



Missing in America Project

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After Action Report

Alabama National Cemetery, Montevallo, AL

October 6, 2020 at 12:30 p.m.

On October 6, 2020 Missing in America Project Alabama laid to rest with full Military Honors four unclaimed veterans at Alabama National Cemetery at Montevallo, Alabama. Owing to National Cemetery Administration virus concerns the service was limited to ten participants in the committal shelter and pre-event press publicity was restricted. Additionally, the Coast Guard Honor Guard operated under new virus guidance. Only one Coast Guard member was detailed and was restricted from touching the urn or the flag.

At 12:30 p.m. six Alabama Patriot Guard Riders escorted the cortege to the committal shelter. At the shelter the Patriot Guard was assisted in forming a flag line by two additional people. The cremains were transported from the hearse into the shelter by members of the Army and Air Force Honor Guard. The service included an introduction, opening prayer, speaker, bell ringing, live TAPS, flag folding for all four Veterans, closing prayer and closing song by a three-person group.

Lessons learned:

Media--the service was covered well by the local county newspaper. We have established good contacts with the local media and expect better coverage post-virus when our MIAP services are larger and not restricted. The event was documented on video. The video and pictures are hosted online at the Alabama Facebook page as well as the Support Committee for Alabama National Cemetery Facebook page and website.

Honor Guard—The Army showed great flexibility in dealing with the temporary restrictions the Coast Guardsman faced. The Army carried the Coast Guard Cremains into the shelter. The Army two-person team folded the flag for the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard Honor Guard member took a knee beside the Army soldier for the flag presentation.

Overall, the service was a blessing to all who attended and has been viewed many times online. Feedback has been exceptionally positive from Veteran Service Organizations and local citizens. The Alabama Facebook membership is growing. This first successful service will motivate more coroners and funeral homes to participate as well as inspire additional volunteers. Greatly appreciate the pre-event mentoring from Clyde Taylor and having our Executive Director, Linda Smith in attendance.

Alabama State Coordinator,

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