



Pearl Harbor... Resident recalls chain of events on Dec. 7

Story and photo by Mary Kay Gominger

This year marks the 65th year since the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Sixty five years ago, AFRH resident Francis Stueve left his breakfast on the table as he and his comrades ran out of the dining hall to see for themselves what all the commotion was about. They heard planes buzzing overhead and heard blasts of gunfire and, at first, figured it was training or maybe the Chinese New Year celebrations they had heard about so they continued eating their meal. Soon, though, it became very apparent that this was no training exercise.

"Gun fire showered on the dining hall and bullets blew through the windows. Me and my two buddies rushed outside and looked to the skies. There were Japanese planes coming from all directions," Francis said. "Before I knew it, my buddy to the left of me took a bullet to his jaw and my buddy on the right took one in his right calf. I was still standing between the two, just trying to absorb what was going on around us."

Francis joined the Army Air Corps in 1938. He was an infantry and artillery man. When he received orders to go to Schofield Barracks in Hawaii, he was pleased because he had heard nothing but good things about being stationed in Hawaii. "Everybody always talked about Hawaii having the most comfortable climate in the world to live in. There was good weather all the time, and I was looking forward to that," said the Iowa native.

Francis got the good weather he was anticipating but he got many more things that he never even imagined.

"The whole Japanese bombing campaign lasted less than two hours," Stueve explained. "But as we watched the last of the planes disappear into the distance, we didn't know if others were coming later or the next day. We knew we couldn't go back in the barracks, if they were going to come back and bomb us again, that's where they would figure we were. So we slept outside, night after night, waiting and watching. We had few rations and medical supplies and just made do with what wasn't destroyed by the Japanese."

Francis said that prior to the bombing, the American troops were working with a group of men native to Hawaii. They were from all nationalities. After the bombing, the American soldiers weren't sure if they were allies or enemies, as a large portion of the men were Japanese.

"They had separated themselves from us right after the attack and we watched them and they watched us," Francis said. "Neither side trusted the other. Turns out they knew nothing about the attack and joined us in the war effort, but for several months, until we could get off the island, we watched each other very carefully."

Rescue ships finally made it to Hawaii, nearly five months later, but it wasn't R&R, it was onto Guadalcanal, New Georgia, New Guinea and the Philippines. Francis and his unit backed up Marines as they took one island and moved onto the next.

"I don't know why I never took a round," Francis said. "I had fragments of grenades but never took a direct hit. I thank the Lord everyday for that and feel very fortunate."

When the war ended, Francis returned home. He had gotten word while in Hawaii that both of his parents had died and the family farm had been sold. After spending a month in DC with a sister, Francis went back into the Army, this time in welding and aircraft design. He retired with 22 years of service.

Francis said he remembers passing by the Old Soldiers' Home while visiting his sister in DC and he remembers paying into a fund that supported the Home. In April of 1961, after visiting the home a few times, he decided to give it a try. That was 45 years ago and now Francis, at the age of 89, is still going strong.

"When I came here back in 1961, we had a four-star general in charge of the place. There were over 4,000 soldiers living here. Many were transient, they would come and go. Everybody, back in those days, had to be retired military to get in," he said.

"I've seen them come and go over the past 45 years, that's for sure," Francis said. "I must like it here, been staying here for 45 years. I guess I never thought I would make it this long," he said with a laugh. "I've still got a few good years left in me and I intend to take them."

See page 8 for another Pearl Harbor story.



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Veterans Day

The memories are still alive



Lee Miggins says a prayer and puts flowers on the gravesite of her husband, Jim Miggins, at the Old Soldiers' and Airmen's Cemetery across the street from AFRH. Lee and Jim were residents of AFRH for 14 years. Jim passed away in 1996. Lee wanted Jim buried close to the AFRH so she could visit his gravesite as often as she wanted.

Photo by Mary Kay Gominger

Editors Column



In 1621 the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag Indians shared an autumn harvest feast which is now known as the first Thanksgiving.

While cooking methods and table etiquette have changed as the holiday has evolved, the meal is still consumed today with the same spirit of celebration and overindulgence.

Reading this you had to have survived the bountiful Thanksgiving we always enjoy here at our Home, and should now be ready for both Christmas/Hanukkah which are part of the same winter-holiday and holiday shopping season.

Let's consider the Christmas / Hanukkah (Chanukkah) Holiday Season. For most of us this is an emotional time. We often dwell on Christmas/ Chanukkah Past. It is a time when we want to be with our families, or those who mean the most to us. To be more "all encompassing" in my writing I am going to write of "The Spirit of the Season," and usually at this time of year I present a greeting to my comrades who have served. This year I direct you to a website, which with a musical background conveys my greeting:

http://65.108.110.30/xmas/past.html

You may wish to share this with other of your comrades or with those who are serving throughout the world in the cause of freedom. The following Internet Web address will allow you to send by email similar greetings to our active duty armed forces, others who have served in our armed forces, and those who wait at home:

http://65.108.110.30/xmas/Xmas-frame.html

For those who are unable to use the Internet this is my greeting: May the Blessings and Peace of the Season be with you now and throughout the coming year 2007. May you have a Bright and Prosperous New Year 2007, and may you partake of the Spirit of the Season now and forever.

Christmas Past - Warring Nations and their opposing armies, with certain oblivious exceptions, have traditionally laid down their arms on Christmas Eve, and enjoyed a period of camaraderie. It is not an unusual result of these brief periods of truce for a lasting PEACE to develop.

Amnesty (from the Greek amnesia, oblivion) - is an act of justice by which a government restores those who may have been guilty of any offense against it to the position of innocent persons. It includes more than pardon, in as much as it obliterates all legal remembrance of the offense.

If I were to extend the use of this term to individuals I would say, "Amnesty to all who consider they have offended me, whether the offenses are real or imagined. The only condition being that they have to accept the amnesty and extend the same amnesty to me. The beauty of this thought is that it gives to all who give and accept amnesty a chance for a new beginning, and we can all use that once in awhile.

