

WORLD WAR II

Welcome Center Cluster



ENGAGE



We love hearing about your visit! Share your pictures, questions, and favorite parts of the tour on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

@ArlingtonNatl

#ANCEducation #WWIIatANC

WORLD WAR II

Welcome Center Cluster

Length: ~1 mile

Starting Point: Welcome Center

Exertion Level: Low

There are three types of stops on this walking tour:



HONOR stops mark the gravesites of specific individuals.



REMEMBER stops commemorate events, ideas or groups of people.



EXPLORE stops invite you to discover what this history means to you.

World War II was fought across four continents and thousands of miles of ocean. The lives of millions of military service members and civilians were affected by the events of this war. This walking tour shares some of the diverse experiences and individual stories of those who fought abroad or worked on the home front.

1	Arlington Farms	Walking from Welcome Center		
2	Nathan Farragut Twining	Section 30, Grave 434-2		
3	Harold K. Johnson	Section 30, Grave 430-2		
4	Omar Bradley	Section 30, Grave 428-1		
5	Elwood R. "Pete" Quesada	Section 30, Grave 439-LH		
6	Joy Bright Hancock	Section 30, Grave 2138-RH		
7	Joseph J. McCarthy	Section 30, Grave 1716		
8	James A. Hurd	Section 30, Grave 1617-B		
9	Benjamin O. Davis Jr.	Section 2, Grave E-311-RH		
10	Amphibious Scouts and Raiders & Frogmen Underwater Demolition Teams	Section 31, along Roosevelt Dr.		

As you complete this walking tour, we'd love to hear your thoughts about the people, historical events and ideas you encounter. At some stops, you'll see a "Social Media Connection" prompt that refers you to the end of the walking tour where you can see ways to share and join the conversation. We look forward to connecting with you!

ENGAGE



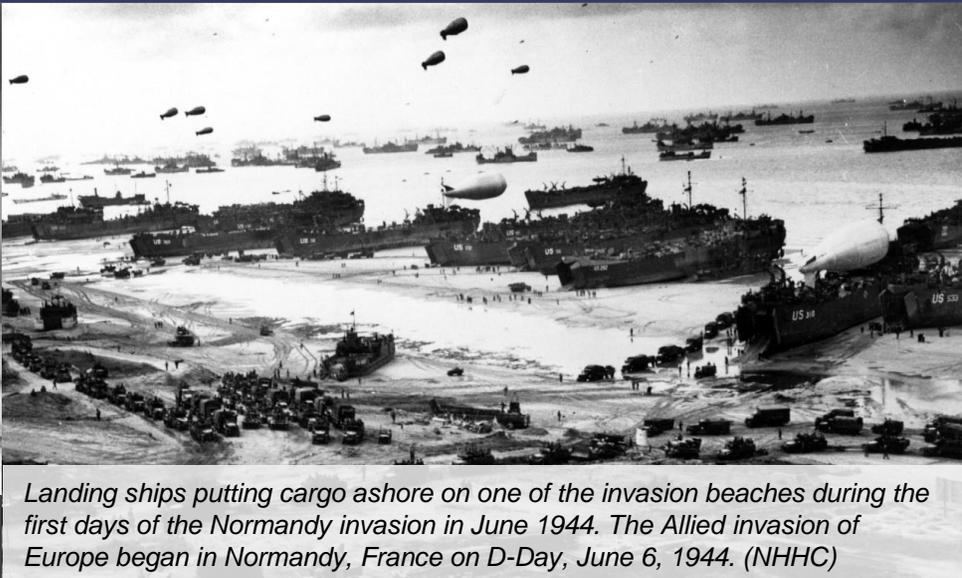
Social Media Connection #1



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



A second atomic bomb is dropped on Japan, this one in Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. (LOC)



Landing ships putting cargo ashore on one of the invasion beaches during the first days of the Normandy invasion in June 1944. The Allied invasion of Europe began in Normandy, France on D-Day, June 6, 1944. (NHHC)

World War II was a people’s war. Mobilization affected the lives of men, women and children. The individuals on this walking tour offer a small slice of the larger story of the United States’ experience in World War II. They include stories of love and loss, discrimination and perseverance, and horror and joy. They represent everyday Americans – both those who are well-known to the public and those who are not – all of whom risked everything in service to their country.

WORLD WAR II

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Two days later, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany, forming the Allied powers. During the first eight months of the European war, most Americans did not want to become involved in another war across the Atlantic Ocean. However, as the war progressed, and Germany continued its military advances, Americans increasingly supported entering the war.

Shortly before 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 7, 1941, Japanese forces attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. This event shocked the nation and pulled the United States into the war. Japan had been expanding in East Asia since its invasion of Manchuria in 1931, and in 1940, Japan, Germany and Italy formed the Axis powers. On December 8, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war against Japan; the resolution passed almost unanimously. Declarations of war against Germany and Italy quickly followed.

The USS West Virginia, USS Tennessee and USS Arizona after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, 1941. (NARA)



The United States sent troops to all global theaters of the war. Back home, the entire country mobilized to respond to the needs of this “total war.” Because victory on the battlefield depended on massive production of military equipment, supplies and resources, all types of Americans

were involved in the war effort. The expanded wartime economy ushered in new opportunities for women, African Americans, Hispanic Americans and members of other minority groups who were able to secure positions in the armed forces or as civilian workers in factories or shipyards. Government-sponsored campaigns urged civilians to do their part for the war effort, whether that was purchasing war bonds, rationing goods or volunteering for service.

Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945. War in the Pacific Theater continued for another three months. After considering an invasion of mainland Japan, President Harry S. Truman authorized the use of atomic bombs against Japan. The United States had been secretly developing the bomb throughout the war, and it became the only nation to use this weapon when a B-29 Superfortress, the “Enola Gay,” dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. This was followed by the atomic bombing of the city of Nagasaki on August 9. Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945, effectively ending the war.

