

Missing In America Project

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After Action Report MIAP Mission, Quantico National Cemetery 14 July 2023

On 14 July 2023, MIAP-Virginia laid to rest the previously unclaimed cremains of two veterans, Major Joseph Ney, WWII, and SP4 Robert G. Thompson. Additionally, we honored two veterans whose cremains could not be specifically identified, Wagoneer Ross A Gridley and PFC Edward L. Kanka.

Three of the four were as provided by the National Funeral Home of Falls Church and the fourth was provided by the Prince William County Sheriff's Office. Wagoneer Gridley and PFC Kanka were veterans of WWI. They passed away 55 and 44 years ago respectively. Their cremains reside in a mausoleum at the funeral home. After all these years, the cards/papers used to identify them could not be read, thus we could not be assured as to which one was who among the many with whom they reside. Urns for Wagoneer Gridley and PFC Kanka were used for honors. MIAP-Virginia provided urns for each of the veterans with laser-etched name plates.

Three of us provided motorcycle escort of the funeral motor coach, from the Falls Church funeral home to Bull Run Harley-Davidson where we met the rest of the procession participants (29 motorcycles and approximately 10 cars). Under law enforcement escort by the Prince William County Sheriff's Office, we proceeded to Quantico National Cemetery where we were joined by 10 or 12 other vehicles.

At 1100hrs, we provided services and honors for these four veterans. There were 60+ people to witness the honors provided to each veteran. Bryan Langerud sang the National Anthem. Chaplain Don Reid provided the Invocation. Larry Brink and Rachel Schumacher, MIAP Volunteers, read the name and tolled the bell for each veteran. David Shuma from Bugles Across America played taps. The US Army Honor Guard provided military honors with flag folding and presentation. Don Reid closed out with the Benediction. Followed by Garrett McKenzie playing Amazing Grace on the bagpipes.

The escort and service when pretty well. However, we did have two men that fell-out due to the heat. It was very hot that day and we had several people that attended to folks that exhibited adverse effects from the heat. The paramedics were called in and one gentleman was taken to the hospital while the other gentleman was treated on-site and released.

Fortunately, everything turned out well, and these four veterans were finally recognized and honored.

Respectfully Submitted, Forrest Lingenfelter, Assistant State Coordinator Virginia's Missing In America Project