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## STANDING THE SOUTHERN POST

By Gary E. Warren, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps

By 6:00 A.M. the jumbo jetliners are in an eastward descent as they jockey and joust with the rising sun. These mechanical giants ponderously lurch downward as they dissect the latitudes of the final approach corridor to the City of Miami International Airport. The jet engines roar above with a methodical clockwork-like rhythm. Stoic and staunch, the Headquarters for the United States Southern Command, occupies the land beneath the cacophony of aircraft traffic. Basking in the first rays of the tropical Florida sun, with its rooftop antennas pointing at distant satellites, this Unified Combatant Command keeps a watchful eye on a very strategic part of the Southern Hemisphere.



The United States Southern Command, known for brevity purposes as “SOUTHCOM,” dates back to 1903. That year, a battalion of U.S. Marines arrived in Panama to protect the Panama Railroad. The Marines remained, to provide security during the initial phases of the Panama Canal, and set camp. For the next 94 years the SOUTHCOM Headquarters marked the Panamanian landscape. It was a military headquarters, but more so, a symbolic political fortification representing the expansionist agenda of the President Theodore Roosevelt administration. In June 1997, the Department of Defense enacted the Unified Command Plan (UCP), which reshuffled the strategic geographical responsibilities within the Department of Defense.

The UCP added territory to the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR). In addition to the historical responsibility for South and Central America, the present AOR includes the entire Caribbean Basin, its 13 island nations and several U.S. and European Territories. Also falling within the SOUTHCOM purview is the Gulf of Mexico, as well as significant portions of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. All-in-all, the SOUTHCOM AOR encompasses more than 15.6 million square miles and host’s 32 independent nations. Also in 1997, the SOUTHCOM Headquarters relocated from Panama to Miami, Florida, The headquarters, a stand-alone military installation, is the most technically advanced military command and control facility in the world, The state-of-the-art communications capability allows the SOUTHCOM Commander-in-Chief, a Four-Star General, to strategically posture and operationally maneuver the U.S. Armed Forces stationed within the SOUTHCOM AOR.

SOUTHCOM by military design and definition, is a Joint Command. The “jointness” moniker reflects its manpower structure. Servicemen and women from all four branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and the U.S. Coast Guard are assigned to SOUTHCOM. The august staff also includes government service employees as well as members of several

federal law enforcement agencies. The SOUTHCOM headquarters staff is an eclectic and professional grouping of military and supporting personnel who implement the strategic policies of the Secretary of Defense. Among the staff officers at SOUTHCOM are: Lieutenant Colonel Mark Kramer, U.S. Air Force; Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Lichtman, U.S. Air Force; Major Larry Katz, U.S. Army; Lieutenant Commander Steve Boraz, U.S. Navy; and myself, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Warren, U.S. Marine Corps.

Like others found traipsing through the everyday walks of Americana, we have common threads that run through the very fabric of who we are. We are sons and brothers. On April 15th, we pay our taxes and on the 4th of July, we barbecue hotdogs in our backyards. To us, the World Series and Superbowl Sunday are patriotic days of obligation. Outwardly we are very ordinary card-carrying American citizens. Inwardly we share a very unique and ancient common denominator. We “GI Joe’s” also happen to be Jewish—and here is a snapshot of who we are:

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Kramer is a career U.S. Air Force Officer. He has served in missile silos and aboard E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft. Since joining SOUTHCOM in 1998, Mark has represented SOUTHCOM at the highest levels of The Pentagon as well as at the Office of National Drug Control and Policy. He is presently the Deputy Director in the Counterdrug Operations office. Lieutenant Colonel Kramer’s father served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War years. Mark is happily married to the former Ms. Kathy Clay.

Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Lichtman, U.S. Air Force, was promoted to his present rank in 1998. Bruce is a Master Navigator with more than 2000 hours of flying time, His current duties at SOUTHCOM include overview of airborne counterdrug operations throughout Central and South America. Bruce’s father is a retired USAF pilot who flew P-51 Mustangs in World War II and was a founding member of the Israeli Air Force during the 1948 War of Independence. Bruce is married to the former Nancy Schwartz and has 3 splendid children. The Lichtman’s are active members of the Temple Beth Ahm Israel congregation in Cooper City, Florida.

Major Larry Katz is a U.S. Army Reservist presently serving on active duty. Following in the footsteps of his grandfather and father, veterans of World War I and II respectively, Larry has also proudly served as a U.S. Army Infantryman. At SOUTHCOM, he coordinates the training and equipping of South American nations counterdrug forces. Larry is married to the former Ms. Kathryn Williams and has two wonderful children. The Katz family attends a synagogue in Coral Springs, Florida, and they fastidiously observe traditional holiday and Sabbath routines in their home.