There has not been a conflict since World War II that has affected Americans so universally. We selected walking tour stops to highlight the diverse ways that the war impacted everyone in America, and the many ways individuals contributed to the war effort. On this tour, you’ll be introduced to individuals from all walks of life – service members and civilians, officers and enlistees, men and women, white Americans and people of color. Their stories represent the thousands of Americans during World War II who showed incredible courage in the face of hardship, who excelled despite facing prejudice, and who repeatedly demonstrated their love for their country through their service.



ARLINGTON FARMS



WALKING TOUR STOP 1 Walking from the Welcome Center

“Gee! Twenty-eight acres of girls!” a young sailor exclaimed when he arrived at Arlington Farms.¹ Built in 1942 on what is now part of Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington Farms was a bustling community of approximately 9,000 women. The complex, built to relieve the wartime housing crisis in Washington, D.C., housed white female government workers—known as “government girls”—and Navy WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service).

Beginning in 1941, women streamed into the capital city to fill the abundant civil service jobs necessitated by the U.S.’s entry into World War II. They crammed into boarding houses and apartment buildings, and yet there was still not enough room. To accommodate this influx of women into the city, the U.S. government built temporary dorm complexes to house the women for the duration of the war: in Arlington, Virginia; Suitland, Maryland; and Washington, D.C. Arlington Farms was the largest and the most well-known of these facilities, housing up to 9,000 women aged 16 to 68 at its peak.

Government girls kept the federal government running during the war. They worked as secretaries, assistants and researchers in almost every government agency and in Congress. Their work spanned from traditional administrative duties as typists to conducting policy research for Congress, classifying fingerprints for the FBI and deciphering enemy codes for the military.

Every government girl arrived in Washington for a different reason. Eddie Jane Poindexter took a job as a typist in the Navy’s Bureau of Aeronautics and moved to Arlington Farms because “it didn’t seem right to go to college during the war.”² Sally Donoho and her friends moved because living and working in the city “sounded glamorous.”³ Others, like codebreaker Dot Braden, took government jobs because their families needed the income.

Often working six days a week and as many as ten hours a day, Arlington Farms women spent their free time attending activities at the recreation center, eating meals together in the cafeteria, and socializing in the hallways of the dormitories. The Farms offered professional classes in shorthand and typing, as well as academic credits through the National University. The dormitories also hosted social dances and competed with each other in sports tournaments. Beyond the wider government girls and WAVES communities, the women at Arlington Farms formed a community of their own, even writing and publishing their own newspaper, “Arlingazette: The Voice of Girl Town.”

After the war, most government girls lost their jobs to men returning from the war. Arlington Farms continued to operate until 1950; at the time it shut down, fewer than 1,800 women remained. During World War II, however, it provided a space for women to flex their independence and to gain professional skills, as well to socialize and form community.

Women wait for letters at the mail desk in Idaho Hall of Arlington Farms in 1943. (LOC/Esther Bubley)



Women arrive at Arlington Farm residence halls after a bus ride from work, 1942. (LOC/Esther Bubley)



Residents and guests relax during intermission at one of the bi-weekly dances, 1943. (LOC/Esther Bubley)

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR



The Welcome Center, parking lot and Sections 54-62 and 73-76 now occupy the space where Arlington Farms once stood. Nothing remains from the buildings.

On your way to Stop 2, you will walk past the Military Women’s Memorial on Schley Dr. This is the only major national memorial honoring all women who have defended America throughout history.

WOMEN'S SERVICE IN WORLD WAR II



Rosie the Riveter ca. 1942. (NARA)

The image of Rosie the Riveter is iconic. With men off fighting the war, the United States faced a labor shortage that only women could fill. For years, white women had been taught to believe that the workplace was not meant for them. After the United States entered World War II, however, the U.S. government launched a large-scale advertising campaign to recruit women for the war effort. They promoted images of “Rosies” who could weld and rivet as well as a man. Around six million women, many with children at home, served in the American defense industry during the war. But industrial jobs were not the only jobs women filled. Beyond combat, women filled almost every other wartime role available.



Marine Corps Women's Reserve members (L-R): Minnie Spotted Wolf (Blackfeet tribe), Celia Mix (Potawatomi), and Violet Eastman (Chippewa), ca. 1942-1945. (NARA)

Women in Uniform

Soon after the United States entered the war, every military branch created all-female non-combat units so that men could be available to fight. More than 350,000 women served, both at home and abroad. They performed traditional “women’s” work as secretaries and nurses, but they also flew and repaired planes, served as radio operators, rigged parachutes and much more. While Congress militarized some of these units, others remained civilian for the entirety of the war. 432 women were killed during the war, and another 88 were taken as prisoners of war. Women served in the following units:

- Women’s Army Corps (WAC, originally the Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps)
- Navy Women’s Reserve (WAVES)
- Marine Corps Women’s Reserve
- Coast Guard Women’s Reserve (SPAR)
- Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)
- Army Nurse Corps (established 1901)
- Navy Nurse Corps (established 1908)

Women at Home

Not all women took up jobs with the military or in wartime production plants. Some, like the “government girls,” took up civil service work; others worked on farms producing the nation’s food supply. More remained at home, helping the war effort through grassroot campaigns. They grew victory gardens, organized scrap drives, sold war bonds and volunteered wherever they could.

Some women also served with the United Service Organizations (USO). USO women provided entertainment and comfort to service members, both offering a distraction from the horrors of war and reminding them of what they were fighting for – home and the women they left behind.

After the war, most men and employers expected women to return to domestic life. But many women did not want to return home; they liked their jobs. Still, employers forced women out of their jobs to make room for men returning from war.