ENJOY YOUR PAPER

AFRH COMMUNICATOR

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The AFRH Communicator is an authorized publication of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Residents and employees are encouraged to submit photos, art, news items, and features. Materials will be edited by The AFRH Communicator staff for journalistic style and length.

How to become a resident today



AFRH is not just a place to live but a place to live more. Our model retirement centers are designed for residents to maintain an independent lifestyle in an environment designed for safety, comfort and personal enrichment.

Eligibility:

Military veterans from each service branch can live at either Home.

Veterans are eligible to become a resident of the AFRH if their active duty service in the military was at least 50 percent enlisted, warrant officer or limited duty officer and who are:

- Veterans with 20 or more years of active duty service and are at least 60 years old, or
●Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to a service-connected disability, or
●Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to injuries, disease, or disability, and who served in a war theater or received hostile fire pay, or
●Female veterans who served prior to 1948.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the following office:

AFRH at 1-800-422-9988, or write to AFRH Admissions Office, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.

Visit us on the web at: http://www.AFRH.gov

The few, the proud....the Marines!
Marines birthday celebration draws crowd



From left - John Morash and Joseph Montgomery proudly pose with the oldest Marine, Virginia R. Sicotte, and the youngest Marine, Lance Cpl Preder. Also pictured is SgtMaj Brokaw from the Quantico Marine Base. See the story and more pictures on Marine Corps birthday activities on page 9.

Message from the Chief Operating Officer



The AFRH management team experienced many positive outcomes as the result of our offsite at Arlie Center last May. In past issues of the Communicator, I've discussed the progress in several areas such as Recreation Services and Marketing, and this month we'll take a look at one of the functions of Campus Operations, room readiness. Now you may think that room readiness is a basic maintenance function that is routinely done with little or no impact on other departments and functions within the AFRH or that room readiness really has nothing to do with residents that already live here. On the surface, it may appear that way. A room becomes vacant, Campus Ops gets in touch with our contractors and when they are done, a prospective resident moves in. Sounds simple, doesn't it? Let's take a closer look.

A resident that has lived here for many years in the same room may not realize the importance of room readiness and that how well this process is done affects not only that resident moving into a new room but all residents that live here as well as the organization as a whole. In our Strategic Plan, financial net growth and stability of the trust fund is defined as one of our major goals. Achievement of this goal became more of a challenge when the Gulfport facility closed last year, reducing our total number of residents by about two-thirds. Resident fees, though only one piece of the trust fund pie, combined with other means of funding (active duty military contributions, military fines and forfeitures and interest), play a substantial role in realizing that goal of financial growth and stability. Hence, having a timely and efficient process in place for room readiness results in prospective residents awaiting entry joining us quicker which not only is a part of our commitment to our veterans but it serves to benefit the entire AFRH community and future veterans for generations to come.

We recently put a new computer tracking system in place that is successfully used in Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC) all around the country. Our implementation of the Monet Ultra Care Resident Information System is a huge step toward another one of our strategic goals – modernization of internal operations to a level of quality and sophistication that maximizes and leverages resources across the entire organization. Monet, once in place and integrated into our daily way of doing business, will provide a much-needed way to collectively amass resident information in a format that is accessible to all pertinent staff members thus providing improved services across the board to our residents. The use of technology such as Monet connects all the various services and activities that we provide to residents under one umbrella which allows for smoother, more cohesive communications between staff members and the end result is that management is better able to make decisions based on accurate, up-to-date data. Disconnects in processes can be immediate-

ly detected. Monet also has built in tracking systems that keeps data on a wide variety of things, one of them being the average length of time it is taking to prepare a room for occupancy. Having this type of information available is crucial to the Marketing personnel who are making room assignments to prospective residents. It is also valuable information on the financial side of the house as they can more accurately project future income and costs associated with operation of the AFRH. In the Health Care area, the data will be extremely valuable in many ways, one example being having adequate staffing to meet the needs of the residents at any given time. The possibilities are endless.

I look forward to reporting to you on the progress of Monet as it is integrated into the AFRH infrastructure. I also encourage you to be receptive to the tides of change we are experiencing and realize that we are doing so with your best interest in mind and looking ahead to the future of AFRH in the years to come.

Tim Cox

Conversation with the Chief Financial Officer



I'm always pleased when residents have questions for me about the financial operations of AFRH; it not only gives me the opportunity to take a break from the office setting to visit one-on-one with residents but it reinforces the concept that we all share stakeholder status and the financial future of our Home is paramount.

Lately, many residents have asked about the Gulfport Resident fund and the status of it since the residents left last August. For those of you that do not know, Resident funds, for both homes, come from donations and interest accrued on the account. The agency still manages the Gulfport Resident fund, which is about \$1 million, and the Navy Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Department at Millington, Tennessee, still does the accounting and investing of the fund. Every year funds are moved from the Gulfport fund to the Washington fund in order to support the percentage of x-Gulfport residents who displace to and remain at Washington

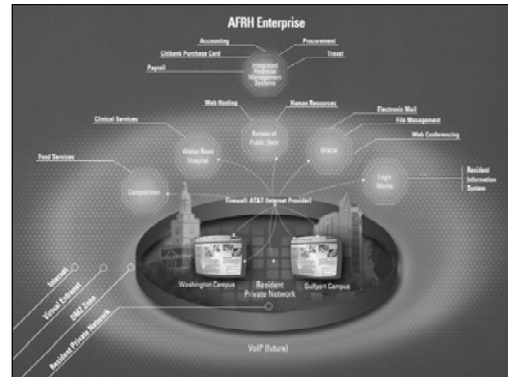
Campus after Hurricane Katrina. The rate used in September 2005 to develop the appropriate funding for the FY 2006 program was \$118 per resident. This rate was developed by Mr. Henry Pike, the Gulfport RAC Chair, and members of the former Gulfport RAC. The same rate was applied to FY 2006 and 2007. Consistent with this rate approximately \$42,000 and \$30,000 was transferred in FYs 2006 and 2007 respectively. This process will be continued annually until the Gulfport Campus is operational with residents.

