

It's easy to explore online

By Taiah Douglas taiahdouglas@thecourier.com

"Love Findlay History," a Facebook page created by Robert "Rob" Tong of Findlay, has attracted about 2,300 members who appreciate the Hancock County area's rich history.

The page contains hundreds of engaging posts and photos showcasing Findlay's antique homes, former businesses, historical artifacts and the

Tong spent 25 years on the Hancock Historical Museum Board of Directors, where

he said he developed a deeprooted love for Findlay's history. Through this



Findlay Flood 1913 - North Main St. In front of Hitchings Insurance

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Continued from Page 1

experience, he was able to see how history had a significant impact on residents and other individuals who have visited the museum. Tong said he longed to share the city's history with those who have not had the opportunity to visit the museum.

When the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to take hold in early 2020, Tong seized the opportunity to go online and create a Facebook group to display Findlay's vintage treasures. "Love Findlay History" not only promotes some of the unique places to visit around town, but also provides details regarding local historical documents, people and events.

Tong said the goal of the Facebook page is to bring together individuals who want to learn more about the historic, inimitable aspects of Hancock County through a friendly, interactive mobile group. According to the page, "Love Findlay History" aims to share the "wonderful history" from "Native Americans, the natural gas boom days, the glass industry, automobiles or even military history from the many conflicts and wars that have occurred in that last several hundred years."

Out of the many historic locations that the page endorses, Tong recommends that individuals visit the Hancock

Historical Museum, at 422 W. Sandusky St. The museum, which Tong calls "a little treasure" and a "diamond in the rough," has a large collection of the antique glass that Findlay was known for in 1886, after natural gas was struck for the first time in the city. Tong advised individuals to check out this exhibit to learn more about Findlay's foundation.



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Wreaths Across America Saturday, December 18, 2021

Maple Grove Cemetery

1120 W. Main Cross St., Findlay . 10:00am

The Wreaths Across America for Maple Grove Cemetery program began by Jon Brumbaugh for an Eagle Scoul project and is now coordinated by Garner Trucking.



Benton Ridge Cemetery

4080 St. Rt. 12, Benton Ridge . 10:00am

The Wreaths Across America for Benton Ridge Cemetery program is coordinated by the Fort Findlay Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution.



St. Michael's Cemetery

1120 W. Main Cross St., Findlay • 10:00am

The Wreaths Across America for St. Michael's Cemetery program is coordinated by Knights of Columbus Pope Leo XII Assembly #839.



Arlington Village Cemetery

18658 Twp. Rd. 71, Arlington • 12:00pm

The Wreaths Across America for Arlington Village Cemetery program is coordinated by Houston Insurance.







For more into regarding this event, contact the Hancock County Veterans Service Office by calling (419) 424-7036 or online at hancockveterans.com





1100 E. Main Cross, Suite 123 Findlay, Ohio 45840

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Office Hours: Mon. - Fri., 8:30 am to 4:30 pm (Closed every other Tuesday at 3:00 pm)





Dennis "Butch" Bruce US Army, Vietnam 1966 Gold Star

Dave Morrow is a peacetime veteran of the USAF and Utah Army National Guard. He was an educator and an EMT. Dave is currently a documentary photographer and writer. He created the website https://dogtagsandcombatboots.org/ to share the stories of our Veterans. The site is dedicated to the stories of Vietnam Veterans and to the veteran Women Warriors of Ohio. It is hoped to be a place for healing.

On February, 21, 1945, Dennis joined his older siblings, Wilmetta, Wilford, Marcie and Jim, in the Bill and Delora Bruce family living in Arcadia, Ohio. He would later be joined by younger siblings Mona, Galen and Nadine.

They were a close-knit family and were active in the congregation of the Arcadia Church of God. Faith would have a huge influence over Butch in his life decisions.

Butch was a handsome, quiet young man, who excelled in academics, ranking in the top five students of his Arcadia High School 1963 graduating class. He had plans to attend medical school and become a doctor. Butch was filled with patriotism for his country, inspired partly by watching his older brother's Wilford serve in the Army in the Korean War and Jim, in the Merchant Marines.

This led him to put college on hold and he voluntarily enlisted in the US Army in 1964. At Ft. Bragg, Butch excelled in training, earing the elite Green Beret, receiving his parachute jump certification and finally completed the Army medic course. He was assigned to the 88th Airborne Division. He was

deployed for a year in San Domingo during the conflict there.

When he returned to the states, Butch volunteered to go to Vietnam. He must have had some concerns about going and his welfare. Right before he deployed, he visited his older sister Wilmetta to say good bye. She remembers his parting words, "I may not see you again." His final Sunday in Arcadia, Butch attended his church where he asked the congregation to pray for him. The entire congregation surrounded him and prayed for his safety.

Butch joined the 2nd BN of the 101st Airborne Division as a medic on the Tuv Hoa Air base in Vietnam. Wilmetta shared a letter dated March 11th, 1966 in which he wrote,

"Pray for me and the other soldiers here...for God's will to be done."

On March 22nd, just weeks after his arrival in Vietnam, Butch was in a group of 40 soldiers tasked to a search and destroy mission. PFC Dennis "Butch" Bruce stepped on a hidden mine and died instantly.

The entire community of Arcadia rallied around the Bruce family after Butch's

death. On the day Butch was laid to rest, the church was packed. As the long funeral procession headed towards the Arcadia cemetery, it passed through the one red light town and the streets were lined with people standing and saluting as the hearse passed.

The US Army and South Vietnamese government posthumously awarded PFC Dennis "Butch" Bruce the following, The Gallantry Cross with Palms, the Military Merit medal, the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

Butch's memory is kept alive at huge family dinners, in fond conversations between his surviving siblings, his many nieces and nephews and by visiting his burial site regularly.

(Contributing to this story, were Wilmetta, now 88, her husband of 69 years, brother-in-law Bob Perkins (husband to Marcie, now deceased), niece Cheryl, nephew Mike Perkins and his wife Kathren).









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