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Raven Hill Discovery Center, incorporated in 1991, is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation.

Mission: Raven Hill provides a place that enhances hands-on and lifelong learning for all ages by connecting science, history & the arts.

To: Friends and Family everywhere
From: Cheri and Raven Hill
Date: January 8, 2022
Re: Transcending time & space

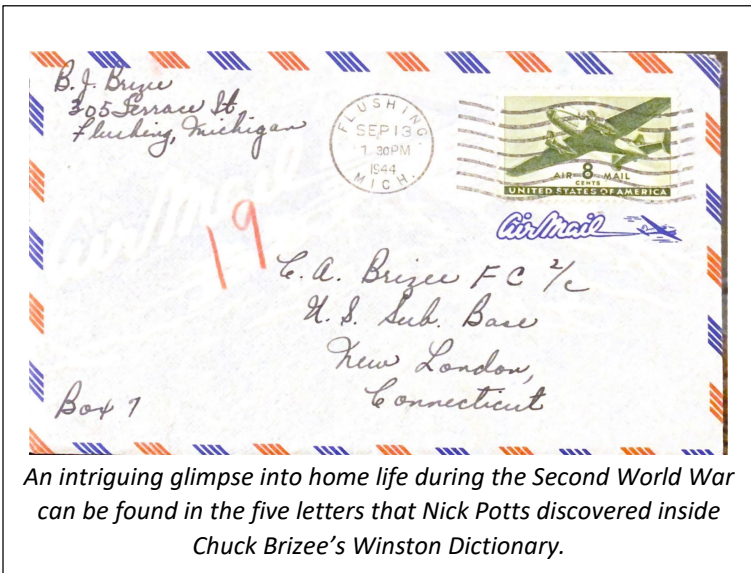
Greetings, Everyone!

During his Second World War radio program, host Paul Harvey would present stories with a significant aspect of the story held back until the very end of the program. As with host Paul Harvey’s World War II (WWII) radio programs, this week’s update brings you **“the rest of the story”**. In April of 2021, our update featured a naval uniform from WWII belonging to Charles Arthur (Chuck) Brizee. In the process of getting the uniform cleaned at Bradford’s Master Dry Cleaners in Petoskey, their staff found a sweetheart picture tucked inside Chuck’s hat. The picture was of his wife, Beverly. It was protected by a plastic sleeve made expressly for that purpose. Three weeks ago, our weekly update featured a picture of a handwritten letter and accompanying envelope. The letter was from Beverly to Charles and was written in September of 1944.



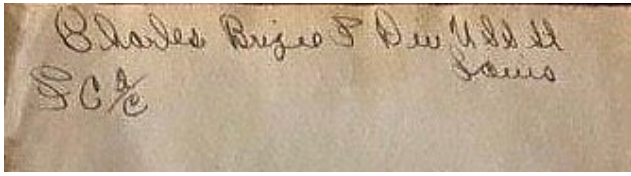
Just like Chuck’s service cap had Bev’s picture placed safely inside, many modern uniform hats have a plastic sleeve inside for a loved one’s picture.

Charles enlisted in the navy in 1940 and was assigned to the USS Nevada. His rank was Fire Control 2 (FC2), a highly technical position responsible for naval gunfire support and surface combat, as well as anti-aircraft warfare. Chuck was on board the USS Nevada, when it was bombed at Pearl Harbor. He was later attached to the USS St. Louis, which survived the bombing and was dubbed the “Lucky Lou”. After submarine training in 1944, Chuck volunteered for sub duty.



An intriguing glimpse into home life during the Second World War can be found in the five letters that Nick Potts discovered inside Chuck Brizee’s Winston Dictionary.