On November 15, 2006, the Agency submitted its annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) to the Office of Management and Budget and Congress. It can be viewed on the AFRH website at the following link: <http://www.afrh.gov/afrh/about/par/afrh-tirepar06.pdf>. The PAR contains many of our required reports to Congress like our annual report and audited financial statement. For the first time in the history of the Home, to the best of our knowledge, the Agency received a clean opinion for two consecutive years, Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006. This is a historical marker in the financial history of the Home. We have also included a special, highlighted section

on E-Government, an initiative under the President's Management Agenda, in our submission this year. In this area we also received recognition by receiving our Accreditation and Certification for our Information Technology (IT) Enterprise system. Both our consecutive clean opinions

and IT Enterprise system are monumental steps in the history of the Home. The diagram below depicts our IT Enterprise system. As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Steve McManus



AFRH resident Robert Lockwood (left) talks with Michael Dominguez, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), and AFRH Chief Operating Officer Tim Cox (center), during a recent tour of the home.

Photos by Sheila Abarr

AFRH welcomes OSD staff members



Leslye Arshnt, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy), visits with AFRH Resident Advisory Council President Walter 'Kit' Kitson.

AFRH Director's Message



This Thanksgiving marks another exceptional year of accomplishments at the AFRH as reflected through our Performance & Accountability Report. As friends and families begin the holiday seasons and gather around dinner tables and enjoy this season of festivals, we celebrate our benefit and bounty to share with others, and to give thanks for in our everyday lives.

We are together to celebrate in each others company and enjoy the freedoms that have eluded other generations and some other nations. If you never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation...you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.

Ponder how grateful we should be:

We have food on our tables, clothes on our backs, a roof overhead, and a place to

sleep - 75% of people in this world are not as privileged;

Money in the bank and wallet, spare change in a dish somewhere places us among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy.

If we woke up this morning with more health than illness, we need to be grateful for more then the million people in this world who will not survive

thru this week;

If you can read this column, you are more fortunate than 2 billion people in this world who cannot read at all.

You, we, our heroes have brought our nation and world to the threshold of 2007 on their wings of sacrifice and self deprivation, so that others may enjoy this day.

Enjoy this day and the days to come. Enjoy this time and put your feet up to recall our good fortune to live in this nation. Pass this on to remind everyone how grateful we should be.

Ben Laub
AFRH Director

Welcome Aboard



Name: Franz C. Mitchell
Branch of Service: USAF
Entry Date: TSGT-E7
Separation Date: May 1951
Rank: January 1971
War Theaters: Korea



Name: Robert J. Stone
Branch of Service: USN
Entry Date: E6
Separation Date: June 1957
Rank: July 1977
War Theaters: Vietnam



Name: Mary Varva
Branch of Service: USN
Entry Date: RM 3rd Class
Separation Date: July 1943
Rank: October 1945
War Theaters: WWII



Name: Henry J. Paskowski
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: 1943
Separation Date: May 1964
Rank: E6
War Theaters: WWII,
Europe & Pacific



Name: Marie Townsend
Branch of Service: USN
Entry Date: Feb. 1942
Separation Date: Mar 1949
Rank: Chief, Yeoman
War Theaters: WWII



Name: John E. Neal, Jr.
Branch of Service: USMC
Entry Date: SSGT
Separation Date: August 1950
Rank: August 1953
War Theaters: Korea



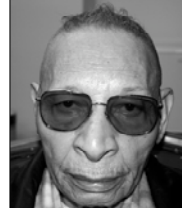
Name: Willie L. Reeves
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: 1941
Separation Date: 1944
Rank: PVT
War Theaters: Normandy



Name: Leslie A. Stevenson
Branch of Service: USAF
Entry Date: 1954
Separation Date: 1977
Rank: E7
War Theaters: WWII



Name: Bert Huff, Jr.
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: October 1940
Separation Date: October 1962
Rank: E6
War Theaters: WWII



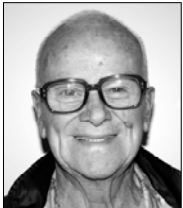
Name: Charles L. Hayes
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: 1944
Separation Date: 1966
Rank: Sgt 1st Class/E6
War Theaters: WWII



Name: Herbert Kahrer
Branch of Service: USMC
Entry Date: March 1953
Separation Date: March 1968
Rank: SSG, E6
War Theaters: Korea, Vietnam & Lebanon



Name: Jay D. Bates
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: August 1964
Separation Date: Aug. 1987
Rank: E6
War Theaters: Vietnam era



Name: Walter Stevens
Branch of Service: USA, USN
Entry Date: 1944
Separation Date: 1980
Rank: E5
War Theaters: Pacific and Vietnam



Name: Elizabeth S. Hurley
Branch of Service: USA
Entry Date: March 1945
Separation Date: May 1965
Rank: MSgt
War Theaters: Japan and Germany

If you have an interesting past... a story to tell... and would like to be featured in a future issue of the **Communicator**, contact
Mary Kay Gominger at 228-348-6604 or Sheila Motley at ext. 3566

Traffic jam results in chance meeting of vets

By Al Mori, Ombudsman

It was my privilege to escort our Royal Hospital Chelsea guests on Nov. 10 to Mt Vernon, President George Washington's estate. We had wonderful weather and I believe a great time was had by all. On our return to the Home we were able to go by the WWII Memorial and they enjoyed this as well. However, my encounter and ordeal was just beginning after our return to the Home. The next day was Veterans Day and I had planned to ride with Rolling Thunder to

the Vietnam Memorial. However, it took me three hours from the time I departed the Home to eventually get to Dale City, Virginia (Potomac Mills for those that shop). Usually this is a 45 minute commute.

As some of you know the Marine Corps Museum was opened on Nov. 10. Along with this the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes were closed. As I was trying to leave DC at approximately 4:30 p.m. on a holiday I didn't really expect much problem, that is why I decided to ride my motorcycle, and it was a very nice day weather wise.

Anyway, as I got across the 14th Street bridge the traffic came to a complete stop. And from there on it was stop and sit and then go, and on and on. When I got to the cutoff for the HOV my motorcycle was hot and we were getting nowhere in a hurry. So I pulled up behind the DOT truck and asked the worker when the HOV would be open, he told me at 6 p.m. it should be open. They were waiting for forty some buses to return from Quantico to the Pentagon parking lot. I asked if he minded if I parked behind him and waited, it was about an hour and that would be easier than sitting in the traffic. He said sure.