Lieutenant Commander Steven Boraz, U.S. Navy, is a bonafide fourth generation American tracing the matriarchal-side of his family to Boston, Massachusetts, circa 1860s. Steve has vigilantly plied the proverbial Seven Seas for nearly a dozen years. His seafaring experience coupled with post-graduate academic credentials provides him the skills to serve as the executive assistant to the Director of Intelligence. Steve is married to Ms. Carrie Beaumont of Salinas, California. Steve and Carrie are members of Temple Beth El congregation in Hollywood, Florida.

I am Gary Warren, a United States Marine. My father canvassed the Pacific skies of World War II strapped inside the ball-turret of a B-24 Liberator. I have served at duty stations stretching from Key West, Florida, to Okinawa, Japan. I was promoted to my present rank, Lieutenant Colonel, in July of 1999. Here, at the U.S. Southern Command, I work in the Counterdrug Operations Office. My responsibilities include overview of ground and riverine training in South America. I work closely with the U.S. Embassies and the supporting Country Team Military Staff to train and equip host nation counterdrug forces. I maintain an affiliation and close friendship with B’nai Zion Synagogue and Congregation in Key West, Florida.

As 18:00 blinks its digital-eyes on the faces of our watches, we know the sun has passed over our heads and is setting upon the tranquil waters of the Florida Everglades. It’s time to honor those who have gone before us. Centered, in the front of the SOUTHCOM Headquarters, two nameless soldiers march left, right, left to the flagpole. Impeccably so, they perform the ceremony of retiring the American Flag for the day. All others passing-by stop, face the flagpole, and snap a

smart hand-salute. The dirge-like melody of retreat is played as the “Stars and Stripes” is lowered. This simple yet venerated patriotic duty humbly reminds us that “time, tide, and military formation wait for no man.” Now the sun has set and all is quiet. We have stood the Southern Post but another day.

(This article has been approved by the Public Affairs office of the U.S. Southern Command.) Lt. Col. Gary E. Warren is a member of Post 100, Jewish War Veterans of the USA .

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## Yesterday’s Past: Corp. David H. Rubenstein

By Paul E. Curran

Passover, 1948, April 23, a Friday.

Milford, Mass., was a different town then, and memory is the only connection between now and then.

In New York, the previous October, the first war dead of World War II came home. Now, six months later, it was Milford’s turn.



Corp. David H. Rubenstein was the 19th Milford man to lose his life in World War II. “Milford’s Fallen Family” of that war would come to total 55. Rubenstein was killed in action, in France, on July 4, 1944. Weeks after his death, his last letter arrived home. Written on June 28 from a fox hole, it described the “carnage about him ... as a slaughterhouse.”

Originally buried at the United States cemetery in Blosville, France, Rubenstein’s body arrived in New York aboard the John L. McCarley with 2618 other “repatriated” war dead.

School Supt. David I. Davoren had been appointed as chairman of the war hero re-burial committee. The committee had met in February and “it was decided ... that the first body to arrive in Milford would receive the town’s tribute for all of its war dead.”

Rubenstein was the first to come home.

The hero’s body arrived via train, in Framingham, on Wednesday, April 21, 1948 and was taken to Milford’s State Armory on Pearl Street.

“Milford was in mourning ... as the body of Corp. Rubenstein lay in State Armory, symbolic of all Milford, ex-service men stood 24 hour duty at the casket, until the funeral on Friday.

David Hyman Rubenstein was a member of the Class of 1944 at Milford High School, and like 11 others, left school early to enter the service.

The class yearbook for 1944 - the Sixtieth Edition of the Oak, Lily, and Ivy - listed Rubenstein and the military “twelve” that went away; all returned but one.

They were: Celso D. Trevani Jr., Louis J. Sannicandro, Joseph J. Niro, Joseph A. Gulino, George E. Warren, Thomas C. Ferretti, Michael N. Garabedian, Charles A. Grillo, Marderos Papelian, Irving J. Pearson, Herbert F. Murray and David Hyman Rubenstein.

On the evening of June 14, 1944 the parents of David Rubenstein were in the audience at John C. Lynch auditorium and as the Milford Daily News reported, "went forward as diplomas were received by parents, the graduates being absent on duty with the Armed Services."  
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Fourteen days later, David Rubenstein wrote his last letter home; six days later he was dead.

Passover, 1948.

The Milford Daily news wrote, "Tomorrow is the beginning of Passover for the Jewish people, and the coincidence of the Milford hero's funeral being held on the same day is a tribute in itself."

The funeral cortege was small but impressive. Main Street was lined with an overflow crowd, and the children of the public and parochial school viewed the procession and attended the religious ceremony.

A horse-drawn caisson, reported to Supt. Davoren as "the same one used in the burial rites for Franklin D. Roosevelt," carried David Rubenstein from the Armory, up Main Street and around General Draper Park, up Congress Street to Pine and down to the Pine Street Synagogue.

