

Lists New Yorkers Among Navy Dead

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U. S. Navy has released the following Negro personnel in the New York area who lost their lives during World War II with home address of next of kin as listed in the man's record:

William Ameker, cook, 3 c, father, James Amerker, 617 Gates avenue Brooklyn.

Richard J. Banks, motor machinist mate 2 c wife, Mrs. Lillian E. Banks, 1947 Seventh avenue.

Terance Bibbs, Steward's mate, 1 c; father, Lathan Bibbs, 14 Madison avenue, Inwood.

William Blocker, seaman 1 c; wife, Mrs. Edith Blocker, 72 West 99th street.

Louis D. Borges, seaman, 2 c 1 c; wife, Mrs. Ruby Borges 1053 For-

wife, Mrs. Martha Saunders, 25 Convent avenue.

Carl C. Scott, Gunner's mate 3 c; mother, Mrs. Jessie M. Scott, 444 Gates avenue.

Oliver Singleton, cook, 3 c; wife, Mrs. Penny Singleton, 303 West 151 street.

Lawrence E. Sneed steward's mate, 1 c; wife, Mrs. Lillian N. Sneed, 328 West 53rd street.

Thomas O. Spurlock, motor machinist mate, 1 c; wife, Mrs. Lucitta Spurlock, 2915 Eight avenue.

Willie A. Stinson, steward, 3 c; wife, Mrs. Naomi Stinson, 1217 Union avenue.

Robert L. Stratmon, steward, 1 c; wife, Mrs. Annie Stratmon, West 111 street.

This story from the New York Age noted Stratmon's death and his widow, Annie.

INTERMENT IN THE LONG ISLAND CEMETERY									
TO: THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.							FELLOWSHIP EMBLEM (Check One) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LATIN CROSS <input type="checkbox"/> STAR OF DAVID		
NAME (Last, first, middle initials) STRATMON, Robert LEROY					STATE New York		SERVICES DATA (Company, regiment, or other organization or branch of service and division, if any.) USN Reserve		
DATE OF BIRTH MONTH DAY YEAR 6 12 1900					DATE OF DEATH MONTH DAY YEAR 8 16 44		DATE OF INTERMENT MONTH DAY YEAR June 24 1948		GRAVE LOCATION SIC. OR PLOT H 7809
REMARKS (Authority for interment, pension or claim number, disbursement, etc.) WW II Dead returned from British Guinea USAF Com. - Finschaffan No. 2							DATES OF SERVICE EMPLOYMENT DIED OR A. D. DISCHARGE RETIREMENT		
							DATE HEADSTONE ORDERED AND BILL NUMBER GREEN MOUNTAIN, VT. AUG 10 1948		
SHIPPING POINT FOR HEADSTONES RAILROAD STATION FOR FREIGHT PINELAWN, L. I., NEW YORK							SIGNATURE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF NATIONAL CEMETERY OR CHM OF POST OR POW CEMETERY <i>J. B. ...</i>		
POST OFFICE ADDRESS 315 PENDING							QMC FORM REV 1 AUG 45 14 Previous editions may be used		

This interment form notes Robert Leroy Stratmon's service and burial in New York.

Black History Month

Stratmon gave his life to the country twice

Norma and Ron Eckard lead a project to preserve and spotlight the role of Brunswick County residents in the Great War. The Caswell Beach couple also spearheads the Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, the non-profit group that is saving and restoring the 1910 rifle range, a training area that was once part of Fort Caswell, where American soldiers learned to shoot before leaving for Europe.

The concrete pit stands at Caswell Dunes condominiums, next to the Oak Island Golf Club. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Friends group is composing a book to document the lives of all 725 Brunswick County residents who served in World War I. Gwen Causey, Amy Eckard, Emma-Lou Edwards, Jane Freach and Kathryn Kalmanson have also contributed to the effort. Kalmanson is the daughter of Susie Carson, the late historian and founder of the Southport Historical Society.

The historians are posting brief profiles and more detailed stories on the website www.caswellriflerange.com. One is the following profile of Robert Lee Stratmon, an African-American man who served during wartime twice and died during World War II:

Robert Lee Stratmon, a Southport native born in 1900, was 18 years old when he signed up for the U.S. Navy during the Great



Robert Leroy Stratmon's tombstone.

War. He was assigned to menial tasks, like most African-Americans during those times. He started as a mess hall attendant, 3rd

Class. By the end of the war, he rose to the rank of Wardroom Cook.

In 1920, according to the Census, he and his family lived in Southport, called Smithville in the earliest records. Later, they moved to Boston, Massachusetts, then New York City.

A member of the Naval Reserves, Stratmon again answered the call of duty during World War II.

He died in New Guinea, presumably from disease, and was originally interred at the Fischaffen U.S. Air Force cemetery. He died August 16, 1944; his remains were taken to Long Island National Cemetery four years later.

"Ron and I have always had an interest in history," Norma said. "After becoming involved with the rifle range, learning what it was and who used it piqued our interest. We have always enjoyed the exhilaration of the hunt and thus a new hunt began. Early on we built a website and the surprisingly strong interest in the site provided additional encouragement for our research."

"It all began in 2011, when our volunteer grounds-landscape committee was cleaning up the common area in Caswell Dunes," Norma said. "The old concrete structure that was nearly 200 feet long caused us to stop and ask, what is this thing that is such an eyesore? That was the beginning of another ad-

venture that continues today. Gwen Causey advised us to contact Jim McKee (of Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site) for information. He called on the State Historic Preservation Office in Raleigh for additional information. Once we learned the structure was 100 years old, we conducted more research.

"By 2015 we knew that our stabilization of the structure needed a 'human element' and we began asking local folks to send us pictures of WWI military in uniform with family stories. A Wall of Honor was established to share at fundraisers. Daughters Lorraine, Amy and husband Sam assisted with the research."

"In October 2017, daughter Amy started researching the state archives and military records to find out how many Brunswick County men served in WWI. She discovered over 700 men served from Brunswick County. We decided to write profiles about the men and post the profiles on the website."

So far, the Fort Caswell-inspired effort has revealed information about 718 local veterans of the Great War.

Anyone who would like to share information with The Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range about a veteran is encouraged to email normaron@mindspring.com.

The website is www.caswellriflerange.com.
— Lee Himant