In 1948, Congress passed the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act, guaranteeing women a permanent place in the military. However, the act restricted women from commanding men, serving in combat and comprising more than two percent of all service members. Women in the private sector did not make any major labor strides until 1963, when Congress passed the Equal Pay Act. The

following year, Congress barred sex discrimination in employment (along with race, color, religion and national origin) when it passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As you explore the cemetery, consider why the majority of military gravesites belong to men and what stories we miss because of that.

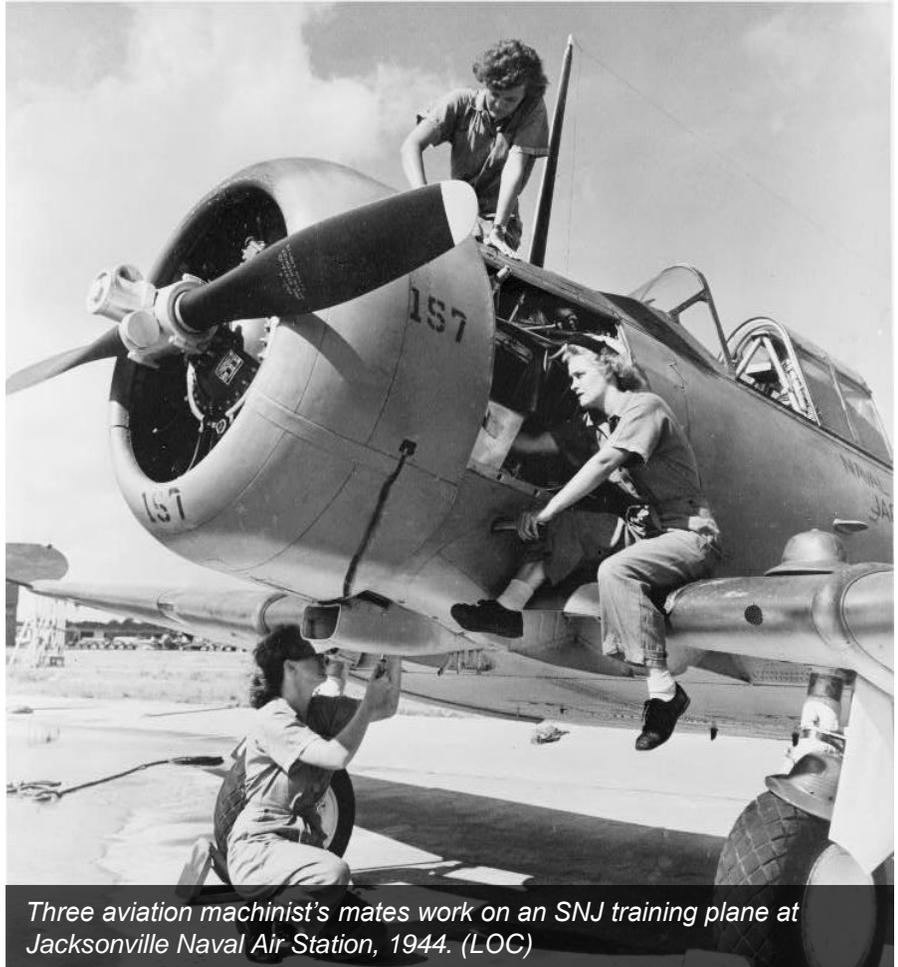


The McLelland family tend their victory garden at Escambia Farms, Florida, 1942. (LOC/John Collier)

WOMEN'S SERVICE IN WORLD WAR II, continued



*Below: WAC recruitment poster 1943. (LOC/Bradshaw Crandell)
WAVES recruitment poster, 1944. (LOC/John Falter)*



Three aviation machinist's mates work on an SNJ training plane at Jacksonville Naval Air Station, 1944. (LOC)



11 Navy Nurses shortly after their liberation in 1945. The women had spent three years in a Japanese internment camp in the Philippines. (NHHC)



Private Margaret Fukuoka, WAC, 1943. (LOC/Ansel Adams)



Olivia Hooker and Aileen Anita Cooks aboard the USS Neversail during their SPAR training, ca. 1941-1945. (NARA)



GENERAL NATHAN FARRAGUT TWINING



WALKING TOUR STOP 2 Section 30, Grave 434-2

BIRTH: October 11, 1897, Monroe, WI

DEATH: March 29, 1982, Lackland Air Force Base, TX

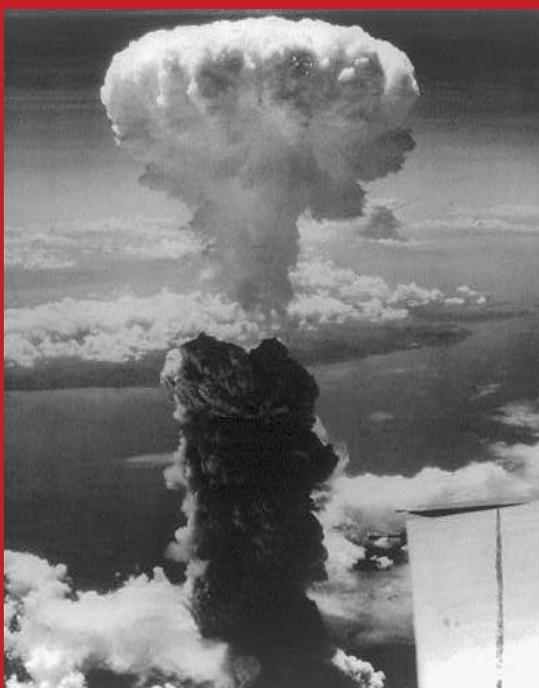
MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force

During World War II, Twining (1897-1982) commanded three Air Forces, including the 20th Air Force in the Pacific, which carried out the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in August 1945. After graduating from the U.S. Military Academy in 1918 and serving in the infantry for a few years, Twining attended flight school and transferred to the Army Air Service.

