



ALOIS SISOLAK, SR

ABSTRACT

A World War II U.S. Merchant Marine Seaman engaged in active, ocean-going service from 1943 to 1945, serving aboard various Liberty Ships and converted freighters, Alois M. “Al” Sisolak, 86, died October 9, 2007. He was a loving, faithful husband, father and grandfather and life-long resident of Piermont, NY, employed for over 40 years by the Robert Gair Paper Company. Also a skilled, part-time small engine repairman, for over 66 years Al was a life member of the Piermont, NY Volunteer Firemen’s Association as a dedicated Chief Driver and Driver Instructor of the Empire Hose Company. This was one of the many tributes paid to him.

“It is people like him, when there wasn’t much equipment or money, through their hard work, made our Department what it is today,”

Gerald F Merna

October 18, 2007

(Updated: September 24, 2015)

**THE LOSS OF ANOTHER OF
PIERMONT’S GREATEST
GENERATION—ALOIS SISOLAK, SR**

THE LOSS OF ANOTHER OF PIERMONT'S GREATEST GENERATION

ALOIS SISOLAK, SR., 1921 - 2007

(By Gerald F. Merna,¹ Oct. 18, 2007)



Gladys and Alois Sisolak

Alois M. "Al" Sisolak, Sr., 86, a life-long resident of Piermont, NY, died October 9, 2007 at the *Friedwald Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing*, New City, NY. He was born January 28, 1921 in Allentown, PA to Francis and Marie Sisolak. Al had moved to Pomona, NY in 2002.

Al's World War II service was as a U.S. Merchant Marine Seaman. He was engaged in active, ocean-going service from 1943 to 1945, serving aboard various Liberty Ships and converted freighters. He made two round-trips to LeHavre, France aboard the S.S. "Richard Rush." He was a member of the Atlantic and Gulf District of the Seafarers International Union of North America.

After his Merchant Marine service Al was employed for over 40 years by the Robert Gair Company (and its predecessors Continental Can Co. and then Federal Paper and Board Co. in Piermont, NY), retiring in 1987. He was also a life member (over 60 years) of the Piermont, NY Volunteer Firemen's Association.

Al was predeceased by his wife, Gladys "Sis" (Sedlack) Sisolak, who passed away at age 73 on December 19, 1998. They were married on June 1, 1946. A daughter, Judith Lane, passed away in 1999. Al is survived by his son, another "Al," Alois Jr., of Pomona, NY, five brothers, Michael, William, Albert, Francis and Victor Sisolak, a sister, Julia Dally, grandsons Richard Anthony, Bruce and Jason Riker, Sister-and Brother-In-Law Dorothy M. and Gerald F. Merna, Potomac Falls, VA; and Brother- and Sister-In-Law Thomas and Betty (Casey) Sedlack Sr., Piermont, NY. Funeral services were conducted at Rockland County Cemetery, Sparkill, NY



The Piermont NY Volunteer Fire Department Firing Squad renders honors to Alois Sisolak, Sr.

¹ Photos at cemetery by Gerald F. Merna, Brother-In-Law of Alois Sisolak Sr. Other photos, documents and memorabilia, unless otherwise credited, from the Sisolak, Sedlack, and Merna family files.



Willie Sisolak, Brother of Al (L), and Alois Sisolak Jr., Son of Al (2d from L), observe Pall bearers Mike Murphy, Laura Gluck, Rich Perry, and Joey Segellacher remove Al's casket from hearse



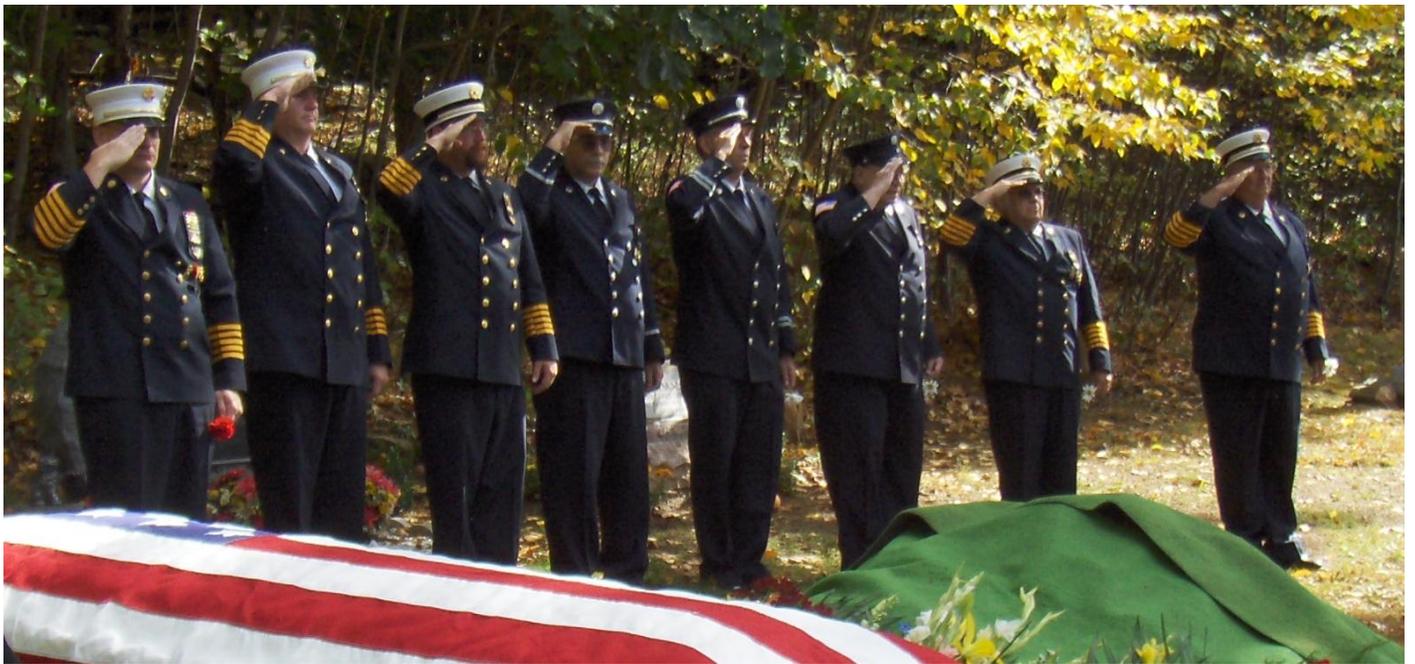
Piermont Fire Chief Danny Goswick and former Chiefs render a Hand Salute at former Volunteer Fireman Al Sisolak gravesite



Monsignor Robert Ford conducts graveside services for Alois Sisolak, Sr.