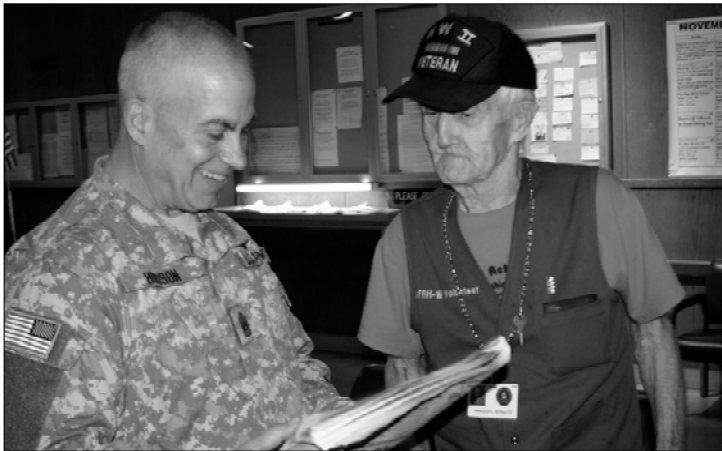
Within in a few minutes another motorcycle pulled up and he decided to wait also, and before long we had seven motorcycles sitting there waiting for the HOV to open. It was kind of funny as we had all kinds of motorcycles and riding gear, people gave some strange looks as they passed by. But the interesting part of this chance encounter was that all seven of us were veterans. We talked about motorcycles for a little while but then it turned to were you in the service.

Turns out that all of us had served; four in the Army; two in the Air Force and one in the Navy, and the sailor was still on active duty as a radioman for the Chief of Naval Operations. Two of us had retired and

the others were veterans that had served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Five out of the seven have spent time working in the Pentagon with four still working there as civilians. Of the two that were not working in the Pentagon, one was working for a defense contractor and the other was an optometrist for a local one hour eye store. But we all shared in a common bond of comradeship with having served our country irregardless of service. With just knowing these individuals for a couple of hours standing along 395 we shared a common bond that made the experience more memorable with it being Veterans Day the next day. It was funny, as we thanked the Marines for having their museum dedication that day because it made it special to meet these fellow veterans and share an interesting experience under otherwise trying conditions. I am certain that if I had been driving my car I would have been doing the stop and cursing to myself the whole way. And with that we said Happy Birthday to the Marines and safe riding and after three hours I made it home, but much richer for having this unusual encounter. So I guess the old adage is true "good things do come out of bad."



Al Mori cruises on his Harley!!!



ANG Senior Enlisted Advisor visits AFRH

Command Sergeant Major David Ray Hudson, the second Senior Enlisted Advisor assigned to the Office of the Chief, National Guard Bureau, recently visited the AFRH. Here resident Harold Schultz shows CSM Hudson a newspaper article that he was featured in.

As the second Senior Enlisted Advisor for the National Guard Bureau, Command Sergeant Major Hudson is responsible for advising the Chief, National Guard Bureau on enlisted affairs of the 457,000 Soldiers and Airmen of the Army and Air National Guard.

Upcoming holiday events - mark your calendars now!

- Toy Drive December 1-20
- AFRH Tree Lighting Ceremony, 6 p.m., Scott Theater
- Annual Crafts Fair, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Scott Dining Hall Lobby
- Little Hometown Soldiers performance, 1 p.m., Scott Theater
- Holiday Dance, 7:30 p.m., Scott Dining Hall
- Holiday Read Aloud, 6:30 p.m. in the Library
- Egg Nog Social, 6 - 8 p.m. in Scott Dining Hall

Happy Holidays!

Here's how to beat those winter blues....

Stay fit with the multitude of exercise equipment in the fitness center



The Fitness Center has a wide variety of resistance training equipment available. Here, a resident gets in a workout.

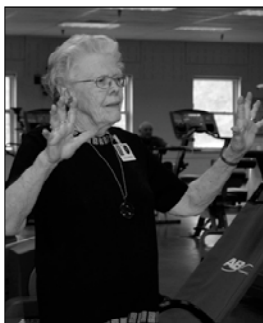


Doyle Crews gets in a brisk walk on the treadmill. There are several treadmills, stationary bicycles, resistance training equipment, free weights and much more available at the Fitness Center. Stop by and see for yourself. If you need help getting a fitness program started, see Jerry Carter.



Elias Solomon gets a workout on the stationary bike located in the Fitness Center. In addition to the many pieces of exercise equipment available for use, there are also fitness classes and free weights for the residents to use at their leisure.

Jean Ringuette stretches her arms while following along with a stretch video at the Fitness Center. Jean and several other residents enjoy stretching exercises several times a week.



Jerry Stahler does sit ups at the Fitness Center. Jerry makes working out a regular part of his day.



All types of movies are available for check out in the library, in both VHS and DVD format.

Travel to faraway places through pages of a book...or catch up on movies you always wanted to see



Robert Stevenson previews a book in the library. The library offers a wide variety of books, fiction and non-fiction plus magazines, newspapers, videos and DVDs.



Keep your mind sharp with puzzles and games

Philip Ellington finds enjoyment working on puzzles. With the cold weather starting to make its way to DC, finding things to do indoors helps pass the time when inclement weather keeps you indoors.

Volunteer to help others

Ruby Bloomer wraps a package in the Wrap Room. Ruby is a volunteer and she helps residents year-round wrapping gifts for them. With the Christmas holidays nearing, Ruby's wrapping skills will be put to good use.

Photos by Mary Kay Gominger and Sheila Abarr



A short story of a mud Marine during WWII

“...the biggest battle of World War II in the South Pacific, the battle of Okinawa...”

By Pete Carter

A short history of a great American – it is deemed appropriate to express recognition and gratification of and for our residents who have done so much to bring home to us our many liberties and freedoms.