In January 1943, Twining took command of the 13th Air Force, which was charged with providing air cover for operations in the Solomon Islands. Two weeks after taking command, while flying a mission over the Pacific Ocean, Twining and fourteen others were shot down. They spent six days at open sea until Navy airplanes rescued them. In July 1943, Twining assumed command of all Army, Navy, Marine and Allied Air Forces in the South Pacific, one of the first joint air commands.

In late 1943, Twining transferred to the Mediterranean, where he took command of the 15th Air Force and the Mediterranean Allied Strategic Air Forces. His forces conducted bombing raids against Germany, Austria and Romania, and supported operations in Italy and southern France. After Germany surrendered in May 1945, Twining returned to the Pacific to command the 20th Air Force. Pilots under his command conducted bombing raids against Japan and dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Below: Atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan, August 9, 1945. (LOC)



At the close of the Guadalcanal campaign, General Twining, right, confers with Lt General Millard F. Harmon and Maj General Alexander M. Patch, Jr, left, 1943. (LOC)

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR

From the Women's Memorial, continue down Schley Dr. to Section 30. Twining will be on your left, two rows up from Schley and three headstones in from the Custis Walk.



Also buried at ANC:

- Master Sgt. John D. Kuharek, Section 70, Grave 1752: flight engineer for Nagasaki mission
- Rear Adm. William Sterling "Deak" Parsons, Section 3, Grave 2167: oversaw design and tests of non-nuclear parts of atomic bombs; witnessed Trinity and Pacific Atoll nuclear tests; armed atomic bomb in-flight to Hiroshima

ATOMIC BOMBS

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, the U.S. dropped another atomic bomb on Japan. This time on Nagasaki. The devastation caused by the atomic bombs was unprecedented. The city of Hiroshima estimated that 237,000 people were killed directly or indirectly. In Nagasaki, approximately 80,000 people were killed. Japan surrendered on August 15, 1945.

There is ongoing debate on whether the use of the atomic bombs was justified. Those in favor of the U.S.'s decision to drop the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki argue that the atomic bombs were necessary to prevent a land invasion of Japan that would have resulted in the death of countless American and Japanese lives. Those who think the bombs were unjustified argue that Japan was close to surrendering and that the Soviet invasion of Manchuria on August 8-9, 1945, was the event that tipped the scale — not the atomic bombs.

GENERAL HAROLD K. JOHNSON



WALKING TOUR STOP 3 Section 30, Grave 430-2

BIRTH: February 22, 1912, Bowsmont, ND

DEATH: September 24, 1983, Washington, D.C.

MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Army

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Johnson graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1933. He married Dorothy Rennix in 1935 and they had three children.

CAREER: In 1940, the Army stationed Johnson in the Philippines with the 57th Infantry Regiment (the Philippine Scouts). After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Japanese Army invaded the Philippines. Between December 1941 and April 1942, the U.S. Army and Filipino forces resisted Japanese attempts to seize the country, and specifically the Bataan Peninsula.

On April 3, 1942, the Japanese received reinforcements and renewed their attack. At this point, Philippine and American forces faced food and medical shortages, with rations reduced and hundreds ill from malaria and dysentery. Recalling these hardships, Johnson wrote, "A prolonged period of reduced rations destroys the will to fight almost entirely, and... may even destroy the will to live."⁴ Despite orders from General Douglas MacArthur not to surrender, the commanding general of Philippine and American forces in Bataan, Major General Edward P. King, surrendered on April 9.

The Japanese Army took around 10,000 American and 60,000 Filipino soldiers as prisoners of war, including Harold K. Johnson. Over the next five to ten days, the POWs were forced to march approximately 65 miles in tropical conditions, with no food or water and little rest. Thousands died, and the march was later named the Bataan Death March.

Johnson survived the march and was imprisoned at Camp O'Donnell, Cabanatuan Prison Camp and Bilibid Prison. In December 1944, the Japanese Army transferred him and 1,600 other POWs to Japan. As the Allied Army advanced toward Japan, he was transferred to Korea, where he was liberated by the 7th Infantry Division on September 7, 1945.

LEGACY: Johnson received the Distinguished Service Cross for his service in the Korean War. From 1960 to 1963, he was commandant of the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. At the height of the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War, he served as Army chief of staff from 1964 to 1968.



A painting of General Johnson in 1972. (NARA/Joseph R. Essig)

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR



Johnson's headstone is in the same row as Twining's. It is the next to last headstone in the row.

GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY



WALKING TOUR STOP 4 Section 30, Grave 428-1

BIRTH: February 12, 1893, Clark, MO

DEATH: April 8, 1981, New York City, NY

MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Army

The last general to attain five-star rank, Bradley was promoted to General of the Army on September 22, 1950. A West Point graduate, he began World War II with no combat experience. During World War I, he had been assigned to guard copper mines in Montana. By the end of World War II, however, Gen. Bradley commanded 43 divisions and 1.3 million men – the largest body of soldiers to serve under a U.S. field commander. As senior commander of American ground forces in the 1944 invasion of France, Bradley played a central role in leading the Allies to victory in Europe. Appointed Army Chief of Staff in 1948, he became the first chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He served in that position from 1949 to 1953 and oversaw U.S. strategy in the Korean War and the early Cold War. Nicknamed "the GI's General," Bradley was known for his modesty and his solicitude toward his troops.



Bradley in 1945. (LOC)

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR

Bradley's headstone is to the right of Johnson's.



LIEUTENANT GENERAL ELWOOD R. "PETE" QUESADA



Quesada in uniform, undated. (U.S. Air Force)

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR



Quesada's grave is four rows back from Bradley's, second from the left.