MSgr. Robert Ford observes Piermont Volunteer Fire Department Chiefs and Members at graveside



A Final Salute to Alois Sisolak, Sr., a 66-year member of the Piermont Volunteer Fire Department



Family Members Connie Sisolak (Niece); Alois Jr. (Son and EMT); Linda (Merna) Figura (Niece); Dorothy (Sedlack) Merna (Sister-in-Law); Gerald T. Merna (Nephew); Tom Sedlack III (Nephew); Betty Sedlack (Sister-in-Law); and Patty (Sedlack) McKillop (Niece) pay last respects MSgr. Robert Ford (R) observes.



Family Members, including Thomas Sedlack Jr., Brother-in-Law and Alois Sisolak Jr.'s co-workers Laura Gluck (Paramedic) and Rich Perry (EMT and member of National Guard).



L: Keith Taylor, Hannemann Funeral Home Director; Center: Willie Sisolak, Brother of Alois Sr. and his Granddaughter Amy Sisolak; Jason Riker, Grandson of Alois Sr.; and R: Fran (Andresk) Stoughton



Honor Guard Members of *Korean War Veterans Association of Rockland County* fold Flag as family members and friends observe military honors being accorded to former WWII U. S. Merchant Marine member Alois Sisolak, Sr.

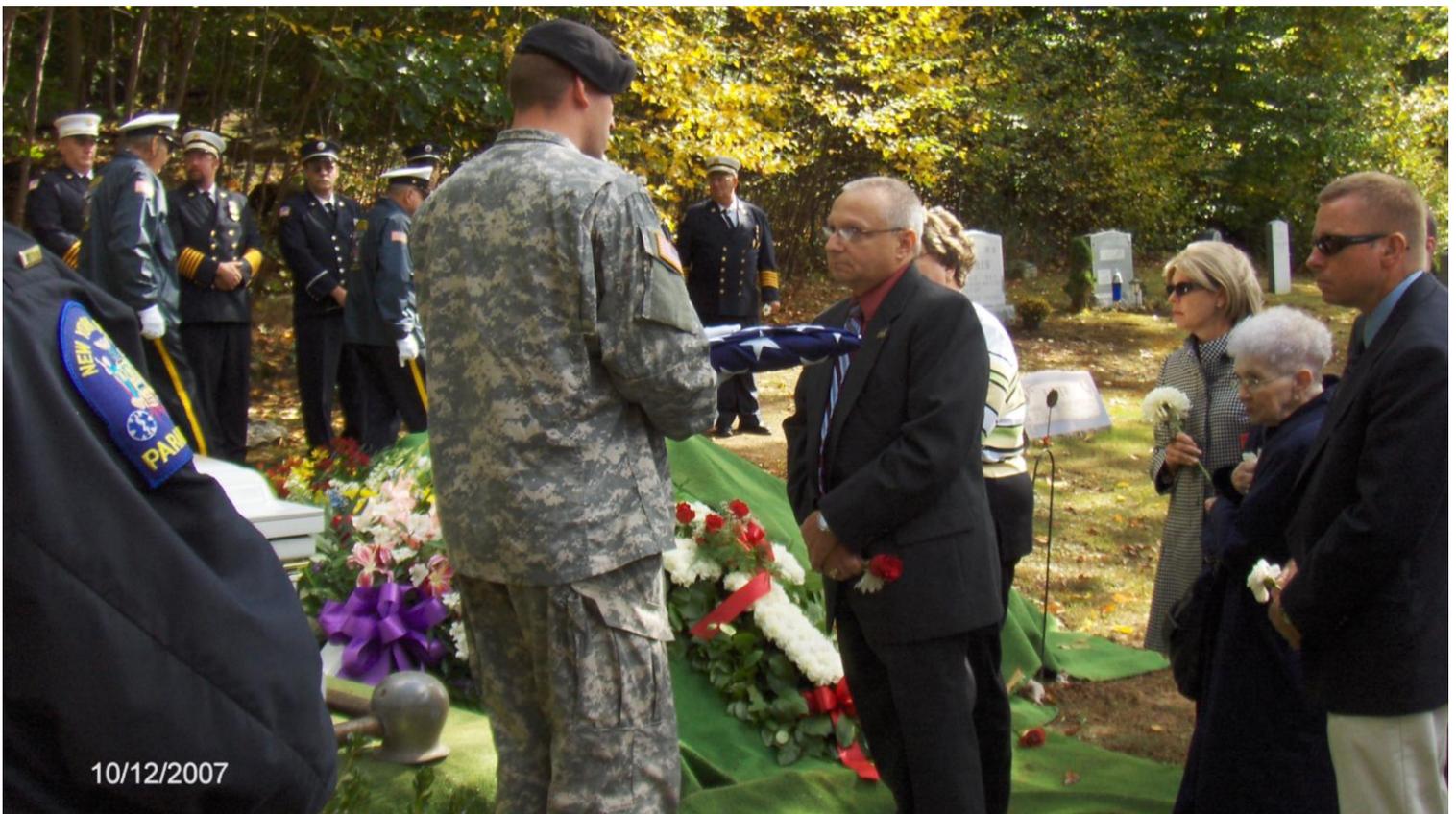


Family Members of Alois Sisolak, Sr. gather at end of burial ceremony at Rockland Cemetery, Sparkill, NY

(Left Picture, LtoR, back row) Gerald T. Merna, Linda Figura Merna, Betty Sedlack Sr., Thomas Sedlack, III. (Front: Dorothy M. (Sedlack) Merna, Thomas Sedlack, Sr., and Patty (Sedlack) McKillop



Hannemann Funeral Home Director Keith Taylor, Piermont Fire Dept. Chiefs and Msgr. Robert Ford observe Korean War Association Honor Guard member present flag from casket of Alois Sisolak Sr. to Rich Perry, Paramedic and National Guard member, and a close friend of Al Sisolak Jr.



