

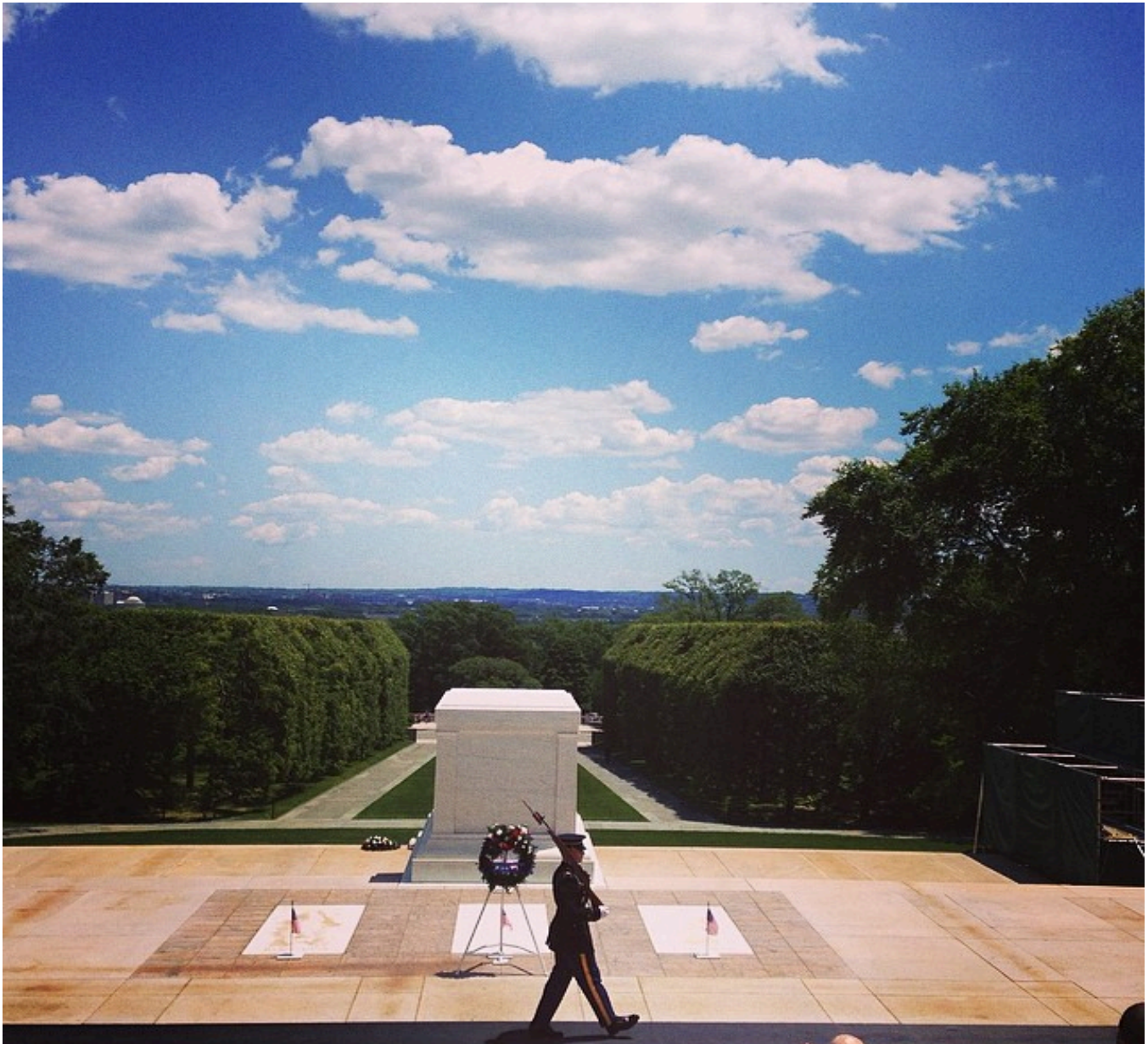


20  
1999 - 2019  
years



# The Sentinel

*...Reaching from earth to heaven above, a lasting tribute to one man's love....*



The Sentinel is the quarterly publication for the members of Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (SHGTUS).

