

Isaiah Beaumont moved to Licking County in 1813 and is one of almost one hundred Revolutionary War soldiers who moved to Licking County after the war. In his pension record that he filed in 1836 he told of his service with a Connecticut Regiment he stated that in December of 1775 they were retreating from the British Army through New Jersey and crossed the Delaware River into Pennsylvania to Valley Forge. In his own words he stated

“In this retreat, we suffered greatly with hunger, cold and the want of shoes. While in Pennsylvania we encamped in the woods during a severe snow storm. We re-crossed the Delaware on the night after Christmas and marched during a furious storm of sleet and snow upon Trenton, where early in the morning we engaged with and captured about 900 Hessians.”

That was Beaumont’s recollection of the famous crossing of the Delaware with George Washington and the attack on Trenton. Beaumont also fought at the Battle of Princeton and was wounded in the arm by a musket ball. He is buried at Maple Grove Cemetery in Alexandria.

Fifteen-year-old Eldabert Cooley was a resident of Granville Township when he enlisted with his father, Loring in the 76th Ohio Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War. He fought at the Battles of Fort Donelson, Shiloh and Milliken’s Bend before he returned home on furlough deathly ill. He died in Granville before he turned sixteen. His father also died of disease and has a marker at Vicksburg National Cemetery.

Janet Jones was born in Newark in 1883. She graduated in 1904 from Denison University in Granville with a major in Zoology and a minor in French. She then began teaching French at Newark High School. She continued her studies in the summers with Columbia University and traveled to France. In April of 1917 America declared war on Germany and entered WWI. General John “Black Jack” Pershing went to France to start planning for American troops arrival. The only source of communication troops had at that time was to use telephones and old-fashioned switchboards that needed an operator to connect the call. Pershing tried men out on the switchboards and found that they were much slower than woman, so he asked the war department to enlist 234 women who could speak French and run a switchboard. The war dept. balked at the idea of enlisting women but finally agreed to do it. Janet Jones volunteered for service and was one of the 234 women from around the country chosen to be a part of the group of women nicknamed the “Hello Girls”. When the war ended General Pershing commented he couldn’t have won the war without them. She is buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Newark.

African American Carl Green also volunteered for service in World War One. He was sent overseas in a segregated unit in the ambulance corps. When the black units arrived in Europe they were given to French commanders to use. The rationale being that the French because of their colonies in Africa, had more experience commanding black troops. The troops distinguished themselves and were highly decorated by the French. Green was buried alive two different times by nearby artillery blasts while bringing in wounded from the battlefield. According to his family the second time when he emerged from the rubble his hair was snow white. He returned to Newark and later moved to Los Angeles where he is buried.

Donald Jakeway had just graduated from Johnstown High School when he enlisted in the Army paratroopers for WWII. He reported to England in 1944 to ready himself for the D Day invasion on June 4, 1944. He recollected on the plane ride across the channel that they were told not to take any prisoners and wondered if he could really shoot someone since he had never shot anything other than a rabbit. Jakeway survived D-Day and later in the year jumped into Holland during Operation Market

Garden where he and his squad liberated a Jewish family that had been in hiding from the Nazis for years. Jakeway's next fight would be at the Battle of the Bulge where he was wounded. While being transported in an ambulance the driver lost control and the vehicle ended up upside down in a creek with everyone dead on board except for Jakeway who was strapped into the stretcher and couldn't move. Fortunately, some soldiers investigated the crash and rescued Jakeway. He returned to Johnstown after the war where he poured his heart and soul into his community until his death in 2019. He is buried in Johnstown.

During the Korean War Walter Nickells and Earl Siegmund were taken prisoner by the North Koreans and were forced to march nine days to prison camps in North Korea. The march would be called "The Tiger Death March". At the end of the march Siegmund was taken to a North Korean Police Station and killed, his body has never been found. Nickells survived and moved to St. Louisville where he passed away in 2012.

Dana Richard Smith had just turned nineteen years old when he was serving as an MP in Saigon. In January of 1968 the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong initiated the Tet Offensive and stormed the MP's in Saigon. It was a life or death struggle that Smith would never forget. After the war he returned to Newark and served as a Newark Firefighter for Twenty-Six years. Smith shared his wartime remembrances in a recorded interview for the library in 2022 just before he was diagnosed with cancer. Dana passed away a few weeks ago on November 27th.

Time doesn't permit me to tell more stories of men and women that have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, nor those who have contributed to our nation's defense in peacetime.

Because of the contributions of the men and women in the armed forces it is a fitting tribute to name the eastbound and westbound lanes of state route 161, "Licking County Veterans Memorial Highway."

I ask for your support of this legislation. Thank you.