WALKING TOUR STOP 5 Section 30, Grave 439-LH

BIRTH: April 13, 1904, Washington, D.C.

DEATH: February 9, 1993, Jupiter, FL

MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force

Quesada (1904-1993) was a pilot whose career spanned military and civil aviation. In 1929, as a reserve officer in the U.S. Army Air Corps, he served as a crew member on the record-setting "Question Mark" endurance flight, which stayed aloft for more than six days to demonstrate the feasibility of in-flight refueling. All five members of the crew, which also included legendary pilots Ira Eaker and Carl Spaatz, received the Distinguished Flying Cross. During World War II, Quesada held fighter commands during campaigns in Italy, North Africa and Europe, including the D-Day invasion in June 1944. He received two Distinguished Service Medals, the Legion of Merit and the Purple Heart. After retiring from active duty in 1951, Quesada entered private industry as an executive at Lockheed. From 1959 to 1961, he served as the first administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

CAPTAIN JOY BRIGHT HANCOCK



WALKING TOUR STOP 6 Section 30, Grave 2138-RH

BIRTH: May 4, 1898, Wildwood, NJ

DEATH: August 20, 1986, Bethesda, MD

MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Navy WAVES

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Born in New Jersey in 1898, Hancock always said she was named Joy to “offset [her] father’s disappointment that his third child was not a boy.”⁵ Hancock’s first two husbands were aviators, and both were killed in airplane crashes in the 1920s. After her second husband died in 1925, she did not marry again for almost 30 years. She is buried with her third husband, Vice Admiral Ralph A. Ofstie.

CAREER: During World War I, Hancock enlisted in the Navy as a Yeoman First Class (Female), or “Yeomanette” as female yeomen were popularly known. Yeomen (F) primarily served in secretarial and clerical positions. After World War I, Hancock left the military and worked as a civilian for the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics. She also earned a pilot’s license — not, she wrote in her autobiography, “because it was the smart thing to do in the 1920s, but because I was afraid of anything that flew” and wanted to conquer her fear.⁶

On July 30, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the Navy Women’s Reserve, or WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service). That same year, Hancock was commissioned in the WAVES as a lieutenant, and served as a liaison between the Bureau of Aeronautics and the WAVES. She became the director of the Women’s Reserve in 1946 and played an important role in getting Congress to pass the Women Armed Services Integration Act of 1948. This act secured women a permanent place in the military during peacetime. In 1948, Hancock was one of the first six women sworn into the regular Navy.

LEGACY: When Capt. Hancock retired from active duty in 1953, she received the Legion of Merit for her contributions to the WAVES. In 1972, she published her autobiography, “Lady in the Navy,” recounting both her own experience as well as the history of women in the Navy. Captain Joy Bright Hancock’s work was instrumental to expanding women’s opportunities in the military.



Lt. Commander Hancock, ca. 1943. (NARA)



Yeoman (F) First Class Hancock in 1918. (LOC)



WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR

Take the Custis Walk past Sheridan Dr. Hancock’s grave is six rows from Arlington House and the end of section 30. It is seven graves from the end of the row.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOSEPH J. MCCARTHY



WALKING TOUR STOP 7 Section 30, Grave 1716

BIRTH: August 10, 1911, Chicago, IL

DEATH: June 15, 1996, Palm Beach, FL

MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Marine Corps

McCarthy was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Battle of Iwo Jima. Soon after landing on the beaches of Iwo Jima on February 21, 1945, McCarthy's company was cut off by Japanese machinegun fire. Organizing a demolitions and flamethrower team, he charged ahead yelling, "Let's get the bastards before they get us!"⁷ Within five minutes, McCarthy, with the support of his company, destroyed the Japanese defenses.

After the war, McCarthy joined the Chicago Fire Department, serving as Superintendent of Ambulances. He remained in the Marine Corps Reserve until 1971.



McCarthy in 1945. (NARA)