\* denotes non-SHGTUS members

# From the President

SHGTUS President Gavin McIlvenna (1997-98)

*Happy Anniversary!* March 29, 1999 marked 20 years since the Society was formed, less than one year after the first large gathering of Tomb Guards in 1998 at Fort Myer. In that year the Sergeant of the Guard, SFC Richard Cline (1997-99), led a group to track down and bring together Tomb Guards to celebrate 50 years of service as Old Guard Tomb Guards (April 6, 1948 the Regiment took over the duty to provide Sentinels at the Tomb).

I was a Relief Commander in training, just about to test for the badge, and remember the long nights of helping put phone lists together from many sources, as well as going to the Pentagon for a special visit with the Secretary of Defense. Besides the honor of meeting MDW Commander Robert Foley (Medal of Honor recipient from Vietnam) Secretary Cohen and Dr. John Hamre, Assistant Secretary of Defense and lifelong supporter of the Society, I vividly remember the huge shrimp that was part of the spread put on by the Navy chefs.



20 YEARS...Yikes, I really am an “old guy” now!

The Society has changed in many ways, except its steadfast commitment to the mission and the platoon. I was told a few years ago that “this platoon is the only one in the Army with its own non-profit organization”. I thought, of course it is. The Tomb Guard platoon is the only platoon in the Army that was expressly formed by order of Congress to perform a specific mission...one that hasn’t changed since 1926. It is a unique platoon, and we are unique organization. When the founders sat down to put the Society on paper, we talked about not wanting the Society to just be another beer drinking fraternity of Soldiers that gathered every year to tell war stories. We wanted the Society to continue the mission of protecting and educating America about the Unknown Soldiers, a mission that is eloquently captured in the Sentinel’s Creed.

*“My dedication to this sacred duty is total and whole hearted.”*

Such a simple statement that has a much deeper meaning. Our duty to the Unknown Soldiers doesn’t end on our last walk, or even when we leave the military and go back into civilian life. Many a veteran will say “*My term of service never ends*”, but are those just words to sound noble? We made a commitment when we volunteered for the mission and are expected to never falter as we live up to the ideals of our creed. Each of us formed a bond with the Soldiers we stood the eternal vigil over, and part of that bond is to ensure that their sacrifice is never forgotten. We must endeavor to educate those that owe so much to so few.

After every reunion there is a ground swell of those that want to volunteer, yet by the first of the year that trickles to next to none. It’s easy to sit back and enjoy the fruit of another’s hard work, letting them do the heavy lifting. It is something entirely different to step into the breach, setting aside personal time

to work towards something larger than yourself. Those who have volunteered to help in many of the aspects of the Society do it not for fame or reward, but to see a living legacy of duty endure.

*“This Soldier will in honored glory rest under my eternal vigilance”*

I ask each of you to take an honest evaluation of your work and personal life and see if you can commit to once again ensure that American never forgets. Step forward and volunteer to help the Education or Centennial committees as they continue the mission to inform the people of this nation about the Unknown Soldiers.

Last month the Board of Directors voted to make the White Rose the official flower of the Society, and just in time for the Centennial Committee to announce the Never Forget Garden project to the public. As I mentioned in an email this was our way of honoring a tradition started on October 24, 1921 when Sergeant Edward Younger identified the World War I Unknown Soldier by placing a spray of white roses on his casket. We will adopt the white rose into our ceremonies, with the exception of one yellow rose during the Rose Ceremony to remember the empty crypt of the Vietnam Unknown Soldier, and all those who are still missing to this day.

Exciting things are in the air regarding the Centennial and I will do my best to keep you up-to-date on all of it. Of course, you can always go to the website and check on the updates as they posted:

<https://tombguard.org/centennial/>

Until next time, please be safe and send a picture when you run into a fellow Society member.

