



Debra Lane <debra.lane@capeelizabeth.org>

Thank You, and a Proposal...

1 message

'James Rowe' via Cape Elizabeth Town Council <cetowncouncil@capeelizabeth.org> Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 9:05 AM
Reply-To: James Rowe <jamesscottrowe@icloud.com>
To: Cape Elizabeth Town Council <cetowncouncil@capeelizabeth.org>
Cc: Cape Elizabeth Historical Preservation Society <cehps@capeelizabeth.org>, info@fortwilliams.org

Dear Councilors,

I write to thank you for your continued yeoman work during these challenging times.

I also write with a rather unique proposal...

Some of you may recall that about 4 years ago, the Friends of Fort Williams Park and the Cape Elizabeth Historical Preservation Society embarked upon a joint initiative to capture the memories and stories of people who had served, grown up at, or otherwise had special experiences at Fort Williams when it was still a Fort. Our call for participants was richly rewarded, and we captured the thoughts of several people, memorializing them on video in our "Fort Williams: First Person" oral history.

This is very short notice, but we heard just yesterday that one of our interviewees, Ernest Brien, is about to celebrate his 100th birthday on October 5!

Ernest is much more than one of the few remaining soldiers who happened to serve in WWII. In fighting in Europe, Ernest exhibited incredible valor and was awarded a Bronze Star, a Silver Star, and a Purple Heart for his bravery!

Following WWII, Ernest returned stateside and was stationed at Fort Williams (he grew up in Portland).

At the outbreak of the Korean War, Ernest was sent there- and again served with remarkable distinction. He was AGAIN awarded the Bronze Star, the Silver Star, and the Purple Heart!!! Ernest Brien is a legitimate war hero. As we interviewed him for our project, I had to keep my jaw from bouncing off the table. I was truly in the presence of greatness!

Following Korea, Ernest could pretty much name his next assignment. He asked to return to Fort Williams, where he completed his amazing service to our country. An amusing sidebar here was that when he requested the Fort Williams posting, the clerk who was filling out the orders hadn't heard of Fort Williams. Ernie said, "Just put down Fort Williams, Maine, and they'll get me there." They did.

Ernie served as co-marshal of our Memorial Day Parade a couple of years ago with Frances Jordan Banks (unfortunately recently deceased). Frances was a nurse during WWII and she had also served at Fort Williams.

In consideration of Mr. Brien's distinguished service to our country and the occasion of his 100th birthday, I would like to propose that a "Proclamation by Unanimous Consent" of the Cape Elizabeth Town Council proclaim Monday, October 5, 2020 as "Ernest Brien Day" in Cape Elizabeth. I'd be happy to provide the wording (the "whereases and the be it therefore proclaimed" for your review and signatures- either pen and ink or electronic). Please let me know if you are in agreement that such a recognition is warranted for this remarkable and wonderful man. I believe that you do not have a meeting between now and October 5, but perhaps this might be done "electronically?"

Separately, I will contact Chiefs Fenton and Gleeson to explore the possibility of a police cruiser meeting Ernest's family at the town line and escorting their car to Fort Williams, where a CEFD honor guard might await at PHL to salute him on his special birthday. If this works, I will certainly invite you, as well as other dignitaries.

Thank you for your consideration and again, for your own service!

Respectfully,
Jim Rowe
127 Oakhurst Rd.



TOWN OF CAPE ELIZABETH

P.O. BOX 6260
320 OCEAN HOUSE ROAD
CAPE ELIZABETH, MAINE 04107-0060

MATTHEW E. STURGIS
Town Manager

P: 207-799-1619
E-Mail: matthewsturgis@capeelizabeth.org
Website: www.capeelizabeth.com

PROCLAMATION

Whereas Mr. Ernest Brien, a native of Portland, Maine, proudly and faithfully served in the United States Army from 1940-1962, and

Whereas Fort Williams, Cape Elizabeth was his home base, having served there from 1940-1942, for a brief time in 1946, from 1949 to 1950, and from 1951 to 1952, and

Whereas Mr. Brien served in Europe during World War II, was wounded in battle there, and served with uncommon valor, for which he was awarded a Bronze Star, a Silver Star, and a Purple Heart, and

Whereas, during the Korean War, Mr. Brien was deployed there, again incurring battle wounds and again serving with uncommon valor, earning yet another Bronze Star, a Silver Star, and another Purple Heart, and

Whereas, on October 5, 2020, Mr. Brien will celebrate his 100th birthday, then

Be it proclaimed by the Cape Elizabeth Town Council, that the citizens of Cape Elizabeth do hereby wish Mr. Brien all possible happiness on his milestone birthday, and

Be it further proclaimed by the Cape Elizabeth Town Council, acting on behalf of the aforementioned citizens of Cape Elizabeth, Maine, that we join together in honoring Mr. Brien's remarkable service to the United States of America- both overseas and here in our town by designating October 5, 2020 as "Ernest Brien Day."