Resident John Ira Bowery, like so many patriotic American boys, was angered by the sneak attack on America on December 7th, 1941. Only 15 years old, he tried to join the Marines. He was told he would have to have both of his parent's permission to join, although he had lied to them, claiming to be 17. He returned home and asked his father first. His father said he would go along if the



John Bowery after his enlistment in the U.S. Marine Corps at the tender age of 16.

mother would give her consent, which she didn't do. John then threatened that if he were not allowed to go he would run away from home and find a way to get in. The next morning John arose to find his application for entry was filled out with both signatures affixed. The Marine Corps accepted him; however, he was not called until February 1942. When reporting, John had matured having celebrated his 16th birthday on January 25th. He was immediately shipped to the paradise of the Marine Corps, Paris Island, SC. The hot sun, humidity, blowing sand and attacking sand fleas were like a malady. That malady was a mere preview of the verbal attacks from everybody not a Boot (basic trainee). The Boots were shouted at and cursed at like animals every minute from reveille to taps. They were marching, running or doing push ups (the DI's pleasure) or being lectured to on a full time scheduling. The guys accepted this treatment. They heard that it would make them the best damn fighting men ever to come out of the Corps. Their objective: "to be just that, winning every battle they fought."

When asked about his assignments in the war zones, John answered that he would rather leave that out. A typical answer from a hero. The records show; however, that John was involved in the

“...they heard that it would make them the best damn fighting men to ever come out of the Corps...their objective: to be just that, winning every battle they fought...”

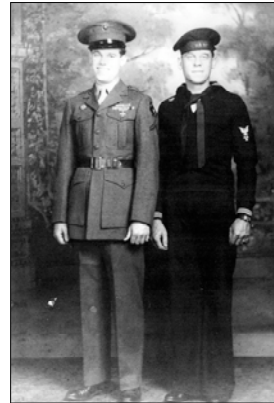
biggest battle of World War II in the South Pacific, the battle of Okinawa, in which we lost 3,443 killed in action and 16,017 wounded in action. John fought with the 8th Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Love Company of the Second Marine Division. His combat experience were landings on the Islands of Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas Islands and then on to Okinawa. He was then sent to Japan for occupation duties on the southern most island, Kyushu.

Upon arriving home he became a member of the inactive Marines and in 1950 he left the Marines and joined the Air Force. After a course in Career Guidance at Lowery AF Base, Denver, Colorado, he earned re-assignment. He chose New Castle County Air Port assuming it was a small base in Delaware. It was the home of the 4th Fighter Interceptor Squadron that was leaving for Korea. He reported to his new assignment two days after they left for Korea. The base was deserted except for four or five enlisted personnel. He immediately became aware that he was senior enlisted and settled in. After about a month there was a tremendous explosion of noise and activity. The 113th Fighter Interceptor Squadron from Washington, DC arrived unannounced. This was a reserve outfit including their air craft and a complete compliment of personnel. He finally got Flight Officers assigned to the flight line and all their support personnel in their proper positions. A general from Eastern Defense Air Force arrived one day and inspected the base. He was surprised that the Squadron was not combat ready. Shortly after he left, Sgt. Bowery received a three page letter of com-

mendation from that general for his work at the base.

While on duty there John was given a Field Commission that he kept for one day. His wife insisted he resign the commission in order to be out on termination of his enlistment. Second Lt. Bowery became Sergeant Bowery after one day's commissioned service. He was granted a transfer to recruiting duty in his home state of West Virginia where he went on making a name for himself. He was made Station Commander for the Army and Air Force recruiting station in Parkersburg, WV.

John has finally settled down to retired life here and keeps busy doing for others on a volunteer basis. He loves his surroundings, the people, and the pleasure of helping both.



From left - John and his father Pete Bowery pose in this photo after returning to civilian life four days after separation of service.

PEARL HARBOR

‘We cannot forget the lessons we learned...’

By Mary Kay Gominger

“Sixty five years goes by in a blink of the eye,” said AFRH resident Bob Carson. “I was there, at Pearl Harbor, 65 years ago. It was an eye-opening event. We cannot forget the lessons we learned...there's an enemy out there, always, that would like to do harm to this country. We can never let our guard down. Sometimes I think we forgot that important lesson.”

Bob Carson is one of a handful of Pearl Harbor veterans that reside at the AFRH. He remembers the day Pearl Harbor

was bombed very clearly. Like many of the troops in Hawaii that fateful morning, he was eating a hearty breakfast of steak and eggs onboard the USS Curtis, tied off of Pearl City between two mooring buoys.

“We heard an explosion and went topside to see what I thought was a plane crash,” said Carson. “I immediately went to man my station on the bridge and I had a perfect view of everything that was happening. Japanese planes were coming from all directions, spraying gunfire everywhere. We did what we were trained to do. There was no time to think about anything but manning the guns and fighting back. And that's what we did. A plane we shot down crashed onboard the deck of our ship. Another explosion came from behind me. It all happened so fast,” Bob recalls.

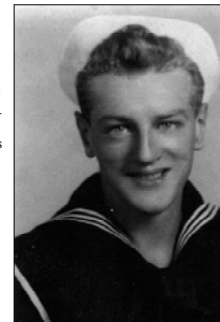
The damage done to the USS Curtis was extensive but the ship was not completely destroyed and later, returned to San Francisco for repairs and was back out in the Pacific Theater in February of 1942. After World War II ended, Bob was transferred to another ship and spent the next 20 years in the Navy on various ships and in various jobs until he retired in March 1962.

Bob said he read about the AFRH in Shift Colors in the fall of 2002 and after a



few visits to the Gulfport home, decided the next spring to join his comrades in Gulfport. He was evacuated to Washington with his fellow Gulfport residents last summer and is waiting for the time he can return to the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

This year on Dec. 7, like every other year since 1941, Bob will think about that fateful morning. He will remember his comrades that sacrificed their lives and didn't come home...he will remember the lessons we should never forget. He survived Pearl Harbor and he wants future generations to not forget those lessons.



A young Bob Carson, signed up and ready to serve his country.