The outdoor services there were attended by a crowd estimated at some 3,000 citizens.

Trailing the caisson were bearers, honorary bearers, marchers, town officials, relatives of the hero and friends.

Some names from that day, the funeral: Larry Heron, Armand J. Boucher, Jr., Jake Smith, Kenneth Foye, Angelo Balzarini, Leonardo Morcone, Arthur Cozzens, John Derderian and Charles Strobeck; veterans, classmates and friends.

The next day, David I. Davoren publicly thanked "each and every individual who assisted in paying respects to our World War II dead." Singled out were Ben C. Lancisi, the Milford High School Band and the officers and men of Co. I.M.N.G.

At the synagogue Rabbi Jona Weisbord of Milford chanted the Mourner's Kaddish, and the extemporaneous remarks of the eulogy were given by Rabbi Joseph S. Shubow, a chaplain in the war.

The Milford Daily News reported his words as, "heart warming," and as "stirring and appropriate tribute to the town's war dead."

In his talk, Rabbi Shubow told of the greatness of America, "the only country in the world where a ceremony of this kind would so greatly be attended by those of all religions."

Rabbi Shubow spoke of the last moments of life for David Rubenstein and of the enemy shell that killed the Milford youth and three of his fellow soldiers.

"The shell wasn't discriminating, it didn't single out as its victim those of any particular religion. It was aimed at the heart of America, aimed at destroying our principles and our way of life."

What Milford lost that day will never be known; or what was lost on the days of death for 54 other Milfordians.

All we can do is remember them. David Rubenstein was buried at Beth Israel Cemetery in Everett, with full military honors. On November 8, 1948, Dr. Harry Helfand and Sidney Smith dedicated the square at Franklin and Main streets in honor of Corp. David H. Rubenstein. His memorial marker is still in place today.

Originally printed in the Milford Daily News, Milford, MA, on April 22, 1997. Paul Curran is a lifelong resident of Milford and a researcher on local history.

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# Jacob Barsimson Paved the Way for Full Citizenship Rights

By Seymour "Sy" Brody

The first Jewish settler who came to New Amsterdam, later to be called New York, was Jacob Barsimson, a Hollander who arrived on August 22, 1654. He was soon followed by other Jews who came from the West Indies and Brazil because they were disillusioned and disappointed with the religious and political situations that existed there. The Jews settling in New Amsterdam were seeking the equality of free men in a land of liberty where they could freely worship and have equal opportunities and obligations alongside the Christian citizens.



Jacob Barsimson and the other Jews found that New Amsterdam was no different from where they came. Governor Peter Stuyvesant treated them as separate citizens. They couldn't engage in retail trade, practice handicrafts, hold a public position, serve in the militia or practice their religion in a synagogue or in gatherings.

Barsimson and the other Jews presented a petition to Governor Stuyvesant for the right to buy a burial plot, which was denied because there was no immediate need for it. Later, under pressure from the New Amsterdam Jews, Stuyvesant gave them the right to buy a burial plot.

Stuyvesant imposed many restrictions on the Jews in the colony. One of these was that Jews would be exempt from general training in the militia and guard duty on the walls of the fort on the condition that each male over 16 and under 60 years of age would contribute 65 stivers each month.

On September 22, 1654, Stuyvesant wrote to the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce to complain about the presence of Jewish refugees from Brazil, who had recently arrived in New Amsterdam. He felt that they were blasphemers of the name of Christ and that they would infect the colony with trouble.

Portuguese Jews, who escaped the Inquisition, had arrived in Holland in 1593. Some of them were investors in the West India Company, which controlled New Amsterdam. They petitioned the West India Company to allow the Brazilian Jews to remain in New Amsterdam as they would not be a burden.

In the meantime, Barsimson, Asser Levy, Abraham de Lucena, Jacob Cohen Henricques, and other New Amsterdam Jews kept putting pressure on Stuyvesant for full citizenship rights. They insisted on the right to serve in the militia and do guard duty on the walls of the city to protect the settlers and the cattle, which were kept inside the walls at night, from the raids and attacks of the Indians and the New England settlers. They continued their petitions and pressure until the Governor finally granted them full citizenship.

Barsimson and the other Jews proudly did their guard duty on the walls of the colony alongside the Christians militiamen. When the British conquered New Amsterdam and changed its name to New York, the Jewish settlers continued to have full citizenship.

This tiny group of Jews displayed the courage and bravery, under the leadership of Jacob Barsimson, to obtain equal citizenship for all Jews coming to the New World for the next three hundred years.

This article is from "Jewish Heroes and Heroines of America," written by Seymour "Sy" Brody, of Delray Beach, FL, illustrated by Art Seiden, of Woodmere, NY, and published by Lifetime Books, Inc., Hollywood, FL. Copyright protected.