Rich Perry presents Alois Sisolak Jr. the flag from his Dad's coffin as Nieces Connie Sisolak and Linda (Merna) Figura, Sister-In-Law Dorothy M. (Sedlack) Merna, and Nephew Gerald T. Merna look on.



Dot and Jerry Merna with Bo Di Francesco, brother-in-law of Thomas Sedlack, Sr. Bo is a former Mayor of Piermont and a current member of the *Piermont Volunteer Fire Department*. (Note: Piermont's Fire Dept. trucks led the funeral procession from the Hannemann Funeral Home in South Nyack, NY to St. John's Church in Piermont for the funeral Mass, and then to the gravesite in Rockland Cemetery in Sparkill, NY for burial).



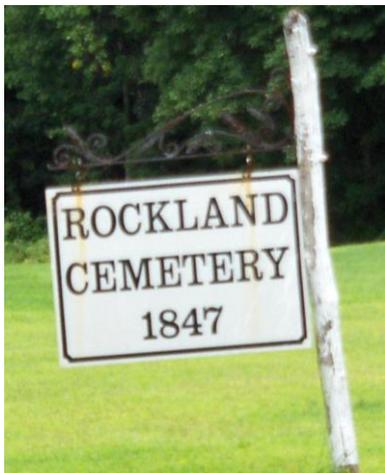
**L: Bo Di Francesco chats with Linda Figura and Al Jr. with friends; Dot Merna, Casey Sedlack and Tom Sedlack III
R: Two nephews, Tom Sedlack III (Napa, CA) and Gerald T. Merna (Sterling, VA), re-unite after almost 35 years**



L: Mike Murphy, Al Sisolak Jr., Rich Perry, Joey Segellacher, and Korean War Veteran from Honor Guard



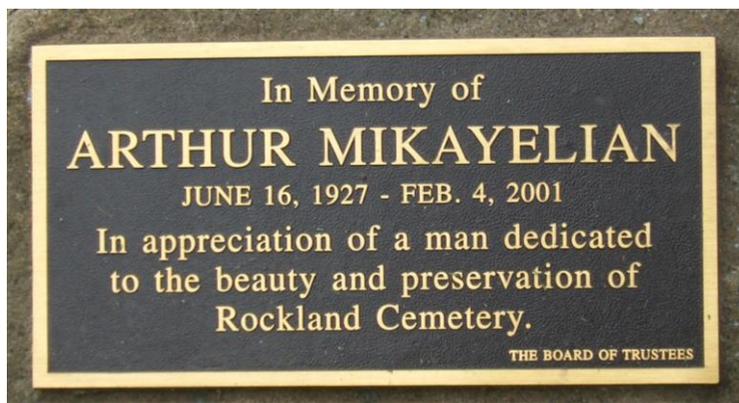
Top: Gerald T. (Jerry) Merna with his Mom Dot Merna and Bo Di Francesco



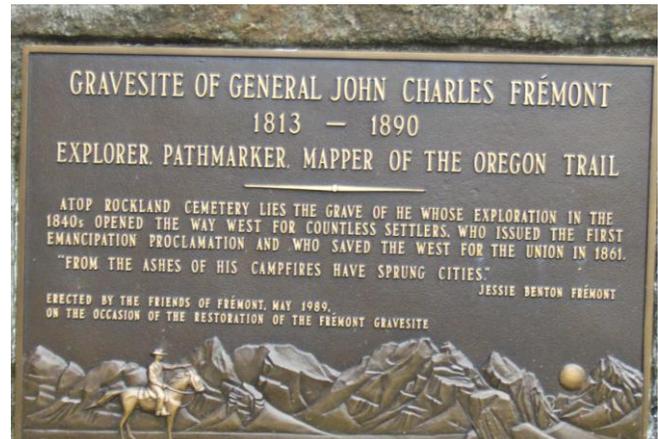
Entrance to Historic Rockland Cemetery, Sparkill, NY where many family members of the Sedlack family are interred, including Al's in-laws, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas (and Helen) Sedlack, Sr. A few days after Al's funeral Dot and Jerry returned to the cemetery to visit her Mom and Dad's graves, pictures shown below.

PIERMONT FIRE DEPARTMENT'S TRIBUTE TO ALOIS SISOLAK, SR.

MANY MEMBERS OF THE EMPIRE HOSE COMPANY TODAY ARE TOO YOUNG TO REMEMBER AL, BUT THOSE OF US A LITTLE OLDER REMEMBER HIM WELL AND HIS DEDICATION TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. AL SERVED AS CHIEF DRIVER AND DRIVER INSTRUCTOR FOR MANY YEARS. THOSE WHO TRAINED UNDER HIM TO BECOME A DRIVER HAVE MANY STORIES TO TELL OF THEIR TIME SPENT QUALIFYING TO BE A DRIVER. ONE STORY KEVIN TELLS IS A TIME WHEN BRUCE DELO WAS TRAINING TO BECOME A DRIVER AND AL SAID HE WAS GOING TOO FAST. BRUCE JUST CLIMBED OUT OF THE SEAT AND SAID YOU DRIVE, LEAVING AL BY HIMSELF IN THE FRONT SEAT OF THE 750. AND IF YOU SHIFTED TO HIGH GEAR ON MAIN STREET, YOU FAILED. YOU WERE GOING TOO FAST. AL TOOK HIS JOB TO HEART ALWAYS LOOKING OUT FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT. MANY WILL REMEMBER AL AND THE MANY YEARS HE WORKED FOR THE PAPER COMPANY. HE SPENT MANY YEARS THERE. AND OF COURSE, LETS NOT FORGET HIS SIDE BUSINESS, FIXING SMALL ENGINES AND MOWERS. HE HAD SOME SHOP BEHIND HIS HOUSE. HE COULD GET MOST ANY ENGINE RUNNING. AL MAY HAVE MOVED FROM PIERMONT BUT HE NEVER LOST HIS LOVE FOR PIERMONT. HE WOULD RIDE DOWN TO THE PIER AND SPEND SOME TIME OUT THERE MEETING UP WITH OLD FRIENDS FROM THE MILL. I REMEMBER THE NIGHT HE WAS PRESENTED WITH HIS 50YEAR BADGE. HE WAS SO PROUD OF HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. AL WAS A 66 YEAR MEMBER OF THE EMPIRE HOSE COMPANY. THAT IS SOME FEAT. AL HAS LEFT US, BUT NOT IN SPIRIT OR MEMORY. WE THANK HIM FOR THE MANY YEARS HE SPENT AS A MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT. HE WAS A MEMBER WHEN THINGS WEREN'T SO EASY AND THERE WASN'T THAT MUCH EQUIPMENT OR MONEY TO BUY SAME. IT IS PEOPLE LIKE AL, WHO THROUGH THEIR HARD WORK, WE HAVE THE DEPARTMENT WE HAVE TODAY. THANK YOU AL FOR HELPING MAKE THE EMPIRE HOSE COMPANY AND THE PIERMONT FIRE DEPARTMENT WHAT IT IS TODAY. AND TO HIS FAMILY, THANK YOU FOR SHARING AL WITH US.