In early December of 2021, I received a phone call followed by an email. Both were from Nick Potts, referencing a recent find that he had made and how it connects to Raven Hill. Nick is currently stationed at Fort Meade, Maryland and volunteers regularly at the Post Thrift Shop. He happened to come across an old Winston Dictionary by accident. It was opened to one of the atlas pages in the back. When he shut the book, an envelope fell out. When he picked up the envelope, the date stamp on the envelope and a newspaper article about the USS St. Louis caught his eye. Nick quickly realized that the envelope was from WWII. He purchased the dictionary and started doing research to learn more.

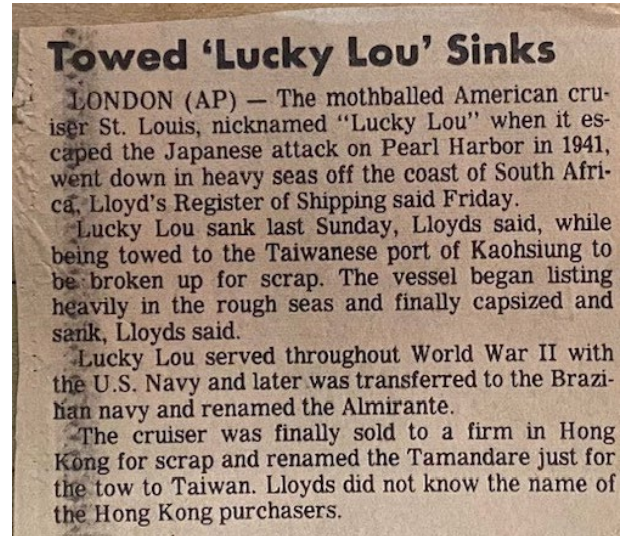


Transcending time and space, the name "Charles Brizee", connects World War II and Raven Hill, thanks to some clever internet sleuthing.

Written on the endsheet inside the front cover of the dictionary was the name: "Charles Brizee". The book apparently belonged to Chuck at some time during his tour of duty in the Navy. While researching Brizee's name, Nick found Raven Hill's website & the update about the Center's Naval Uniform exhibit, which includes Chuck's uniform. With a phone call & email, it was "mission accomplished".

Tucked away inside the dictionary for safekeeping were letters and papers, as well as the news article on the "Lucky Lou". The correspondence was between Bev and Chuck, after they were married in August of 1944 and Chuck was at submarine school in New London, Connecticut. This was just before Chuck went into submarine service in the Pacific.

When I asked Nick about his own background, he said he tends to collect vintage, unique items here and there. He is really drawn to items that relate to the military and may have a story to tell. As a kid, Nick said he grew up in a military family and then joined the military himself. He truly enjoys trying to learn more about history. Nick wrote, "I'm just glad to have been able to find the Brizee family through these circumstances, allowing me to return the dictionary and letters to their rightful place."



After Pearl Harbor, Chuck was assigned to the USS St. Louis and then served on submarines for the remainder of World War II. This article on the "Lucky Lou" is from 1980, long after WW II was over and the Brizee family was residing in Colorado. We may never know how the press release ended up in Chuck's dictionary along with the letters from 1944.

Mike Brizee, Chuck and Bev's eldest son, shared how emotional he got reading the letters. He said that his father always had a dictionary close by, consequently, he was not surprised at Nick's find and thought that this is just the type of story that might end up as a book or movie someday. Mike has requested that the letters be put on display at Raven Hill along with his dad's uniform.

So, just like Paul Harvey's radio programs, our weekly update concludes with **"And now you know...the rest of the story."**

Regular weekend hours during the winter are noon to 4pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 4pm on Sundays. To make an appointment for other times, email info@miravenhill.org or call 231.536.3369. The Smithsonian **Labor Days: History of Work** exhibit remains on display during regular hours or by appointment.

Just a reminder that we continue to ask visitors to mask up while inside Raven Hill, for the sake of the vaccinated and the unvaccinated.



Nick shows off Brizee's Winston Dictionary with its treasure trove of history tucked inside.

Stay safe out there, everyone. We want you to visit soon.

Cheri



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