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## From the Society Historian

Larry Seaton, SHGTUS Treasurer and Historian

### **A Rose is a Rose is a Rose is a Rose\***

“Civilization begins with a rose. A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose. It continues with blooming and it fastens clearly upon excellent examples. (G Stein: As Fine as Melanctha)

As Gavin has mentioned above, the Society has adopted the white rose as its official flower. When this discussion about adopting a rose first began, I reached out to the American Rose Society to see if they might have any information about the variety of rose that Sgt. Edward Younger placed on the Unknown Soldier’s casket in 1921. Bob Martin\*, President of the American Rose Society, responded to my request and placed his nose against the investigative grindstone and produced the following information:

*“The selection took place in the French town of Chalons-sur-Marne on the morning of October 24, 1921. (Châlons-en-Champagne is a city in the Grand Est region of France. It is the capital of the department of Marne, despite being only a quarter the size of the city of Reims. Formerly called Châlons-sur-Marne, the city was officially renamed in 1998.) He stood alone in the small, dark octagonal room holding the bouquet of white roses cut from the garden of French parents who had lost two sons to the war.”*

From the above, the record tells us that the roses were cut from a French garden, perhaps locally, prior to October 24, 1921. That indicates the rose would have been a garden specimen rose, likely well-

established in order to produce a bouquet of blooms in late October. That tells me the rose must have been introduced in commerce, most likely in France, some time prior to 1921. The time of year also indicates that the rose was a repeat-flowering variety that would have been freely blooming in the fall, as opposed to once-flowering roses that bloom only in the spring.



The photo of Edward Younger “recreating” his selection on May 30, 1930 has a close up of white roses of distinctive tea or hybrid tea form, also popular among florist roses at the time. That however is a “re-creation” that took place nine years later in Washington DC so the likelihood that the same variety of rose was used in the re-creation is not high. The type of rose, however, is likely to have been the same. The indistinct photos of the actual bouquet on the casket in 1921 also suggest that the rose was a tea or hybrid tea rose. Tea and hybrid tea roses are also typically repeat blooming, which suggests that they could

have been in bloom in France in late October 1921. The tea and hybrid tea roses were then, and indeed now are, the primary type of rose used by florists and recognized by the public as “roses”. They also typically come with long stems which may be arranged in a bouquet such as the one used in the selection.

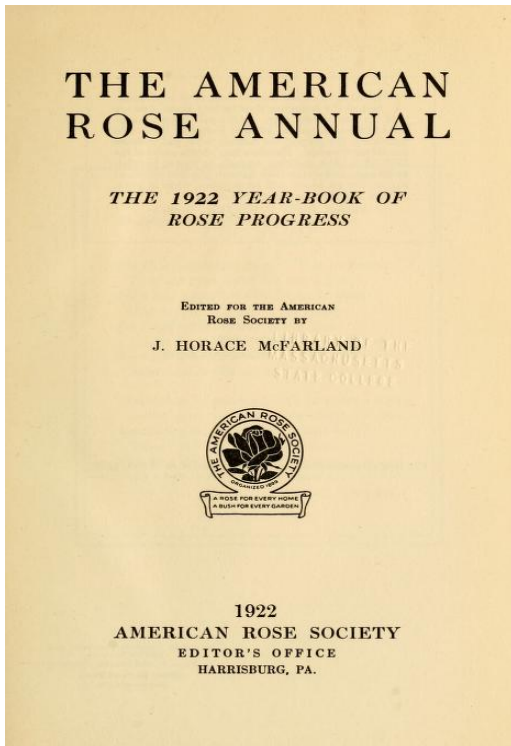
Taking this information, I have studied likely candidates of white tea roses popular in France circa 1921. I did this through an advanced search of the website HelpMeFind. That turned up several candidates, the most likely of which is ‘Niphetos’ a white tea rose hybridized by the French breeder Bougere in 1841.

There is also a climbing version of the rose introduced in 1889 that is said to be much more productive of long-stemmed blooms.

‘Niphetos’ is variously translated from the Greek as “snowing” or “falling snow”. The rose is also sometimes referred to as “The Wedding Rose” or “The Bridal Rose” because of its use at weddings. It was by all accounts a very popular white tea rose in its time and is very likely to be one found blooming in a French garden in October 1921. It is therefore my guess – and understand this is only an educated guess – that the rose laid by Sergeant Younger was ‘Niphetos.’