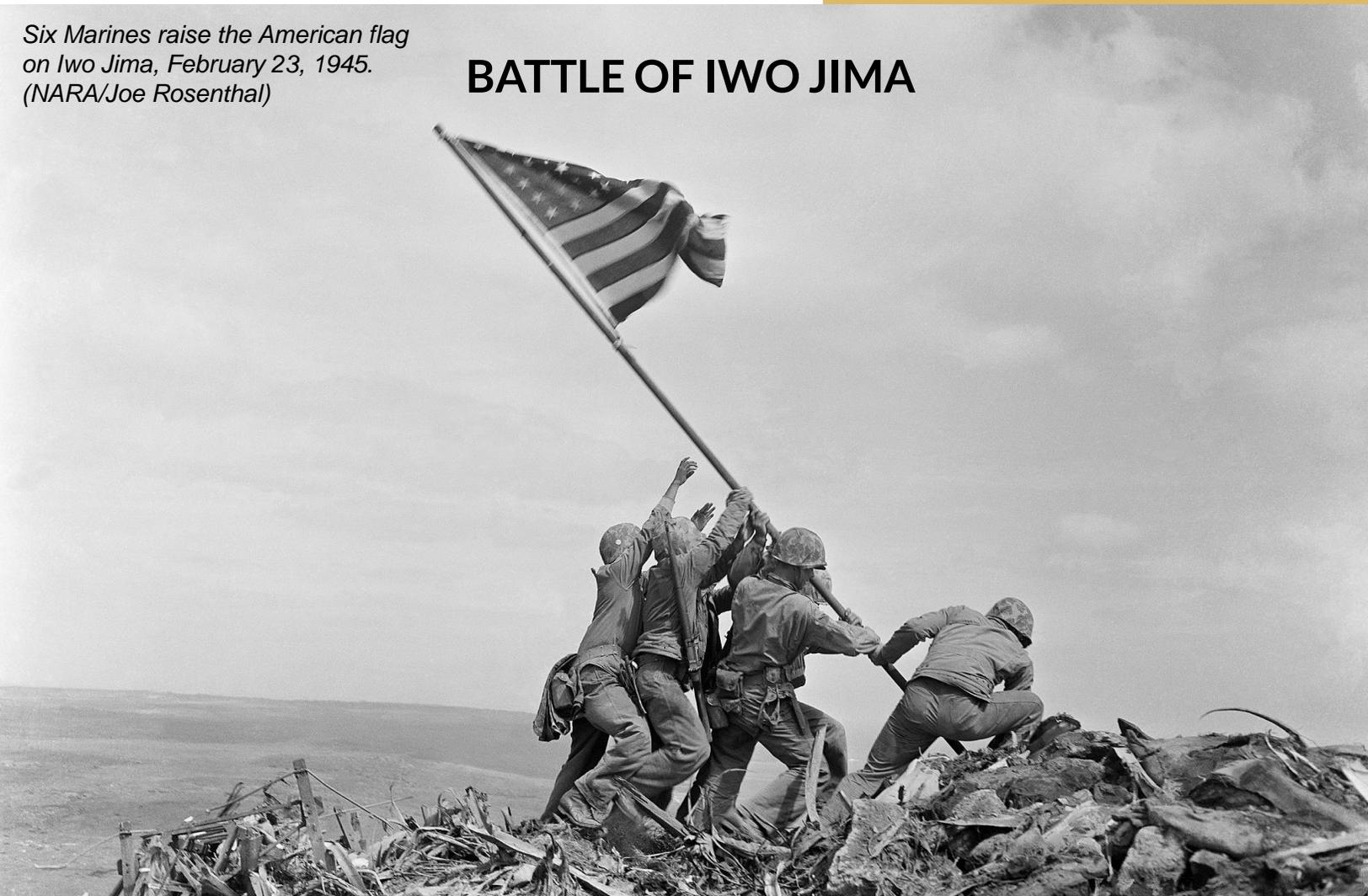


WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR

*Return to Custis Walk,
McCarthy's grave is 20 rows from
Hancock's. McCarthy's is the
tenth headstone in the row.*

*Six Marines raise the American flag
on Iwo Jima, February 23, 1945.
(NARA/Joe Rosenthal)*

BATTLE OF IWO JIMA



On February 19, 1945, the U.S. Marines invaded the Japanese island of Iwo Jima, initiating one of the bloodiest battles in Marine Corps history. One month after Strank and the five others raised the American flag, the United States secured victory, but with heavy casualties on both sides. Of the 70,000 U.S. Marines, almost 7,000 were killed and another 20,000 were wounded. Only 216 of an estimated 18,000 Japanese soldiers were captured alive; the remainder were killed in action. Victory at Iwo Jima set the stage for the final major land battle of World War II: the battle of Okinawa. For the remainder of the war, Iwo Jima served as an emergency landing site for the U.S. B-29 airmen.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES A. HURD



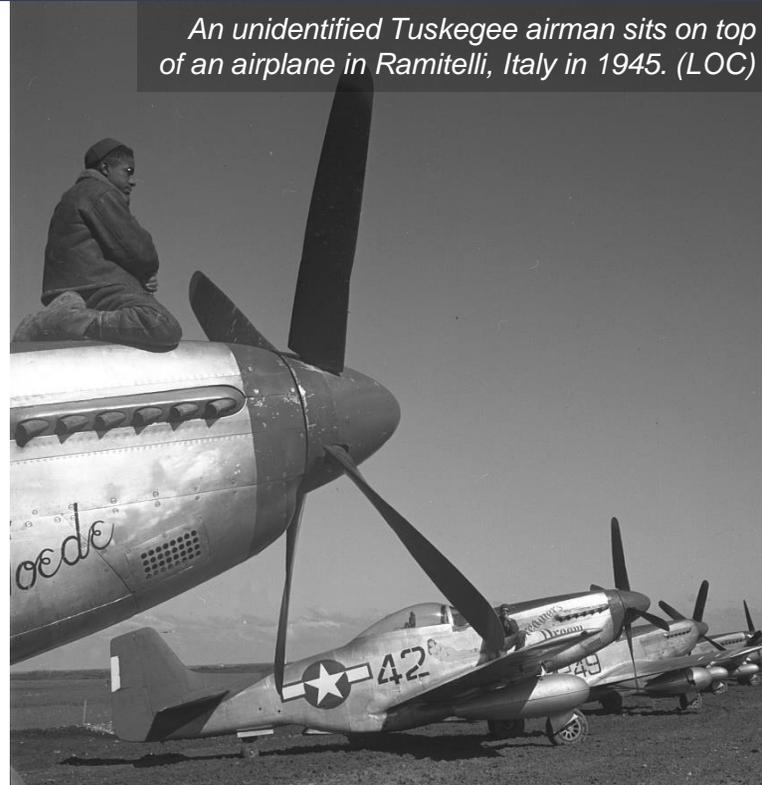
WALKING TOUR STOP 8 Section 30, Grave 1617-B

BIRTH: August 20, 1917, OK

DEATH: May 2, 2000, Sarasota, FL

MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force

Hurd is one of the only people to have been both a “Buffalo Soldier” (a nickname given to some segregated African American military regiments from the 1860s to 1950s) and a Tuskegee Airman. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1939 and received flight training in Tuskegee, Alabama. After earning his wings as a Tuskegee Airman, he served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II and then the U.S. Air Force until his retirement in 1963. His service included time in Korea during the Korean War and assignments in Japan. He later earned a master’s degree in education psychology from Howard University, where he also served as an administrator for 20 years.



