

THE MAINE TROOP GREETERS

FALL NEWSLETTER



Vol. 1 Issue 3
Oct – Dec 2012

WELCOME NEW TROOP GREETERS

8/2012
Jay Rand
Michelle Winchester
Rickey Winchester
Carl Winchester

Welcome to the fall issue of our Maine Troop Greeters Newsletter. As always, we appreciate the comments and suggestions you have sent to us. The summer season passed quickly as it always seems to do. Flight arrivals have been down but activity has picked up recently, so keep your schedule open for greeting.

OUR MISSION

The mission of The Maine Troop Greeters is to express the Nation's gratitude and appreciation to those Troops going overseas for a safe return and for those returning, for a joyful homecoming and to make their (hopefully brief) stay in Bangor as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

FOUR THOUGHTS:

1. I still think we have greeters who don't feel that they are part of The Maine Troop Greeters. You have a chance in November to influence changes. Run for the Board, encourage others to run or join the Membership, Operations, or Community Relations Committee. Just come to a meeting!
2. We must be a positive group. Nothing hurts a group more than negative thoughts, words, or action. Never be negative around the service folks we meet. They don't need to know our personal problems or life story!
3. Your attendance at flights is your business. It is a joy to see so many of you in line thanking our heroes. However, please sign the attendance book if you want to continue to be called or paged. That is how we know you are here. It may seem like a small thing but we have hundreds of greeters to support.
4. And by the way, have you reached out your hand to a new greeter....make each person feel welcome.

Chuck Knowlen



As of September 29, 2012

Greeter Profile



Born in Emmitsburg, Md., Bill Knight enlisted in the Army Air Force as a young man in 1940. His first choice however had been the Navy, but during his physical exam for this service, he was told that he required some dental work to be done before he would qualify. After having the necessary work done he tried again, but was now told he was unacceptable because he had two teeth extracted. So luckily for him the Air Force had more lenient dental standards. After completing basic training, his unit was assigned to Godfrey Field in Bangor. Godfrey Field at that time consisted of four small buildings and a runway. Godfrey Field was to become Dow Field and eventually Bangor International Airport. It was during his time in Bangor that Bill met his wife-to-be, Shirley Bowden. After the onset of the war, Bill's unit was sent to North Africa and then on to Italy. His assignments included stops in Cairo, Alexandria, Port Suez, and Anzio. After being discharged in 1945, Bill returned to Bangor, married and settled into civilian life. However, the urge to join the Navy had never really left him and in 1957 he enlisted and this time he was accepted... apparently the Navy had relaxed its dental standards. Serving for six years as a recruiter in Bangor, he then spent the remainder of his service on destroyers retiring in 1981. In 2003, Bill along with many others began greeting military flights at B.I.A. Often spending endless hours at the airport he helped to guide the greeter movement along to the point where it became The Maine Troop Greeters. In 2009, Bill was one of three Troop Greeters to be featured in the award winning documentary film – *The Way We Get By*, and as such became one of our most recognizable troop greeters. Bill resides at the Maine Veterans Home, 44 Hogan Road Bangor, Me 04401.

Much of the above was obtained from the book *Quiet Courage* by Don Colson



Bangor International Airport - The Beginning

This is a three part series on the history of Bangor International Airport. This installment features the origins of the airport. Two future pieces will focus on the Dow Air Force Base and Bangor International Airport eras.

Bangor International Airport dates back to the early 1920's. Edward R. Godfrey, one of Bangor's earliest aviation pioneers, created Godfrey Field in 1923 from pastureland he purchased from the Rich and Morse Farms between Union and Hammond Streets.

The Crymble Aircraft Corp. leased the first hanger and airfield. The hanger was constructed in 1931 by Godfrey. Some of the first flights were a 2 1/2 hour trip to Portland, via Rockland. Other routes during the early years were to Boston via Portland, which were often piloted by Amelia Earhart.

