program. That led to a discussion about the costs involved, which in turn had us asking, “why are we doing this?”

When the Flower Fund program began after World War II, it provided a way for families to place flowers at our overseas graves when no better alternatives were available, such as e-commerce. Today, in our global e-commerce environment, commercial florists process and place floral orders much more quickly and efficiently than we can.

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Responses to your specific question are given below. If you wish to discuss this further, please feel free to give me a call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Timothy A. Nosal', with a stylized, flowing script.

Timothy A. Nosal
Chief of Public Affairs

Nosal Timothy

From: Nosal Timothy
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2015 2:28 PM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: Query in response to letter from Senator McCain
Attachments: McCain 02 JUN 2015 Corozal.pdf

Mr. (b) (6)

This e-mail is in response to your query filed with Senator McCain's office. A copy of the letter that the Senator's office sent ABMC along with a copy of your query to the Senator's office is attached. You will notice ABMC was asked to respond to you directly.

The photos that you forwarded to Senator McCain only represent a snapshot in time and in no way reflect the overall condition of the cemetery. In fact the work in your photographs is now complete.

One group of photos shows plot re-leveling and the other shows a storm drain with trash present. The storm drain is cleaned weekly and plot re-leveling is a standard maintenance practice at all of our cemeteries. If you look closely at the photos, you will notice the plot areas next to drainage ditch and adjacent to the work areas are perfect.

When you first brought this issue to our attention in the spring, your concerns were forwarded to the Deputy Secretary for Overseas Operations. He did address your concerns with the superintendent.

Over Memorial Day weekend, the cemetery was visited by staff from the U.S. Embassy in Panama and ABMC Commissioner Darryl Dorgan. No one who visited the cemetery that weekend reported any problems with the maintenance of the site. In fact, we only received compliments about the condition of the cemetery and the superintendent.

I can assure you the condition of the cemetery in Panama is excellent. I can further assure you that ABMC has a close working relationship with the local Panamanian authorities.

ABMC has a recognized standard to which we maintain our cemeteries. That standard is unparalleled.

Sincerely,

Tim Nosal

Chief of Public Affairs

American Battle Monuments Commission
2300 Clarendon Boulevard | Arlington, VA 22201-3367 | T 703-696-6789

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AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

JOHN-McCAIN
ARIZONA

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

United States Senate

June 2, 2015

Lt. Col. Theodore Gloukhoff
Director, Personnel and Administration
American Battle Monuments Commission
Courthouse Plaza 2
2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22201-3367

Dear Lt. Col. Gloukhoff,

I wish to bring to your attention a matter concerning (b) (6) who has a concern regarding the Corozal American Cemetery in Panama.

Because the situation is under your jurisdiction, I am respectfully referring this matter to you for consideration. I feel that this issue would be better addressed by you and request that you respond directly to (b) (6)

Thank you.

Sincerely,



John McCain
United States Senator

JM/xdb

241 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0303
(202) 224-2235

2201 EAST CAMELBACK ROAD
SUITE 115
PHOENIX, AZ 85016
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122 NORTH CORTEZ STREET
SUITE 108
PRESCOTT, AZ 86301
(928) 445-0833

407 WEST CONGRESS STREET
SUITE 103
TUCSON, AZ 85701
(520) 570-6334

TELEPHONE FOR HEARING IMPAIRED
(602) 952-0170

Corozal American Cemetery in Panama

(b) (6)

Sent: Thursday, May 07, 2015 9:13 PM**To:** Work, Case (McCain)**Attachments:** KINDLE_CAMERA_1428303495000.jpg (190 KB) ; KINDLE_CAMERA_1428303511000.jpg (196 KB) ;
KINDLE_CAMERA_1428303751000.jpg (167 KB) ; KINDLE_CAMERA_1428304286000.jpg (171 KB) ;
KINDLE_CAMERA_1428304301000.jpg (259 KB)

I recently visited Panama. I still (b) (6) and have (b) (6) for more than (b) (6). (b) (6) Dannie Cooper was the Superintendent for 15 plus years. He had it ready for inspection everyday.

I contacted ABMC. The public affairs person. I could not get a number or name of the Director.

I got a message today from ABMC stating they were leveling the ground so that's why the grass is missing. But why couldn't the Superintendent buy a green tarp and use stakes to hold them to the ground. Seeing a old blue tarp, with holes and bricks and wood on them got me disgusted. Why didn't the Superintendent give the guards a paper which would explain to the visitors that work is being done?

The pictures of the filthy gutters is really nasty. A Panamanian cemetery is located north of Corozal American Cemetery and its water drains into the Corozal American Cemetery. For your information Panama does not embalm the dead and they are buried in wooden caskets. So that water is contaminated. Mr. Cooper kept those drains cleaned because of the possibility of the body fluids being in the water. Look how mossy and algae is in the drains. Look at the leaves and garbage. Having standing water attracts mosquitos. In Panama mosquitos are dangerous because of dengue fever. If the Ministry of Health of Panama would see that ditch ABMC would be facing problems with the Panama government.

Call me if you want at (b) (6)

(b) (6)