An unidentified Tuskegee airman sits on top of an airplane in Ramitelli, Italy in 1945. (LOC)



WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR

Facing Section 30 from Sheridan Dr, Hurd's grave is six rows back, four plots in.

GENERAL BENJAMIN O. DAVIS JR.



WALKING TOUR STOP 9 Section 2, Grave E-311-RH

BIRTH: December 18, 1912, Washington, D.C.

DEATH: July 4, 2002, Washington, D.C.

MILITARY BRANCH: U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force

A 1936 graduate of West Point, Davis was among the first group of African Americans admitted to the U.S. Army Air Corps. The U.S. Army initially barred Davis from joining the Air Corps because of his race. In 1941, however, as the United States edged closer to involvement in World War II, concerns about a shortage of U.S. military pilots prompted the Army to begin training African American pilots. Davis enrolled in advanced flight training at Tuskegee Army Air Base – the program that created the famed Tuskegee Airmen.”

“Davis was the first African American officer to fly solo in an Army Air Corps plane, and he received his pilot’s wings in 1942. After assuming command of the 99th Fighter Squadron, comprised of other graduates of the Tuskegee training program, Davis deployed to Tunisia in April 1943. Later, the squadron went to Sicily to aid in the Allied invasion of Italy. In October 1943, Davis assumed command of the 332nd Fighter Group. After successfully escorting U.S. bombers into German airspace, Davis was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross. Davis was one of the first Black officers in the U.S. Army and the first Black officer in the U.S. Air Force. He was advanced to four-star rank in 1998.



Davis Jr. climbing into an advanced trainer in 1942 in Tuskegee, Alabama. (NARA)

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR



From Custis Walk, turn right on Sheridan Dr. Continue onto Grant Dr. and turn right on Roosevelt Dr. About 250 feet along Roosevelt, look to your left. Davis Jr.'s grave is near the top of the circle of graves.

THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN EXPERIMENT



In 1925, the War Department published a report asserting that African Americans were incapable of operating complex military equipment, such as airplanes. The military used this study to bar African Americans from enlisting in the Army Air Corps. On January 9, 1941, however, after years of intense pressure from prominent Black newspapers and civil rights leaders, the Secretary of War approved the formation of an all-African American pursuit squadron – the Tuskegee Airmen.



Tuskegee Airmen in Ramitelli, Italy in March 1945. (LOC/Toni Frissell)



The first graduates of the Advanced Flying School at Tuskegee. Left-Right: G.S. Roberts, B.O. Davis, C.H. DeBow, R.M. Long, Mac Ross, and L. R. Curtis. (LOC)

On July 19, 1941, Captain Benjamin O. Davis Jr. and 12 other cadets reported for aviation training at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The Tuskegee Airmen project was originally framed as an “experiment,” and most high-ranking officers and civilians expected it would fail. The “experiment” did not fail, and six of the original 12 cadets passed the course. These six men became the first Tuskegee Airmen.

In July 1942, the 99th Fighter Squadron, with 28 military aviators, became the first African American squadron mobilized for combat. Despite the squadron’s training, the Army did not deploy the 99th overseas until April 1943. It then took another month for the Army to give the squadron its first mission.

In late 1943, military officials and newspapers published reports questioning the skills of the 99th Fighter Squadron, forcing Davis to testify at hearings at the Pentagon. Throughout the hearing, Davis rebutted the negative reports and defended his squadron. However, the squadron was only exonerated after the military conducted a subsequent report on its operations.

Two years later, in November 1945, the War Department released a report stating that while escorting bomber planes, the Tuskegee Airmen of the 332nd Fighter Group shot down fewer enemy planes than did white squadrons. The report failed to mention that the 332nd Fighter Group was not deployed until near the end of the war, when the German air force was drastically depleted, and therefore the pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group encountered fewer enemy planes than squadrons that had flown earlier in the war.

While the military remained segregated throughout World War II, the wartime military service of African Americans and other racial minorities did make a difference. On July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981, ending racial segregation in the United States military. Additionally, Black veterans evoked their wartime service as evidence that they deserved equal rights as U.S. citizens. In this way, World War II laid crucial groundwork for the postwar civil rights movement and the important legislative gains of the 1950s and 1960s.

REFLECTION:

Imagine working under the expectation that you will fail. Imagine working for people who want you to fail. Imagine working under conditions in which if you fail, others of your race/gender/ethnicity/etc. will never get the chance to succeed.

This was what the Tuskegee Airmen and other African Americans in the military faced. The Tuskegee Airmen were held to a higher standard and scrutinized to a greater degree than white aviation units because of their race.

★ AMPHIBIOUS SCOUTS & RAIDERS & FROGMEN UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAMS ★



STOP 10

Memorial Trees in Section 31 along
Roosevelt Dr

The two red maples here have plaques that honor the Frogmen Underwater Demolition Teams and the Amphibious Scouts and Raiders of World War II. While you might not recognize either of those unit names, you probably recognize what they went on to become: the U.S. Navy SEALs (Sea, Air and Land Teams).

When the United States entered World War II, the Axis powers had fortified their shores with mines and obstacles. This made it difficult for American ships to get close enough to shore to land troops. In response, the U.S. Navy began training teams of divers to do underwater demolition. On June 6, 1943, the Navy established a full Naval Combat Demolition Unit (NCDU) training school at Fort Pierce, Florida. Sailors who volunteered for the school were put through intense training that included 16-hour days of running obstacle courses in the hot sun, paddling rubber boats in rivers and the ocean and carrying boats through snake- and alligator-infested waters. By the end of the first "Hell Week," about forty percent of the sailors had quit or were lying injured in the hospital.