Another major upgrade to the airport was flood lights in 1937. They allowed for expanded schedules with night flights. Flying commercially during Bangor International's early days was far different from experiences of today. Planes flew much lower, between 6,000 and 14,000 feet, causing a much more turbulent ride. Airplanes had no air conditioning and many produced significant engine smells. The flights did begin to feature stewardesses, who also doubled as nurses in case of emergency.

The airport and field have become Dow Field, Dow Air Force Base and now, Bangor International Airport.

The only memorial found for Godfrey is the main road and entrance to the airport named Godfrey Boulevard.

LETTER OF
APPRECIATION



Thank you so much for the hero's welcome your group gave to my fiancé's unit, the 136th MEB National Guard out of Texas. He flew in and out Saturday, September 15th. They are heading out for nine months and had to just say goodbye to their families. Their hearts were heavy and they were anxious about what they would find in Kabul with all the unrest today. Your welcome meant so much to them and was truly appreciated by the troops and their families. I have spoken with several families over the weekend and each soldier was deeply humbled and very impressed by your group. Thank you so much for being there to cheer them up when we could not. Words can't express our deep appreciation but I hope these few words encourage your group to continue your very important work.

Sarah J



Hike for Heroes: Will Mosebach and Kristen Creech took time out from their hike from Calais Me. to West Palm Beach FL. last month to spend a day with Maine Troop Greeters at B.I. A. They were able to meet two flights and Will a veteran of Army service in Iraq described his greeting experience as emotional. Will and Kristen are using the hike to raise awareness and funds for veterans and military families. Their route will cover 2500 miles and take seven months. Good luck Will and Kristen.

For additional information contact: ActiveHeroes.org/Hike

Baby Blanket Ladies: Gloria Guptill and Debbie Bickford have been crocheting afghans for new born babies and passing them on to the new dads on home bound flights for over nine years. They crochet the afghans during the year and pass them out during the holiday season between Thanksgiving and New Years. While they haven't kept score, they believe they have passed out four hundred afghans over the years. Gloria remembers the occasion when an officer told her he had been directed by his wife to get a blanket for one of his men. Keep the needles going Gloria and Debbie.

Calling All Snow Birds: Please contact Allison at ahernandez1505@gmail.com when you leave for the winter and again when you return.

Sick Call: Bill Knight and Dana Chase are in the Maine Veterans Home, 44 Hogan Rd. Bangor 04401.

Bob Bailey is in the rehab section of EMMC recovering from a stroke. A visit or card would be appreciated.

Fireball Run: A special thanks to George Bridgham for his work in making the Maine Troop Greeters effort on this project a success.

*This Date in
Military History*

October 20, 1950: The first airborne operation of the Korean War involves 2,860 paratroopers of 187th Airborne Combat Team in a jump between Sukchon and Sunchon in North Korea.

November 11, 1918: The Great War, World War 1, ended with the implementation of an armistice on the eleventh hour of this day .

December 7, 1941: Pearl Harbor is attacked by the Japanese Navy resulting in 2400 deaths and 1200 wounded along with significant damage to the U.S. fleet at anchor. The U.S. declares war on Japan the next day.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 11 – VETERAN’S DAY: Attend your local ceremonies, celebrate our veterans. Parades will be on Nov.12

NOVEMBER 17 –THE MAINE TROOP GREETERS ANNUAL MEETING: 10AM to 12PM, 647 Main St., Bangor. Election of board members. Please plan on attending.

DECEMBER 15 – ST ALBANS CONCERT AND GIFT PRESENTATION: details to follow.

You can contact us in regard to newsletters by leaving a note in the Troop Greeters room or by e-mail to gcory@roadrunner.com

and by writing to: Maine Troop Greeters
Bangor International Airport
287 Godfrey Blvd.
Box 6
Bangor , Me. 04401

Special thanks to Allison Hernandez, Luke Krummel, and Sharon Slamons for their work on this issue.