In the course of my research I came across an interesting reference that is likely to be just coincidence but perhaps not. There is an article in the 1922 American Rose Annual, at p.132, titled “Among European Rosarians,” by E. A. White, Professor of Floriculture, Cornell University. The Editors Note by J. Horace McFarland, the Father of the American Rose Society provides further detail on Professor White:



*Editor's Note: To get rose observations at first hand by a competent rosarian is very much worthwhile. Professor White, who was the efficient secretary of the American Rose Society for several years, and until his increasing duties made continuance impracticable, has provided us with just such observations.*

Professor White's trip included one to France where he visited prominent gardens and nurseries in the fall of 1921, at the same time of the selection of the American Unknown Soldier. That account includes the following account of the visit to the garden of Joseph Pernet-Ducher:

*On my arrival at Lyons, I found a note from M. Pernet-Ducher saying his daughter would call for me early Thursday to take me to their nurseries. Mlle. Pernet speaks excellent English and acted both as guide and interpreter for me during the entire day. The war brought deep sadness to their home in that it took both sons, Claudius, 31 years old, and Georges, aged 28 years. The morning was spent among the roses.*

Recalling the detail of the origin of the roses used in the selection, they came from "the garden of French parents who had lost two sons to the war." Compare that to the note of White that,

*The war brought deep sadness to their home in that it took both sons, Claudius, 31 years old, and Georges, aged 28 years.*

I looked at the Google Map and note that Lyons is some distance to the Southeast of the town of Chalons-sur-Marne, albeit on the rail lines. The gardens of Joseph Pernet-Ducher in Lyons were not therefore local. On the other hand, we do know that Joseph Pernet-Ducher was a prominent rosarian and nurseryman in France whose garden was full of roses in the fall of 1921. In contrast, I would assume the destruction in France during the Great War would have made it unlikely that there were many local gardens in October 1921 that could supply a bouquet of white roses. Further detail on Joseph Pernet-Ducher may be found here:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph\\_Pernet-Ducher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Pernet-Ducher)

The account of the selection of the American Unknown Soldier has a number of "coincidences" and perhaps this is just that. Then again, a plausible explanation of the origin of the roses used in the selection is that they were a bouquet of the white tea rose 'Niphetos' from the gardens of Joseph Pernet-Ducher, the famous French nurseryman near Lyons.

Of further interest 'Niphetos' continues to be available from three US and six foreign sources to this day. For more information about the American Rose Society, visit their website at [www.rose.org](http://www.rose.org).

Respectfully submitted,  
Larry Seaton, 1970-71

**\*“Sacred Emily” by Gertrude Stein, 1913.**

Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.  
Loveliness extreme.  
Extra gaiters.  
Loveliness extreme.

<https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/sacred-emily>

## From the SOG

*From SFC Christopher Carney, Sergeant of the Guard  
(2014-16, 2019-Present)*

Greetings fellow Tomb Guards. I am Sergeant First Class Christopher Carney the new Sergeant of the Guard (SOG). I have taken over as the SOG and Platoon Sergeant. I am a former Tomb Guard and served from 2014 to 2016 and have been given the unique opportunity of serving TUS again. I'm married to my wife, Heather with three children and we live in Springfield, VA. My hobbies include guns, working out, and antiques.

I have been in the Army for 10 years as an Infantryman and have served in many assignments while stationed at Fort Myer, Fort Bliss, Fort Benning, Fort Jackson, and Afghanistan (2011-12).

After an unusual set of circumstances at the Tomb occurred, I was presented with the opportunity to return to the Tomb and serve as the SOG. I was selected and I re-entered TUS Training in October, to brush up on the changes since I was here last and completed training this February.

Working with and for Soldiers is the best part of being in the Army. I have had the pleasure of working with outstanding Soldiers and Non-Commissioned Officers in my career but none of them compare to the Tomb Guards of past and present. A lot has changed at the Tomb in the short time I was gone but the fundamental vigil of the guard has remained the same and the humble reverence of being stewards of the Unknown Soldiers remains unchanged. I look forward to helping and watching these fine Soldiers grow as Soldiers and Tomb Guards.

As I write this the weather is changing and it is finally what appears to be spring outside, the cemetery as always is a beautiful place. The TUS Platoon is filled with a new generation of guards who have their own desires and aspirations. The guard changes are a good as they have ever been, and the Soldiers are better than I ever was and it's an honor to serve those that serve the Unknown Soldiers.

It's good to be back.