American Legion Plaque at Cemetery Entrance



General Fremont Plaque also at Cemetery Entrance²

For our Nephew, Al Sisolak, Jr. We are so saddened at your loss of your dear Dad, and our Brother-in-Law, Al Sr. We are glad Dot and I, and your two Cousins--- our Son and Daughter, Jerry and Linda--were able to come for the viewing and funeral. We were so touched by the vast outpouring of love and respect from so many family members and friends. The Piermont Volunteer Fire Department members performed magnificently in rendering their Firematic Service and also attending his burial at Rockland Cemetery, where the Fire Dept. Honor Guard, Firing Squad and Bugler, as well as the participation of the three Korean War Veterans Association. Rich Perry and your other EMT friends also rendered most appropriate honors. The attendance of current Chief Danny Goswick and so many former Chiefs of the Fire Department was impressive as well, and showed the high esteem in which they held your Dad. You can be proud of his long heritage of service to God, Family, Country and Community. Stay well, and we hope our next visit will not be so long in coming. All our love, Aunt Dot and Uncle Jerry

Gerald F. and Dorothy M. Merna (Potomac Falls, VA)

October 18, 2007

² John Charles Fremont (1813-1890) also known as “The Pathfinder”, and “The Champion of Freedom”; son-in-law of Thomas Hart Benton, a Senator from CA. Appointed lieutenant colonel of US Mounted Rifles in 1846 and ordered to act as Gov. of CA by Commodore Stockton; Gen. Kearny, US Army, revoked this order and placed him under arrest for mutiny; tried by court martial, found guilty, and pardoned by President James Polk, but resigned. Military Governor of CA, 1847; U.S. Senator from CA, 1850-51; candidate for President of the U.S., 1856; general in the Union Army during the Civil War; Governor of Arizona Territory, 1878-81; French Ancestry; Died of peritonitis in a hotel room in New York, NY; original interment at Trinity Church Cemetery, Manhattan, NY; reinterment in 1891 at Rockland Cemetery, Sparkill, NY. (Source: *Dictionary of American Biography*; Fremont, John C. *Memoirs of My Life*. Chicago: Belford, Clarke and Co., 1887 and others.



Rockland Cemetery (photo by Gerald F. Merna)

November 25, 2007

Dear Al:

I'm sorry it's taken this long to get these pictures to you; I have been trying to add information about your Dad and his life, but that is taking some time. So I thought I'd at least get the funeral pictures done and send them to you. When I finish the rest they will be pages to add in front of these.

Meanwhile, we hope you can have and use these as a fond remembrance of your Dad, and also of the many people who helped you during this sad time and who performed so wonderfully at his viewing and burial.

A few "extra" pages are attached separately for you to give to your friend. Also, this is all on the attached DVD that you and/or your friends can make all the copies you may want. (If you print copies from the DVD the "margin settings" are:

Top and Bottom: 0.3"; Left and Right: 0.4" (anyone familiar with printing Word Documents will know what these measurements are).

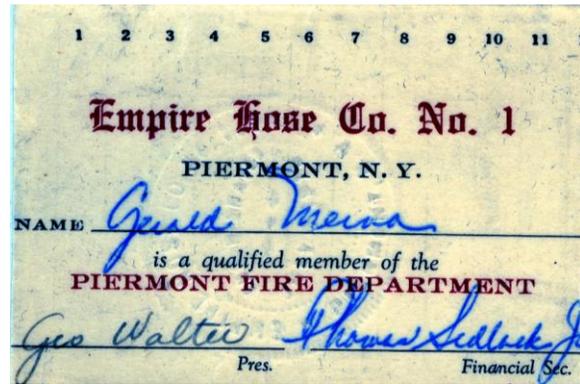
Hope all is well; call when you can.

Love,

Aunt Dot and Uncle Jerry



Dot and Jerry Merna's 1951-52 Piermont home: 2nd floor Apartment in two-family house on Main St.³



Jerry Merna (Far R, 1st Row behind banner, above word "Empire"). Bud Sedlack (Far R, holding banner)⁴

³ This two-family house on Main St. was the first residence for Dot Sedlack and Jerry Merna after their Feb. 10, 1951 marriage in Piermont's St. John's Catholic Church. Dot, Sister of Gladys Sisolak, was born in Piermont and is a 1948 graduate of its TZHS Class of 1948 and was a telephone operator for the Nyack, NY Telephone Company. Jerry, a former resident of nearby St. Agnes Home and School for Boys in Sparkill, also attended TZHS, and was then the Marine Corps Recruiter for Rockland County. When he volunteered for and served in Korea (1952-53), Dot's Piermont Cousin Jim Hickey was also overseas on US Navy Submarine Duty, so Dot and Jim's wife, Jo (Triggiani) Hickey, kept each other company in this house on weekends, while otherwise living with their respective parents--Dot in the Sedlack/Sisolak home on Ferdon Avenue, and Jo in Sparkill, until their husband's returned. The house shown above exists today, as does the small Park directly across from it that now includes a *GI Joe Statue* honoring the WWII American Soldiers who shipped out to D-Day from *Camp Shanks* in Blauvelt/Orangeburg. Named "*Last Stop USA*," it was dedicated on Memorial Day 1994 and Jerry's Brother Jim was a speaker at the dedication ceremony.