“...there's an enemy out there, always, that would like to do harm to this country. We can never let our guard down...”
Bob Carson

Residents join in Marine Corps celebration

By Sheila Motley

The 231st Marine Corps birthday was held 9 November 2006 in the Scott auditorium with refreshments and swing dancing immediately following in the corridor dining hall. The highlight of the ceremony was the speech given by Sgt Maj Mark T. Brokaw, from Quantico Marines Base. SgtMaj Brokaw stated to our residents "I stand before you humbled by your service; by your dedication and devotion to our great nation. You are a group of truly unique and special individuals, individuals who have collectively changed our world. The uniqueness of those who have been called to serve their country has not gone unnoticed and never will! As a matter of fact, the acknowledgement of those who serve and their sacrifices given can be traced back through history more than 2000 years!" Your impact on the preservation of freedom and democracy throughout the land will long outlive your time in this world." SgtMaj Mark Brokaw delivered the birthday message to the residents from the Commandant of the Marine Corps to all Marines, Gen. Hagee stated, and I quote:

"All Marines are making a difference. Regardless of where you are serving, you are adding new chapters to the legacy that was earned with sweat and blood on old battlefields. Just as previous generations of Marines shaped today's Marine Corps, your deeds are molding the Corps of tomorrow. Our Corps has never been stronger, and all Americans are extremely proud of your significant performance and unwavering commitment to serve our Corps and country. With higher caliber Marines like you, our future has never been brighter."

Afterwards both residents and guest commenced with the cutting of the birthday cake with the eldest being resident, Virginia R. Sicotte, who served during WWII at Camp Pendleton Base in the Message Center. Virginia said, "it's a thrill when I see the Marines dressed in the uniforms and I'm happy and grateful to be included in the U.S. Marines 231st birthday program." The youngest Marine at the ceremony, Lance Cpl Preder of the U.S. Marine Barracks Washington, Alpha Company, said, "it feels good to know that the veterans are still showing their support for the new generation and hopefully, I'll be as dedicated as they are when I become a veteran." Lance Cpl Preder also indicated that he feels a sense of pride, tradition, honor, courage and commitment to stand before his predecessors."

On 9 November 2006 AFRH residents attended the U.S. Marine Corps birthday ceremony at Ft. Belvoir. Marine Gen. James E. Cartwright, Commander of United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), was the guest of honor at the McNamara Headquarters Complex's celebration of the U.S. Marine Corps' 231st Birthday. He



Left to right - General James E. Cartwright, guest of honor, the oldest Marine present, AFRH resident Joseph Montgomery and the youngest Marine Lance Cpl. Travis Halleck. The USMC birthday cake was cut, and the first three pieces presented according to tradition. The first piece was given to Gen. Cartwright as the guest of honor. The second to the oldest Marine, and the final piece was given to the youngest Marine.

reminded those present that the Marines celebrate their birthday each year as a reminder of who they are, what they do, and why they do it.

Gen. Cartwright gave a moving address, invoking the need for a facile, flexible military force that is dedicated to its mission, and diligent in passing on its traditions to the next generation. He stated, "our military must be where the action is going to be, not where it has been."

Lastly, the ceremony concluded with the playing of Anchors Aweigh and the Marines' Hymn. It was a ceremony rich in tradition, meaning, and camaraderie for those in the audience privileged to call themselves Marines.

"All Marines are making a difference. Regardless of where you are serving, you are adding new chapters to the legacy that was earned with sweat and blood on old battlefields. Just as previous generations of Marines shaped today's Marine Corps, your deeds are molding the Corps of tomorrow. Our Corps has never been stronger, and all Americans are extremely proud of your significant performance and unwavering commitment to serve our Corps and country. With higher caliber Marines like you, our future has never been brighter."

*Message to all Marines from General Hagee
Commandant of the Marine Corps*



Residents Edward Blaha and Edith Baudon dance during the Marine Corps Birthday celebration at AFRH.



Residents John Smith and Willa Farrell proudly pose with General Cartwright, Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, after the ceremony at Ft. Belvoir.

Photos taken by Betty Burke-Fox, DTRA, PAO

Small miracles in the Chaplains' Office

The Chaplain's office helping residents and others

By Ron Harding

Since arriving here over a year ago and assuming a job of Office Manager in the Chaplains' Office, I have learned to never turn down any donation, large or small. My first experience was with a large print bible that someone donated to our office. One evening at Bible Study, I was approached by one of our more senior residents and asked where I had gotten my bible. I told him that it had been given to me by a friend, but I might be able to find him one on the internet. I then remembered the donated bible and asked him to come by the office to see if it was acceptable. When he came to examine the bible, he immediately loved it and asked me how much he owed? I told him another member of the home had donated it and it was free if he wanted it. A small tear rolled down his cheek as he said "Thank you very much,"

and went on his way.

Later on a very nice couple donated a queen sized headboard to the Chaplains' Office. They gave no specific directions as to who should receive this new piece of furniture—just whoever needs it. As another volunteer and I were carrying it into the office, those who were there gave us the impression that we had lost our minds accepting a queen sized head board for the Chaplains' Office as a donation. Again, at evening Bible Study, I announced that we had received a headboard in the office and asked if anyone needed one. A visitor raised her hand and said she knew someone who needed one. Because we could find no rope to tie it down in her truck, she decided to pick it up the next day. In the meantime, a resident from the home decided he needed the headboard. Now we had "two" folks who needed a headboard and only one headboard to donate. When it was decided that a resident in this situation had a priority over a visitor, a decision was made to give the headboard to the resident. The next day a concerned resident walked into the office and said, "I have \$100 towards the purchase of another head board for the visi-

tor at Bible Study." Thanks to another donation from another resident, a new headboard was ordered and given to the lady. This was just another small daily miracle in the Chaplains' Office.

A newly arrived Gulfport resident requested some help. His good friend had passed away and was being buried at Arlington National Cemetery the next day. He had no car or transportation. I told him I am not making any promises, but would see what I could do. One of our Chaplains overheard the conversation and immediately volunteered to take the man to the funeral. Chaplain Austin spent half of his day at the Cemetery and at the funeral and allowed the resident to spend time with his friend's relatives that he had not seen in a long time. Needless to say, the resident was very thankful for our assistance.