# Update from the Quarters

*SFC Christopher Carney, Sergeant of the Guard (2014-16, 2019-Present)*

The Platoon has been busy this past quarter. We have had many Soldiers come and go, get promoted and complete training this past quarter. As I write this the Platoon has completed a month of working on two reliefs so that twelve Soldiers could attend Expert Infantry Badge (EIB) Training and testing, with SGT Aspinall\* and SPC McKenzie (2017-19) receiving their EIBs (out of 17 within the Regiment). SPC McKenzie (2017-19) was also recognized with an Army Achievement Medal for completing EIB testing without any errors, earning the title "True Blue". Since 1943, the EIB is awarded to Soldiers with Infantry or Special Forces Military Occupational Specialties. Earning an EIB requires completion of several prerequisites and passing a battery of tests on basic infantry skills. These skills include day and night land navigation, first aid, patrol lane tasks, and moving under direct fire. One of the last tests is a 12-mile foot march, which must be completed in three hours. Soldiers must march carrying an M4 and more than 40 pounds of combat gear.

We have last walks scheduled that include SPC McKenzie's (2017-19) on 1 April ; SGT Garcia (2017-Present) on 17 April and SPC McCutchen (2017-Present) on 10 July. Former Tomb Guards and Society members are always encouraged to attend these ceremonies, and more information will be provided when the details are confirmed.

We have had four recent promotions in the Platoon with PFC LeClerc\* (3rd Relief, in training), SPC McKee\* (3rd Relief, in Training) SPC Relford\* (2<sup>nd</sup> Relief, in training) and SGT Aspinall\* (1st Relief, in training) and soon CPL Koeppel (2017-Present) will be SGT on 1 April.

SPC Christopher Johnson (2018-Present) and SGT Garcia (2017-Present) have been selected to represent 4/3 Battalion in the Best Warrior Competition. The tasks include the Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, essays, boards, marksmanship, land navigation and overall military bearing and appearance. We wish them luck but as SGT Garcia would put it "I Don't come in second".

The Platoon has not had any recent births, but many Tomb Guard kids have visited the quarters to be with their parents while they worked the two-relief schedule. As always there is a large turn around in the Platoon of both Badge Holders and new men in training. We currently have thirteen Soldiers in training, and the badge holders are always trying to work towards finding and training their replacements.

Thanks for your help and I look forward to meeting you or seeing you again.

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## Last Walk

*Editor*

A Sentinel's last walk with the Unknown Soldiers before he moves on to another assignment in the Army is special time of reflection and duty. A heartfelt Thank You to all for their dedication to duty and their service to the Unknown Soldiers. We wish our brothers who have departed over the last quarter the best of luck with their future endeavors.

**February 14**

SPC Michael Amlong



**March 22**

SSG (P) Garrett Golden



## Newest Tomb Guards

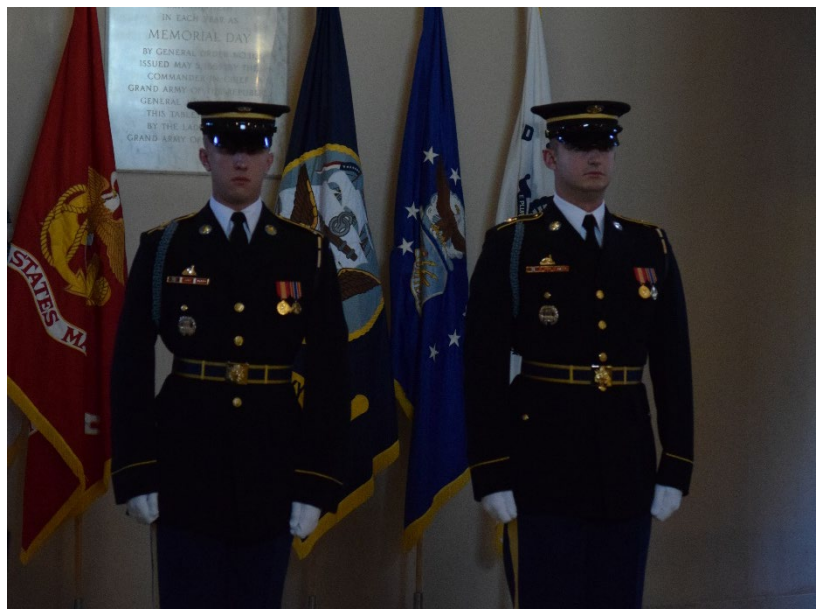
*Editor*

After many hard months of training, we welcomed two new Tomb Guards this quarter into our ranks:

**January 11**

SPC Trevor Drahem\* (TGIB #664)

PFC William Jeffs\* (TGIB #665)





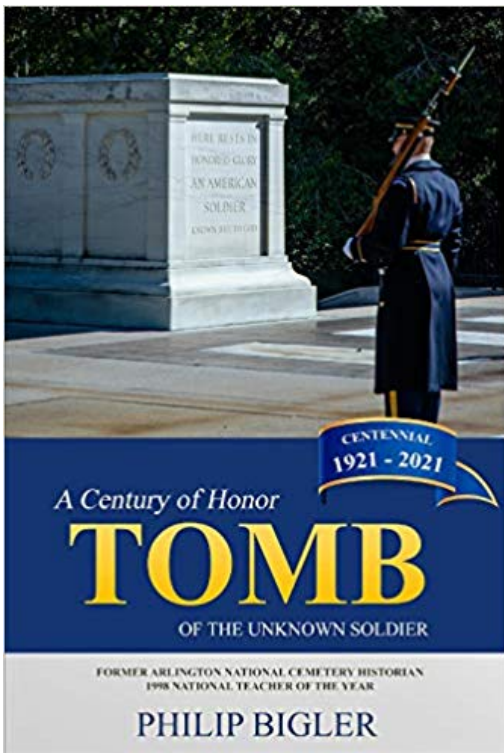


**February 22**  
CPT Victor Farrar (TGIB #666)

## Book Review — A Century of Honor

Dave Hathaway, SHGTUS Associate Quartermaster

### Learning a Great Deal Thanks to Philip Bigler



For the first new offering in the Society store this year is the new book by Philip Bigler entitled *A Century of Honor: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*. Many of you are already familiar with his first book on ANC and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier entitled *In Honored Glory: Arlington National Cemetery the Final Post*. Having served as a Historian of the Arlington National Cemetery makes him uniquely qualified to write a comprehensive history of the Tomb itself and how it came to be. As with all of his books there are comprehensive endnotes and a bibliography that outline where his research came from.

The book itself is an easy read, but it comes in a total of 376 pages plus a 16 page insert with glossy black and white photos. It opens with an historical outline of events leading up to today. After that there are eight chapters that make it easy to set the book down and come back to it without having to ask or figure out “Now where was I?” or “where did I leave off at?” I must admit, I’m somewhat biased and confess that I read

quite a bit of history especially military history. *Century of Honor* never left me feeling bored nor did I find it a dry read.

I found the first few chapters on the events leading up to the building of the Memorial Amphitheater and the establishment of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier the most interesting. One fact that I didn't know was that the idea for a memorial specifically honoring our nation's Unknowns actually came from the British and the French who had already established such memorials in each of their countries. Another portion of the book is devoted to the repatriation of the remains of U.S. soldiers killed in combat. This covered the logistics involved in this process, including the identification of the remains. The selection process of the Unknown Soldier from World War I along with the transport of the remains aboard the USS Olympia, and the interment ceremony are all described in great detail.

Other chapters of the book outline the selection for the Unknown Soldiers from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. An entire chapter is devoted to the identification of X26 Michael Blassie. The last chapter of the book covers the history of the Tomb Guards. Sprinkled throughout this Chapter you will find the names of Tomb Guards past and present. There are seven appendices that follow this chapter containing information such as the establishment of Decoration Day, inscriptions on the Memorial Amphitheater and remarks from President Ronald Reagan on the Burial of the Vietnam War Unknown Soldier.

I learned a great deal from reading *A Century of Honor: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier* and highly recommend it to anyone who wants to learn more about the history of the Tomb and how it came to be.

To order a copy, visit our store on the website <https://tombguard.org/store/> and place your order.