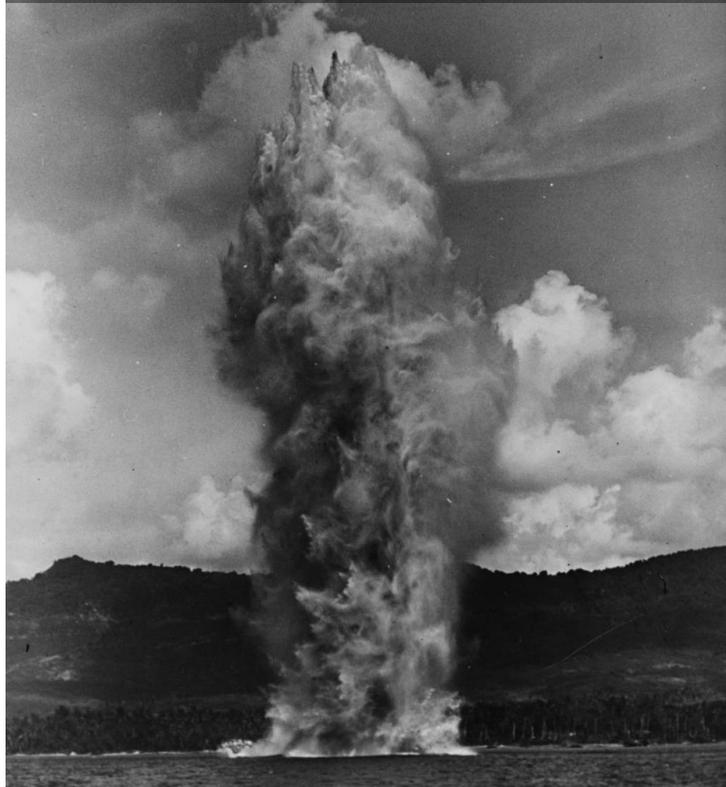
The first NCDU class graduated in September 1943; seven units deployed to the Pacific, three to the Mediterranean and one to England. By April 1944, 34 NCDUs were in England to handle the demolitions during the June 6 invasion of Normandy. On D-Day, 37 NCDU men were killed and 71 wounded. This remains the bloodiest day in the history of American naval special warfare.

Alongside NCDUs, Amphibious Scouts and Raiders (S&R) also performed important work to ensure the safe landing of American troops. This joint Army and Navy unit was created in 1942 to scout landing sites and lead assaults. The unit initially trained at the Amphibious Training Base in Little Creek, Virginia, before it was relocated to Fort Pierce in February 1943. S&R men conducted missions as part of the Allied invasion of North Africa and France, including pre-assault operations at Normandy prior to D-Day. After successful amphibious assaults at Normandy and in southern France, members of the NCDUs and S&R units were reassigned to other units.

To face the special circumstances of war in the Pacific, which included unfamiliar waters and perilous coral reefs, Underwater Demolition Teams (UDTs) trained in Waimanalo, Hawaii. These teams were larger than NCDUs, and they relied more on swimming than boats to reach beaches and perform reconnaissance. Between December 1944 and August 1945, UDTs participated in every major amphibious landing in the Pacific.

After World War II, the need for amphibious scouts and underwater demolition teams decreased, and many units were disbanded. UDTs did serve during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, however, and they began to expand their capabilities on land. This multi-pronged capability became the basis for the establishment of U.S. Navy SEAL Teams in January 1962. Today, Navy SEALs perform missions in just about every environment and condition imaginable. Underwater demolition and reconnaissance remain among their primary duties.

An explosive charge blows up an underwater obstacle off Guam in July 1944. (NHHC)



UDT swimmers prepare to recover their gear and swim towards their objective area, 1945. (NHHC)



Underwater demolition team members use aluminum paint as camouflage, 1945. (NHHC)

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR



Return to Roosevelt Drive and turn right. After passing Weeks Drive, the Memorial Tree is about halfway down Roosevelt Drive, on your left.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS



We love hearing about your visit! Share your pictures, questions, and favorite parts of the tour on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Tag Arlington National Cemetery using @ArlingtonNatI and hashtags #ANCEducation and #WWIIatANC.

WOMEN'S SERVICE IN WORLD WAR II

Women have always played important roles in history, but the historical record has not always included their stories. Oral histories and other records have made it easier for their stories to be recorded and shared today. Using the [Veterans History Project](#) from the Library of Congress, choose an oral history to listen to or read the transcript.

How can you share that person's story?

Share your thoughts with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram by tagging Arlington National Cemetery using @ArlingtonNatI and the hashtags #ANCEducation and #WWIIatANC.

WORLD WAR II WALKING TOUR

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1. Eleanor Lake, "Twenty-Eight Acres of Girls," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 1, 1944, 1B.
2. Robert McAyeal, "Government Girl," *Evening Star*, January 7, 1945, 61.
3. "New Recreation Hall for Girls Opens Soon at Arlington Farms," *Evening Star*, September 6, 1943, B.
4. Quoted in Harold K. Johnson, Anyasan and Silaiim Points (paper prepared for School of Combined Arms, 1946-47, Command and General Staff College), p. 12, cited in Louis Morton, *The Fall of the Philippines* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 1993), 332.
5. Joy Bright Hancock, *Lady in the Navy: A Personal Reminiscence* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1972), 4.
6. Hancock, *Lady in the Navy*, 41.
7. Quoted in The National World War II Museum, "Captain Joseph J. McCarthy: Medal of Honor Series," August 5, 2020, <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/captain-joseph-j-mccarthy-medal-of-honor>.

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Page 6: "Two Negro SPARS pause on the ladder of the dry-land ship 'U.S.S. Neversail' during their 'boot' training at the U.S. Coast Guard Training Station, Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, NY. They are recent enlistees and have the ratings of apprentice seamen. In front is SPAR Olivia Hooker and behind her is SPAR Aileen Anita Cooks.", ca. 1941-1945, National Archives, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/535869>.

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