

PATRIOT CONNECTIONS and the DOG TAG PROJECT

About Patriot Connections

In 2009, Patriot Connections was established by Sue Quinn-Morris to provide our veteran, military, first responder and patriot community with a comprehensive resource of events in NJ, PA and the surrounding areas - including resources for veterans and first responders.

Whether it's information on upcoming 5K Runs/Walks, Sporting Events, Job Fairs, Town Hall Meetings, Motorcycle Runs, Ceremonies, Dinners, Dances, Honor Missions, Welcome Homes, Golf Outings, or Resources for our Veterans, Military and 1st Responders - you will find it on the Patriot Connections website (www.patriotconnections.org)

Organizations may add their upcoming events (FREE) – and events are listed on our Website, Facebook Page, Twitter and included in our Email Notifications.

PATRIOT CONNECTIONS DOG TAG PROJECT Established

In 2014, Patriot Connections took over the POW/MIA Awareness Committee of NJ Dog Tag Project when it was disbanded after the death of President Tony Halas. Sue Quinn-Morris was the Director of Research>Returns for the POW/MIA Awareness Dog Tag Project since the onset of the project in 2010, so the transition was seamless and other than the name changed to Patriot Connections Dog Tag Project, nothing has changed.



Patriot Connections DOG TAG PROJECT MISSION

The mission is to return dog tags that were lost and found to the veterans they belong to or their families. The cost incurred in research and returning them is NEVER PASSED ON to the veterans or their family members.

DOG TAG COLLECTIONS

SOUTH JERSEY COLLECTION – This collection of dog tags journey home began in 1993 when New Jersey newspaper Reporter Jim Six had an overwhelming feeling of sadness when Deptford Police Chief Ray Milligan, on his way to Vietnam as logistics support for Operation Smile, told him dog tags could be bought on the street, sometimes for pennies.



"For some reason it just ticked me off that these guys were selling old dog tags," Six said. "So, I gave him \$100 and said buy as many as



you can and bring them home." His friend gave him about 450 dog tags when he returned. Six hoped to find the owners' names listed on the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, D.C. "When I got them I thought maybe I could just match them up with the list of names on the Wall and see if they belong to anyone who died or survived," he says. "But when I looked at this pile of almost 500 dog tags, I was just totally overwhelmed." After returning some himself and a local boy scout group, he gave them to us (2010) to try and

locate and return them. With much effort and research, we have located many, completed returns and have more returns underway throughout the United States. For more information, including list of dog tags in our possession, previous dog tag returns, etc, visit <http://www.patriotconnections.org/dog-tag-project/>

BOUGOURD COLLECTION - This collection of dog tags began their journey home after British Army/Navy veteran, Aaron Bougourd, received them from the family of Major Thien in 2006. Bougourd had been volunteering for the Father Ray Foundation Orphanage in Thailand when he met Major Thien, and helped him find his lost family in Vietnam. Thien, a South Vietnamese officer living as a refugee. Major Ly Kim Thien was commissioned as an officer of the Republic of Vietnam Air Force in 1964 and served in several capacities throughout Vietnam up until the fall of Saigon in 1975. It was after this that he was sent to a communist reeducation camp, where he was tortured and forced to denounce his anti-communist beliefs. In 1994 he escaped Vietnam on foot through Cambodia and on to Thailand, which is where Aaron Bougourd met him. Thien's family, as a token of appreciation, gave Bougourd some dog tags they had found at Ben Hoa Air Base. Aaron, a resident of the UK, reached out and sent some of the dog tags to Patriot Connections Dog Tag Project to help return them. Returns are underway. For more information, visit <http://www.patriotconnections.org/dog-tag-project/>

HUTCHINGS COLLECTION - In December 2012, Jack Hutchings, a prominent businessman in Florida, had been traveling on his yacht in the Solomonian Islands. There, the villagers gave him some American WWII dog tags they had found. He brought them home in hopes of getting them returned to the veterans/families. Upon returning home, he stumbled across a newspaper article in the Orlando-Sentinel about the dog tag return to USMC Vietnam veteran, James Alderman that we did. This prompted him to contact us in hopes that we could locate and return the dog tags to the veterans/families they belong to. For more information, visit <http://www.patriotconnections.org/dog-tag-project/>



SANTAYANA COLLECTION - Touring the Ho Chi Minh trail in 1998, Wall Street trader Manny Santayana stumbled onto a Vietnamese man who made a living out of extracting

bombs from the ground, grinding up the metal and selling it for profit. Sometime he would stumble upon dog tags from U.S. soldiers, which he would collect and store in an ammo bag under his bed. Santayana paid him \$100 for 105 dog tags and brought them back home. Over the next several years, he was able to make some returns to dog tag owners, but he eventually became too busy to continue with the research. He then enlisted the help of Senator James Beach, who formed a committee for dog tag returns – Quinn-Morris has researched and facilitated returns from this collection. The collection is stored in the NJ State House. View list of dog tags on Patriot Connections website.

Organizations helping with Dog Tag Project

The Nam Knights of America MC, which is a Military and Veteran Motorcycle Club, has assisted with dog tag returns since the onset of the project and spans nationwide with returns in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Florida, Illinois, New York, Arizona, Tennessee, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Ohio, Maine, Kentucky, Washington DC and Michigan.

Additionally, the following organizations have and continue to aid with the return of the dog tags in various states across the USA; American Legion Riders, VFW Riders, Warriors Watch Riders, Patriot Guard Riders, various American Legion Posts and VFW Posts.



It is essential to the Project that the dog tags are handled and delivered to the veterans and/or their families in a dignified manner. From the moment the dog tag is handed off, to the moment it reaches the hand of the veteran, the dog tag is well cared for and attended to, to ensure that it arrives to the veteran/family safely.

When researching/returning dog tags, key identifying information is obtained from research, the veteran and/or family. If that matches the information on the dog tag, arrangements are made for the dog tag to be returned. The matching information is the "claim check" so to speak. There are numerous dog tag returns underway all over the country.

If you believe we may have your dog tag, or a dog tag that belongs to a family member or friend, please contact Director of Research/Returns Sue Quinn-Morris at squinn9807@aol.com or 856-495-7270.

LINCOLN SENTINEL-REPUBLICAN
 Celebrating 125 Years The Official Newspaper for Lincoln County
 Thursday, November 8, 2012 Lincoln, Kansas 14 pages \$1.00
Dog tags returned to veteran's family after 43 years

By Jeff Phillips
 A dog tag returned to a veteran's family after 43 years, a story that is a testament to the power of research and the dedication of those who care for our veterans. The tag, which was found in a pile of scrap metal, was identified as belonging to a soldier who served in Vietnam. The family, who had been searching for the tag for decades, was finally able to bring it home. The story is a testament to the power of research and the dedication of those who care for our veterans.

Sgt. Clark 'Beck' Robinson holds a dog tag that was returned to his family after 43 years.

Members of the Nam Knights of America MC are shown with their dog tags.