Late one afternoon, Mr. Dickerson called for Chaplain Goodloe to come to his office. Upon arrival, he found a lady resident who was quite upset and crying. He found out she had a medical appointment in Virginia the next day with no transportation or vehicle. As it turned out, one of our

Superman Volunteers, Mr. Bob Carson, was still on duty at the desk in the Chaplains' office. When he was asked if he could help he, as usual, stepped up to the plate and said he would make sure she got to her appointment. This was the second occasion for Bob to volunteer to help a lady get to her medical appointment. Of course he helps his fellow man too.

The primary mission in the Chaplains' Office is to help our fellow residents. Whatever needs one may have, we ask that folks come by and give us an opportunity to try to help.

If you are interested in volunteering to help your fellow residents, contact Melodie Menke, Volunteer Services, ext. 3410

Rec Therapy welcomes new additions

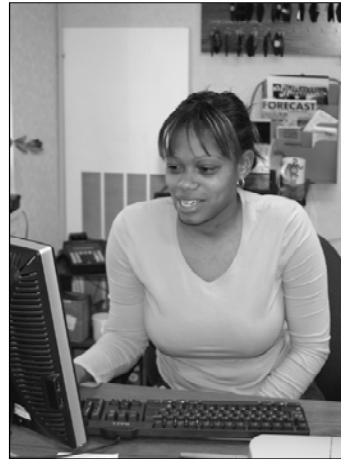
By Carol Mitchell

The KHC Recreation Therapy Department would like to welcome aboard our new Recreation Therapy Assistants, Sarah Kenan and Nicole Chappell, to the Recreation Therapy staff. Sarah, who was a native Washingtonian but now resides in Maryland, has been working at AFRH-W for 22 years this November! Sarah decided to take on a career change from Nursing Services to Recreation Therapy. Sarah looks forward to working with the Assisted Living Program in the Scott building and RT programs in the King Health Center. The RT staff looks forward to working with such a dedicated and enthusiastic employee.

Nicole Chappell comes to AFRH-W from Northwest Health Care Center which is located in Washington, D.C. Nicole worked in the Therapeutic Recreation Department and looks forward to continuing working in the RT field here at King Health Center. Nicole was also born a native Washingtonian but moved to Kentucky for a few years and eventually came back to reside in Maryland. Nicole looks forward to meeting the residents and providing new and creative programs for the residents of KHC.



Sarah Kenan works with Marvin Taylor on hand and eye coordination.



Nicole Chappell makes room reservations for Leonard French.



Resident Ida Simpson shares her military history with two students from Ballenger Creek Middle School.

Bravo Kids Club visits KHC residents

By Steven Briefs

The residents of KHC enjoyed the company of 7th & 8th grade students from Ballenger Creek Middle School located in Frederick, Maryland, on Thursday, Nov. 2nd. They belong to a club called "Bravo" which stands for Bulldogs Raising Awareness of Veteran Organizations. This group of 15 boys and girls brought refreshments, played a variety of music and socialized with our residents. What a great time for all. They were escorted by their student advisor, Mr. Allen, and parent Karen Adametz and a few others. Everyone benefited from the hour they spent here and all agreed we hope they'll return next year.

This holiday season

Residents give thanks for many things

"In everything give thanks . . ." (1 Thes. 5:18)

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; his love endures forever." (Psalm 107: 1)

By Chaplain John Goodloe

How is it possible to give thanks in everything? How was it possible for those involved in the first Thanksgiving to give thanks, especially in the face of so much adversity? Of the approximately 102 passengers that came over on the Mayflower, only 52 were reported to be present for that time of "feasting." Many had succumbed to the perils of the journey itself, while others were victims of disease and the bitter conditions encountered after the arduous trip. Some months after the landing, most likely between September 21, and November 11, 1621, these settlers held the first thanksgiving as a harvest celebration lasting for three days. The native persons, the Wampanoag tribe, already in this area where the colonists settled, were also a part of this celebration. They outnumbered the settlers 90 to 52. It is said that the Chief of this tribe contributed at least five deer to the feast. The tribesmen celebrated regularly with festivals of thanksgiving after every hunt or harvest. Apparently, for them no matter what the circumstances, there was always something for which to give thanks.

So it should be with us today – giving thanks no matter what the environment or circumstance of our existence. I've heard residents say, "Just because I'm alive. . ." or "In that I woke up this morning . . ." or "I'm on this side of the sod . . ." to indicate that they are grateful to be still among "the land of the living." Life itself though filled with problems and challenges can still be and should be celebrated. I have also recently heard it said, "Misery is a choice." If that is the case, and I certainly believe the content of this message, my question then is, "Why would anyone choose to be miserable?"

A number of you responded to my request to share with me, and in turn with us, what you are thankful for in this season that we as a nation celebrate as "Thanksgiving." I would like to be unselfish and take a portion of the many responses I received and share how so many of you are thankful in the midst of unfavorable conditions. Others of you responded without thought of the circumstances but in the obvious joy of being grateful. The following is what some of you had to say:

" . . . So many of my friends and relatives that I grew up with and went to school with [have had their voices] hushed . . . in death. Over the years, I've had some dark days in my life, but through it all, God has let me live and blessed me with a reasonable portion of health and strength, allowed me to watch my children, grandchildren, and even great grandchildren come into the world and grow up . . . He has blessed me with this beautiful home here at the Armed Forces Retirement Home. . . ." RLW

" . . . [At the death of my son in 2005] my life has turned completely around. I found a new way of worshipping God . . . singing praises to God, and thanking Him now for letting me now live in peace and quietness of heart, soul, and mind. Recently I came to the Armed Forces Retirement Home. I am so thankful to God that there is such a wonderful place for us who have served our country – to be together, have great fellowship and love – until one day soon we will meet Jesus face to face and bow down and worship Him . . . for eternity. . ." MAT

"I am old and want to give my thanks to the nurses who were with me during the 10 plus operations I had during my years in the Army and Air Force. Their prayers were for me. During [these] times in my life [I] was in the hands of our Lord. Now I am under the [nurses'] loving care of the 3rd floor. . . I have no fear and [I] am grateful for this care. . ." HCS