⁴ Jerry was also a member of Piermont's *Empire Hose Co. No. 1*. His above membership card was signed by Dot's Brother, Thomas Sedlack, Sr., and its President, George Walter, both now deceased.

Opinion

Serving the Lower Hudson Valley since 1850

4B

The Journal News | Saturday, June 10, 2006

OUR VIEWS

A statue in Piermont

Tribute to troops who marched through the river village

Gone now is the industrial night light and the sounds of 24-hour clanking, whirling machinery of Piermont's former carton and paper factories, but the ghosts remain, as do the souls of some of the nearly 1.3 million U.S. Army personnel who trudged through the Hudson River village on their way to D-day and the European Theatre in World War II.

Some 40,000 a month were sent via the famous pier that served the factories and which during the war was an embarkation point for military processed through Camp Shanks in Orangeburg.

Piermont was "Last Stop USA," and some Rocklanders still recall sitting as youth on village curbs watching the soldiers march or being trucked along Piermont Road and Ferry Road.

Now, a lasting salute to all is found at the very spot where the troops marched. "G.I. Joe," a lifesized bronze statue in the combat uniform of U.S. Army personnel and honoring the military of World War II, was dedicated on Memorial Day weekend.

The 6-foot, 4-inch statue, bronzed by the Tallex Fine Arts Foundry in Beacon after design and other work by StudioEIS in Brooklyn, is based on an idea supplied by veteran George Lynch Jr., commander of Piermont Memorial Post 7462, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The statue depicts a waving soldier in battle gear and faces "exactly where our boys marched through here," said Lynch, who enlisted in the Navy during World War II when he was 17.

Most of the G.I.s in the invasion of Normandy last stepped on U.S. soil in Piermont. "And of course, Italian and German prisoners came through the pier as well to Camp Shanks," Lynch added.

The statue officially represents the Army and Air Corps personnel who were processed through Camp Shanks, where



Kathy Gardner / The Journal News

Jason Hahne of the Tallex company in Beacon guides the new life-size bronze statue honoring World War II soldiers as it is installed over the Memorial Day weekend at the "Last Stop USA" memorial in Piermont's Kennedy Park.

the actual staging of units for the D-day invasion began, but it really is symbolic of all who went off to fight in a war for survival, the goals of which seemed quite clear to most.

It has taken a long time for such a memorial to come to Last Stop USA, and it is most fitting.

The Piermont post began seeking money for the statue in 2004, receiving donations from 340 or so people and raising \$74,000.

It will be illuminated 24 hours a day, and while the old industrial night light of Piermont is long gone, such a spotlight will bring the past back to many and in that engender respect for the fallen and those who sacrificed.



LAST STOP U.S.A.

During World War Two, 40,000 U.S. troops per month, including many Piermont residents, passed this spot enroute to the end of Piermont Pier, the largest port of embarkation on the East Coast, where ships were waiting to transport them to military duty in war-torn Europe. Many of these troops landed on the shores of France where the invasion began on June 6, 1944. Thus this area came to be known as "Last Stop U.S.A."

After the war came to a victorious conclusion, some 533,869 men returned home to the U.S.A. first setting foot on their homeland at the end of that same Piermont Pier.

"Lest We Forget," many of the men who embarked from Piermont never returned.

This plaque is dedicated to the honor of those who served and the sacred memory of those who never returned.

DEDICATED 1994



This two-family home was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Sedlack, Sr. in 1945 (the previous owners purchased it in 1907). Daughter Gladys Sedlack married Alois Sisolak and rented the left side shown above. The Sedlack's and Daughter Dot lived on the right. In 1997 the Sedlack's sold this house to Mr. and Mrs. Alan Ruck, he the former star of "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," "Spin City," other movies and stage plays.⁵ Mr. and Mrs. Sisolak then moved to Pomona, NY with their Son, Alois, Jr., where Alois, Sr. died in 2007.



Soon after purchasing the Sedlack Home, the Ruck Family converted it to a one-family residence as shown in the above front and rear-view pictures of the home. The Ruck's eventually sold their home.

⁵ The film follows high school senior Ferris Bueller (Matthew Broderick), who skips school and spends the day in downtown Chicago along with his girlfriend Sloane Peterson (Mia Sara) and best friend Cameron Frye (Alan Ruck). He creatively avoids his school's dean of students Edward Rooney (Jeffrey Jones), his resentful sister Jeannie (Jennifer Grey), and his parents. Released by Paramount Pictures on June 11, 1986, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* became one of the top-grossing films of the year and was enthusiastically received by critics and audiences alike. In 2014, the film was selected for preservation in the National Film Registry as per being deemed "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant." (Source: Wikipedia).

13 December 2007

Hi Casey and Bud:

Hope this finds you well and enjoying the holiday season.

We had a nice telephone chat with Phyllis last night (Tom was out at the time). During the chat she asked if we could send the pictures I took at Al Sisolak's funeral. I just put a copy in the mail to them of what is in this package to you.

We thought you might like a copy as well, especially since most of the family is shown in the "story" I put together.

We have heard many favorable comments about Bud's presentation on the History of the Gair Company. Is that in a format such that you can share a copy with us?

Though my time at Robert Gair after I got out of the Corps on my first enlistment and went back in when the Korean War broke out, that was infinitesimal compared to the lifelong careers of Pop, Bud, Al and so many other family members and friends, it was a memorable one nonetheless.

I am also enclosing a copy of the brief article I wrote for the Nyack Historical Society that they printed in January 2007 regarding my tour of recruiting duty in Rockland County from 1950 – 1952 when I left for Korea.

Love,

Dot and Jerry

Jerry Merna's 2007 letter to Dot's brother Thomas Sedlack, Jr. and his wife Elizabeth (Casey).

Retired Marine Recalls Service in Nyack

by Gerald F. Mema

Nyack played an important part in my life. From 1950 to 1952, I proudly recruited for the U.S. Marine Corps in Nyack and was promoted there.