Dave Hathaway  
Associate Quartermaster  
ffhathaway@msn.com

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## Bereavement Committee Update

*Amy McIlvenna, BSN, RN*

### **Happy Spring Everyone!!!!**

I hope that everyone survived the crazy winter. Fortunately, the Bereavement Committee has not been busy and this allowed me some time to gather my thoughts and organize myself. I know that I may sound like a nagging wife – Gavin would probably say that I am – but I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone about the duties and benefits of the Bereavement Committee.

When I get notification of a Tomb Guard passing, the first thing I do is try to contact the family and pass along the condolences of the Society. I also try to get an idea of when the service may be held. I then determine what benefits you are entitled to from the Bereavement Committee. Lifetime members are entitled to the Tomb Guard Identification Badge headstone/niche marker free of charge. For all others the cost is \$50.00 and can be purchased from either me or the Quartermaster. All members are entitled to a flower arrangement for the service and a copy of the DVD, *Voices from the Tomb.*

If I don't already have a picture of you in uniform, I attempt to get a photo as soon as possible so that I can order the Memorial Cards for the funeral/memorial/celebration of life and get them sent out along with the DVD in time for the service. I order flowers for the service and discuss the Tomb Guard Identification Badge headstone/niche marker.

***This is where I ask you all for your help.*** Time is the enemy when it comes to providing these things for you and your family. By filling out your Bereavement form legibly, completely, and sending me a photo of you in uniform (preferably at the Tomb), you are helping me do my job as quickly and efficiently as possible. For those of you who have Smart Phones, there is an application called CamScanner. This app allows you to take photos of documents and pictures and email them as a PDF. If you need a Bereavement form or would like to see an example of a memorial card, please let me know and I will get one to you as soon as possible.

Purchasing your headstone/niche marker ahead of time and getting your arrangements in order, will help your family as they try to navigate a very difficult time in their lives. Keep a notebook with important numbers and people to notify at the time of your passing. If you are planning to use the standard military headstone, keep in mind that there are restrictions to the number of lines and letters that can be used. A funeral director can help you put this together.

You are also entitled to the Presidential Memorial Certificate through the VA. The request form (VA-40-0247) is available on the National Cemetery Administration website [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov). A military discharge document must be submitted with the request. Their mailing address is: Presidential Memorial Certificate 5109 Russell Road, Quantico, VA 22134-3903. Toll Free fax (800) 455-7143. The request can be submitted in person at any VA Regional Office.

To streamline my process, I am asking that your family **contact me directly via my cell phone** at the time of your passing. I work during the day in a surgery center and may not be able to answer the phone right away, but I am able to check my voicemails frequently. The sooner I am notified, the sooner I can get things ordered and on the way. Thank you for your service and for your help.

Have a Wonderful Spring and Blessed Easter

Respectfully,

Amy McIlvenna, BSN, RN  
Bereavement Committee Coordinator  
[bereavement@tombguard.org](mailto:bereavement@tombguard.org)  
503 Dogwood Rd, Hood River, OR 97031  
317-965-3228



Life gets busy, and sometimes the smallest things get overlooked. But if you have ***moved recently or changed your email address*** please send changes to [membership@tombguard.org](mailto:membership@tombguard.org). We try to keep addresses current and up to date, as we do a lot electronically, and this will save the Society money.

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## Coming to ANC and want to visit the Tomb Guard Quarters?

Due to an ever-increasing Quarters tours schedule and special events, please contact the SOG with as much notice as possible via email with the following information:

1. Date **AND** time you want to come by
2. How many people you will have in your group

### Contact

SFC Christopher Carney  
Sergeant of the Guard  
[christopher.d.carney12.mil@mail.mil](mailto:christopher.d.carney12.mil@mail.mil)  
cell: 910-751-1161

If no briefs or events are scheduled, he will add you to the TUS Calendar (historically they almost always have time available for us “old guys”). This process will ensure the guards are aware you are coming so they can accommodate you the best that they can.

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*Once Upon  
A Time...*

*The Sentinel* wants to publish your articles, letters, and photos.

Do you know of a good story for inclusion in the next edition of *The Sentinel*?

We are looking for highlights on our members and their families, life activities, or when you randomly run into another Tomb Guard. Contact the editor at [publicaffairs@tombguard.org](mailto:publicaffairs@tombguard.org)

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