"I came to the AFRH-W on Monday, 5 June 2006. On that night, I laid my head on the pillow and thanked God for this place. I am thankful for the friends I have made since arriving here and thankful for the opportunity to extend a helping hand." GLW

"I'm thankful for . . . the food provided; the medical care in local proximity; the beauty created for our partaking. . . . That I am blessed to live in a place where I get to vote and select representatives in our government. Where there is not constant turmoil and strife that exists in the world. A nation of laws and not chaos – a place where I can enjoy the fruits of all God provides." DP

"I'm thankful for having God as a major part of my life. I am thankful for friends I have met at the Home and particularly for one who is a friend that I can openly share with." AMJ

"[I'm] thankful that God allowed me to live past the days that I did not know Him personally. To have the opportunity to grow spiritually and be obedient to the Word. . . . that I can see, walk, talk, do things for myself, live in America and be able to do for others. . . . that God brought me safely here to the retirement Home. Thankful for the Home and the people that work so hard to make it a wonderful place to live." GH

"I am thankful for being needed at AFRH. I thank God every day for happiness and blessings." CLH

"[I'm thankful for knowing that] things may not happen when I want them to, but they are always on time." OW

"Sometimes things don't go well for me, but I thank God that I . . . overcome them later on. . . . As I journey through the day, there are so many things that come to my mind and I give the Lord thanks for them, whether they be small or large. Mainly I start off with the small things. There is so much to thank God for . . . if you really try to serve Him and your fellow man." PLC

"I am thankful to God for the AFRH-W (also Gulfport, MS earlier), a safe haven in my elder years. I am thankful for the inner peace and acceptance of life that the Lord has given me. I am thankful for the United States of America and [I'm] proud of my Country and their belief in the freedom of men and their religion." NM

"I am thankful because God predestined that Jesus would die in our place, and that the Holy Spirit was so patient for so many years, bringing me to the point where I would accept this fact. Else – there would be nothing to be thankful for." RS

"I am thankful for all the creation God created, the heavens, the earth, the waters, the food that I eat and drink, the life He gave me to live. Without God I would have nothing, with God I have everything." JLA

"I asked Him to allow me to come to AFRH. My heart has been broken several times because I have felt the pain of others [whom I have seen here]. This [experience] has given me a ministry. . . I am thankful the Lord allowed me to come here, and I am thankful that He has given me . . . a ministry of being an intercessory prayer warrior." PWS

"I am thankful for all that He has given me here on earth and I must thank and worship Him in my daily living in a way that is acceptable to Him." CMH

"I am thankful for being able to worship God without fear of persecution; for my health and strength; for having my right mind; for having my eye sight; for my mobility; for the relationship I have with family and friends; for having a good home here at AFRH." WM

My desire would have been to have included all of each submission. I struggled to select that which would give glimpses of where many minds are during this season of Thanksgiving. It appears as if these quotes are very much in line with what President Lincoln said in his proclamation, making Thanksgiving Day a national holiday. This Proclamation seems so adequate for the day in which we live, even for the national and global situations in which we find ourselves.

"The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity . . . harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict. . . . No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, Who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that [these gifts] should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States . . . to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father Who dwells in the Heavens. And I recommend . . . they do also . . . commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union. . . ."

Abraham Lincoln: October 3, 1863

Such poetic words seem so fitting a beautiful holiday in which "being grateful" is the primary focus and motivation. I hope yours was full of meaning and fond memories.

Veterans share experiences

British Army vets spend a week with AFRH

By Mary Kay Gominger

Four residents of the London's Royal Hospital Chelsea spent a week at the Armed Forces Retirement Home earlier this month visiting with the AFRH residents and taking in the sights and sounds of the DC area. Over the past several years, AFRH residents have alternated with the Chelsea pensioners in visiting each other's homes, providing both sets of veterans a look at a similar lifestyle in another country.

According to Martin Snow, a staff member accompanying the group, the Chelsea pensioners that made the trip this year are excited to be here.

"Although we have many differences in how we are structured, there are still so many similarities between the two groups of veterans," said Martin. "We are a much smaller group than here housing about 305 in-house pensioners. All of our residents are retired Army enlisted men (we have no women, yet) but the main concept of taking care of our warriors is the same."

The history of the Royal Hospital Chelsea dates back to the year 1692. Pensioners must be over the age of 65, single and upon entry they surrender their entire Army pension. In exchange, they are given a room, three meals a day, clothing, and medical benefits. The Royal Hospital Chelsea spans 66 acres right in the center of London. It is run by a Governor, a retired four-star general, and second in charge is a Lt. Governor, a retired two star.

While here, the Chelsea pensioners spent time both on campus and in the DC area making trips to the Quantico Marine base, a stop at the World War II Memorial, they listened to President Bush as he addressed a large crowd on Veterans Day, just to name a few.

According to Laura Fogarty of Recreation Services and the coordinator of this year's visit, all the activities that took place this year with the Chelsea pensioners and residents were done so in part by donations made by the NCOA, who have cosponsored this event for many years.

"The National Defense Council for the Non-commissioned Officers Association have been huge supporters of the AFRH for many years and have come through with donations to help us fund the events we do with the Chelsea group," Laura said. "Last year they helped fund our resident's trip to London. This group has been very generous to the AFRH and have always been big supporters of our programs."



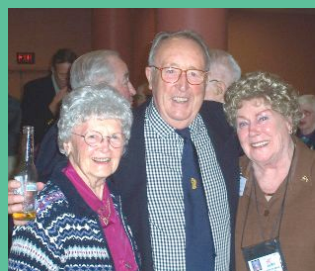
Above - Richard Schnieder, Executive Director NCOA National Defense Foundation, escorts Martin Snow, a staff member at London's Royal Hospital Chelsea during their recent visit to DC.



Left - Chelsea Pensioners participate in the Veterans Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. Here, they walk with members of the NCOA to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown.



Home resident Dick Robinson greets the Chelsea Pensioners at Dulles International Airport the day of arrival.



Marian Ritchie and Helen Abercrombie welcome one of the Chelsea Pensioners during a reception held in the dining hall the evening the group arrived.

Photos taken by Laura Fogarty and Robert Cooper.