We met many wonderful people in Nyack and I was fortunate to enlist some of Nyack's finest citizens to serve our Corps and country.

Before we married, Dot took the daily Rockland bus from Piermont to Main Street to her job as a long distance operator for the Nyack Phone Company. I was living in Piermont then too. We often took the bus to Nyack for the theater, ice cream at Eagle's store, and to Charley's bar and restaurant for his famous turkey and roast beef sandwiches, and of course, an occasional cold beer.

In 1951, Dot Sedlack and I were married at St. John's Church in Piermont. St. John's was later destroyed by fire but rebuilt on the same site in 1964.

Following our honeymoon, we moved into the old Graycourt Apartments in Nyack at 127 South Broadway. As fate would have it, that building also burned down. Friends jokingly blamed us for this fire because we were newlyweds.

One day while walking down Main Street in my Marine dress blues, I encountered an attractive woman walking two fairly large dogs. Perhaps my uniform caught her attention. We chatted briefly. This gracious lady turned out to be Helen Hayes, "The First Lady of the American Theatre," on her way to the five and ten cent store as we used to call both Newberry's and Woolworth's on Main Street.

Years later Dot and I saw a play in Washington, D.C. that Ms. Hayes also attended, drawing a large crowd of course. We were privileged to meet her after the show. She indicated she remembered our meeting in Nyack, but whether or not she did or was just being kind, it didn't matter. It was great to see her again.



Mernas' wedding reception at the St. George Hotel. The recently well-restored complex of office suites at 48 Burd Street represents the last vestige of Nyack's great hotel industry. The St. George Hotel was built in 1885 by George Bardin, a very successful hotelier and restaurateur. It was the overnight stop for visitors arriving by steamer from the City, destined for Suffern, Tuxedo and other interior locations. The hotel was famous for its dining room and grand breakfasts of flaming rum omelettes which were served to guests before boarding stagecoaches to continue their journeys.

My recruiting tour was very successful, enlisting many Rockland youths, including several from the Nyacks. I enjoyed talking to high school seniors throughout the county, including my own Tappan Zee High School. (There were no protests against military recruiters in those days.) Here I was, a TZHS dropout, telling students to finish school, attend college, and then join the Marines!

Several youths from my alma mater, St. Agnes Home and School for Boys in Sparkill, were among my recruits. St. Agnes's legendary Coach Jim Faulk, a World War II Marine, often referred young men who he thought were beyond even his strict discipline and could greatly "improve" by undertaking boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina. As an article in *The Journal News* attested, Coach Faulk was "Mr. Everything" to the boys.

Calling on prospects' parents to obtain their written consent for their son to join the Marine Corps was a very daunting challenge, considering the war in Korea was in full force at the time. I don't recall enlisting any women in Rockland

County, but did so years later on a second recruiting tour in Owensboro, Kentucky. The real proof of my success was being promoted to staff sergeant in May of 1951.

I also attended and occasionally spoke about the Marine Corps during civic meetings, luncheons and other events. One such occasion was a Cub Scout ceremony at St. Paul's Methodist Church where Tech Sergeant Gross and I carried in two large candle-lit cakes.



Sergeants Gross and Mema at the Rockland Theatre for the 1951 showing of "Flying Leathernecks." The theater was one of the great movie palaces of the era from about the 1920's to the 1950's, ending in the late 1960's. Many Broadway tryouts were staged there. During its early years, African-Americans were restricted to the balcony. Torn down in 1978 after being closed for 11 years, the theatre was on the west side of North Broadway where Victoria Mews, an apartment building with offices, now stands.

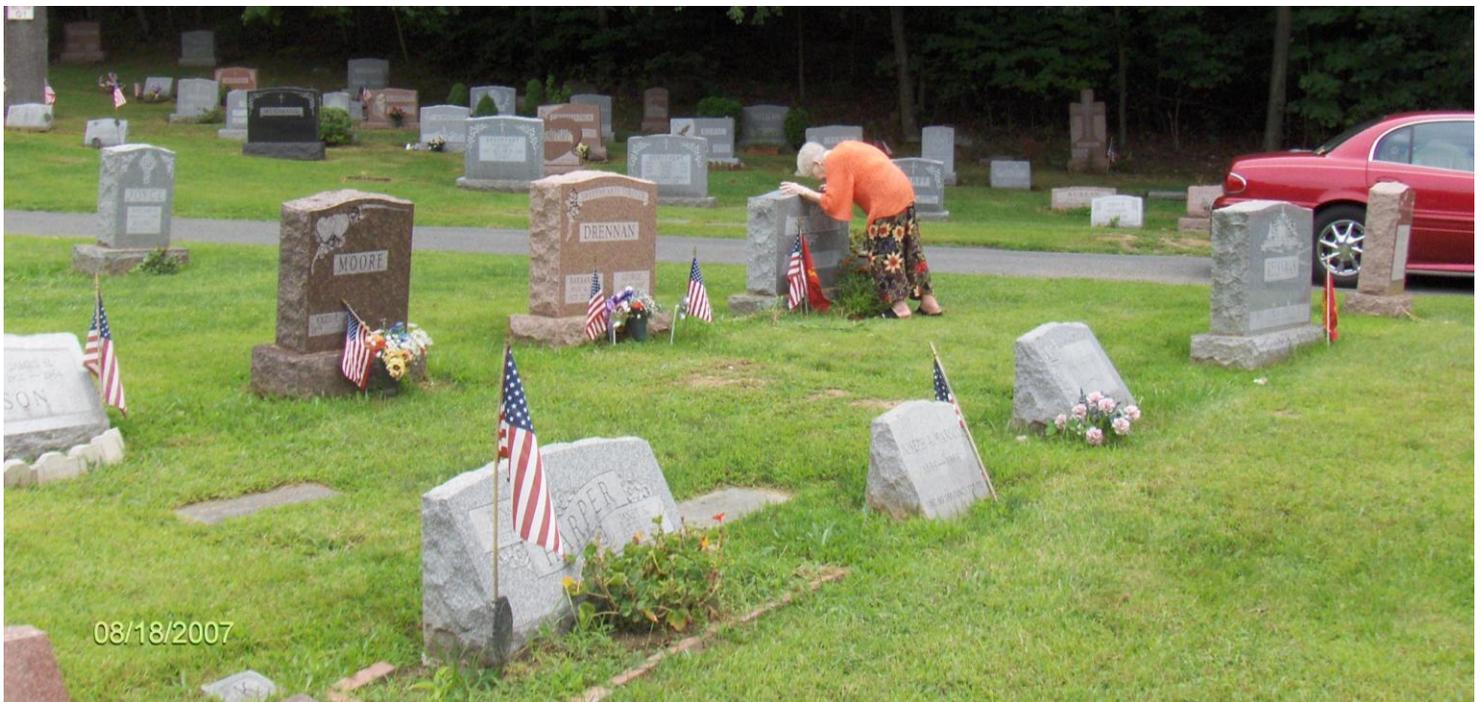
Upon my return from Korea in 1953, I decided to make a career of the Marine Corps, and ended up serving for 22 years. And, on my way to Vietnam in 1966, I was commissioned as a second lieutenant after having served in every enlisted grade from private to master gunnery sergeant.

My memories of Nyack are deep and warm. Recruiting in Nyack affected not only our memories, but greatly influenced our lives, including my future assignments.

The author is a retired first lieutenant, United States Marine Corps. He holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from George Washington University. For more of his memories, visit the Web site of his Alma Mater, St. Agnes School, www.stagnesalumni.org

Photo captions by Bob Goldberg, producer of "When Nyack Meant Business" and many other John Scott Armchair Walking Tours.

VISITS TO THE ROCKLAND CEMETERY GRAVES OF MR. & MRS. THOMAS (AND HELEN) SEDLACK, SR.



Dot pays respect to her Mom and Dad at Rockland Cemetery, Sparkill, New York



Jerry F., Dot, Linda at Sedlack Family Plot



Jerry T., Dot Linda



Jerry T., and Linda at St. Agnes Convent Memorial Plaques

FAMILY PICTURES OF ALOIS & GLADYS SISOLAK:



June 01, 1946: Wedding of Alois and Gladys Sisolak



**Wedding of Alois and Gladys Sisolak with Bridesmaids and Attendants Taylor- Mickey-Bill-Willy Lynch
Bridesmaids: 1st from Left: Unk; 2nd from Left: Ruth Taylor; 3rd from L: Dot Sedlack**



Nov. 6, 1950: Al and Judith



May73: Richard & Judith Riker⁶



Unknown Date: Al and Sis

⁶ Judith Lane Sisolak was a 1966 TZHS graduate and BOCES school in West Nyack, becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse at Ramapo General Hospital, Spring Valley, NY. She married Richard Bruce Riker of Tappan, NY in May 1973 and they had three children before Judy died of an accident at home in 1999. Her daughter Bernadette died at 29 in 2004, after Bernadette's son Richard, age 5, (Judy's grandson) died in 2001.



July 1957: Sis and Al



Al Sisolak, Jr. with Linda (Merna) Figura and Son John G. Figura



June 1955: Jerry, Judy, Jim



Jan. 16, 1944: Al, Sis and Freddie (Unk.)

Mr Al Sisolak
329 Ferdon Av
Piermont, NY 10968-1203

May 30, 1995

Dear Pat + Jerry

This story appeared in the Journal News. We thought you would enjoy reading it.

Love Sis + al.



PERSONALIZED SERVICE: Al Sisolak, a customer care representative for Hudson Valley Ambulance, assisting Leo Ribeca recently during a kidney dialysis treatment at Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern. Staff photo/Claire Stevenson

May 1995: Al Jr., Son of Alois & Gladys Sisolak (Rockland Journal News, NY) (Story continued below)

Smoother service

By Jamie Kempton
Staff Writer

Suffern

LEO RIBECCA has grown accustomed to having Al Sisolak by his side.

Ribbecca, who's 77, travels by ambulance to and from Good Samaritan Hospital three times a week for kidney dialysis treatment. Sisolak, Hudson Valley Ambulance's customer care representative to the hospital, makes sure Ribbecca's three-hour stays are as wrinkle-free as possible.

"It's great," Ribbecca, a Nanuet resident, was saying the other day from his third-floor hospital bed while schmoozing with Sisolak. "He's very concerned with how I feel. These people are magnificent at their jobs."

Most people associate emergency medical technicians with loading patients into ambulances for transport to and from hospitals and administering immediate aid.

EMTs still perform that traditional role, but now they are branching out to provide more personalized care in today's evolving health care environment.

Haverstraw-based Hudson Valley Ambulance, the state's largest licensed ambulance provider with 14-county coverage, established the position of customer care representative (CCR) in January to provide a closer link with the patient, to smooth patient transfers and to make ambulance deployment more efficient.

The four-month-old pilot program at

In a pilot program at Good Sam, EMTs take on a new role providing more personalized care

Good Samaritan has worked well enough to warrant CCRs at other hospitals, says Jim Dress, Hudson Valley Ambulance's public relations and marketing manager.

Benedictine Hospital in Kingston has given a green light to the plan, and Nyack and Kingston hospitals should have CCRs in place by the summer, Dress says. Hudson Valley Ambulance pays for the CCRs, who are state-certified EMTs who receive specialized training tailored to the hospital they serve.

Hudson Valley Ambulance crews

EMTs continues C8

Health and safety expo

In conjunction with National Emergency Medical Services Week, which runs through tomorrow, a health and safety expo is set for 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. tomorrow at Rockland Lake State Park South.

The event, sponsored by the Rockland County EMS Recognition Committee, features exhibits, equipment demonstrations and information on services provided by EMS personnel.

Ambulance corps from throughout Rockland will offer instructional demonstrations and exhibits on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, spinal immobilization and extrication.

Among other programs featured:

- Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) programs from local police departments.

- "Child Find" program — advance fingerprinting and photographing of children in case they are ever abducted or missing.

- K-9 demonstrations.

- Police and EMS helicopters on display, along with Chopper 4, the helicopter used by WNBC-TV.

- New York state police bomb squad exhibit and display.

- Karate demonstration.

The rain date is Sunday. Call 368-5033.

EMTs
continued from C1

often are required to wait with patients whom they bring to the hospital for outpatient testing and treatment. When the wait is considerable, the hospital-based CCR can care for the patient, enabling the ambulance crew to return to service and improving unit deployment.

At Good Samaritan, Sisolak meets the patient before emergency-room discharge. If the patient is bound for a different treatment facility, nursing home or other residence, Sisolak answers questions about what the patient can expect of the new surroundings and staff.

Sisolak makes sure the patient's paperwork and belongings are in order. If the patient has any special needs, such as oxygen or ambulatory aids, Sisolak relays that information ahead to the ambulance crew so they will have those provisions ready.

If the patient won't be ready by the scheduled pickup time, Sisolak informs Hudson Valley's Dispatch Center. He also lets the

nursing staff know if the ambulance will be delayed.

When the ambulance arrives, Sisolak assists in placing the patient on the stretcher. He also alerts those at the patient's destination of the impending arrival.

In the past, Sisolak's role would have been performed by the hospital's discharge planning nurse. But with all the other responsibilities inherent in that job, delays in getting the patient out would sometimes tie up ambulance rigs.

"This facilitates the ambulance crews so they are not hanging around for 45 minutes when they could be out of here in 15 minutes," says Louise Ecke, Good Samaritan Hospital's patient representative.

"The premise is that it gets patients out in an orderly fashion so we have better bed utilization, and it gives the patient more one-on-one attention at that time. Al has a great personality and he works great with the nursing staff and patients."

Karen Bachmann, the nurse who oversees discharge planning

at Good Samaritan, says Sisolak has been a benefit to both the patients and nurses.

"He relieves their anxieties and allays their fears," she says. "He can also anticipate our needs. He establishes priorities if there's an emergency, and he can reroute ambulances if he needs to."

With Sisolak arranging patients' transportation, reassuring them and their families and assisting in transfers, nurses are free to concentrate on direct patient care.

"With Al there, my nurses are not tied up; it allows them to give better care to the patients," says Maryanne Portoro, clinical coordinator of the hospital's Emergency Department. "We're better able to service our customers. It's nice to have Al on site."

'The personal touch'

Before he became a CCR, Sisolak performed the traditional EMT role of riding the rigs, and also was a dispatcher for Hudson Valley Ambulance. He is Rockland branch supervisor of the ambulance service's EMS Bike Team, which is assigned to events like carnivals and parades. He's also a

"I enjoy the contact and the personal touch with the patient. Sometimes they're on edge, and wary of meeting new people or going to a new facility. I make them feel more comfortable."

— Al Sisolak

member of the volunteer ambulances corps for the Piermont Fire Department, Nyack and South Orangetown.

At Good Samaritan, Sisolak works a standard eight-hour shift from 8 a.m. to 4 or 4:30 p.m. He averages 12 patient discharges a day, including regular dialysis patients.

"I do miss being on the road at times, but I like being at the hospital with the patient," says

Sisolak, who's 42 and is a lifelong Piermont resident. He's been with Hudson Valley Ambulance for eight years.

"I enjoy the contact and the personal touch with the patient. Sometimes they're on edge, and wary of meeting new people or going to a new facility. I make them feel more comfortable."

CCRs receive customized training from hospital personnel in a variety of areas: customer relations and communications; management of emergency psychiatric and substance abuse situations; cultural sensitivity; understanding and working with older patients; infection control; radiation safety; lifting and moving the patient; and other areas.

"We think of it as a team-oriented approach where the ambulance service works in conjunction with a major medical facility to maintain a positive working relationship," says Dress, the Hudson Valley Ambulance spokesman.

"The patients are our customers and we need to provide the best customer service we can. This is taking what we do a step further."



Summer 1955: Family picnic in Sisolak's back yard: L: Linda C. Merna (in stroller), Mom & Pop Sedlack, Jim Merna, Judy Lane Sisolak, Gladys Sisolak, (next unknown), Hugh McAvinue (white shirt & tie)



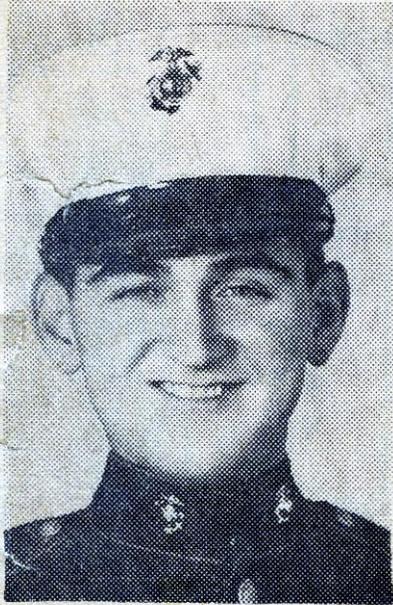
1951: Al and Sis Sisolak, Wes Hardy (Mom Sedlack's Brother), Dot and Jerry Merna (Jerry then the Marine Recruiter for Rockland County with his office in the Nyack Village Hall (NY) from 1950 – 1952.



Thanksgiving 1999: Sue Merna and Al Sioslok Sr. with "Bailey"

Men Serving the Stars and Stripes

Brothers In Three Service Branches



MICHAEL SISOLAK



WILLIAM SISOLAK



CHARLES SISOLAK

Three sons of Mrs. Mary Sisolak, of East Third Street, Wind Gap, are serving in the armed forces. Michael is serving in the Pacific area with the Marine Corps and will have been in that area a year in April. He is a private first class, recently

promoted. William, recently promoted to Seaman Second Class, is serving with the Navy on Harbor Protection. Charles with the Army and recently promoted to private first class, is engaged with an auto repair in Georgia.

Al Sisolak's three Brothers who served in WWII. (Al. Sr. also served in the Merchant Marine in WWII)



1944: Michael Sisolak⁷



Nov. 6, 1950: Jerry Merna, Al Sisolak, Sr. and Judy Sisolak

⁷ Many years ago Dot mentioned to her husband Jerry that as a new teenager she had a "crush" on Michael when she met him when he visited Piermont to see his Brother Al. Jerry's comment to that was to the effect, "Well that was another good Marine in your life, but I'm honored that I was the one you married!"