



## CAMP GORDON JOHNSTON ASSOCIATION, INC.

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### The AMPHIBIAN SUMMER 2024

Summer is an active time in the Florida Panhandle, as we are a vacation destination! Due to travel and other distractions, we are publishing a single newsletter covering the summer months. We hosted two special exhibits, D Day in June and early July, and the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force from mid-July through August. We had 697 visitors in June, 694 in July and 285 in August. Late August and most of September is very quiet, as school is back in session, but it is still too hot for the festivals and events that bring visitors to our area. Time to get some much-needed work done!

We are sad to announce that we lost our best ambassador in August. Vivian Matthews Hess was a child at Camp Gordon Johnston, who moved here in 1942 when her father became the camp Postmaster. Vivian attended reunions and told wonderful stories about her time and experiences in Carrabelle. She visited the museum regularly and donated her extensive patch collection, which is on display. Vivian will be missed by all of us.

**Vivian Matthews Hess** was born June 15, 1933, in Tallahassee, Florida.

She graduated from Leon High School in 1951 and worked as a nurse for many years.

She died August 7, 2024, and was preceded by her beloved husband Lawrence "Bud" Hess.



#### Serviceman of the Month:

1<sup>st</sup> LT Frank "Buddy" Carson, Jr.  
401<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group, 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force.

Carson was from Monticello, AR and enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force in 1942. He arrived in England in July 1944 and flew as a pilot on a B-17 "Flying Fortress" Bomber, completing 35 bombing missions over Northern Europe, primarily Germany.

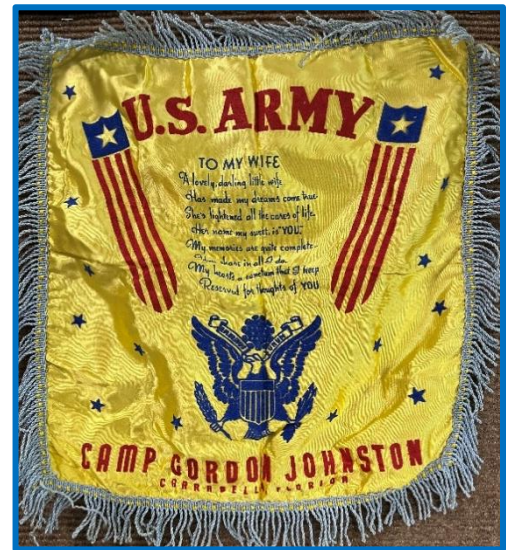
After he was discharged from the Army Air Force, he worked as a flight instructor at Graham Air Base in Marianna, Florida.

His daughter Kay Carson lives in Apalachicola, and lent the museum his story, photos and artifacts for our 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force exhibit.

**Artifact of the Month:** Sweetheart and Mother Pillows were very popular in all branches of service and the Civilian Conservation Corps from 1917 until 1945.

They were sold in Camp PXs and came with a special envelope for mailing home. The recipient then stuffed the pillow herself and held her serviceman close to her heart until he returned.

The museum has quite a few of these on display, including one from Camp Carrabelle, which was the former name of Camp Gordon Johnston, and from Dale Mabry Field in Tallahassee.



We were recently visited by Historians J r my Andersen-B  and Ga tan Sarelli from Normandy, France, on the trail of the 4th Infantry Division in their training before participating in Operation Neptune on June 6, 1944. They visited with the museum, explored Lanark Village and Alligator Point, and will be making stops in Georgia at Ft. Benning (now Moore), Fort Gordon and the former Camp Toccoa, the training place of the 101st Airborne Infantry Division.

What a treat! We learned many wonderful things about the 4th Infantry Division in their time in Europe, and even some things about their time here in Carrabelle that we didn't know!

**Current Exhibit:** (until September 28): The Philippines Campaign. Many of the soldiers of the 38<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division who trained at Camp Gordon Johnston served a vital role in the liberation of The Philippines from Japanese occupation in 1945 after which the division became known as the "Avengers of Bataan".

**Coming October 1:** Operation Market Garden: The 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force in WWII

Be sure to put Museum Day on your calendar! On October 5<sup>th</sup> all three Carrabelle Museums will have a special program called "Pieces of History: Shells and Shards" in which we will focus on the nature of artifacts in Museum exhibits and what they tell us.



### Did you know?

Artifacts are still being found at the former Camp Gordon Johnston. A canteen was found in the water nearby of WWI vintage. Much of what the soldiers used early in WWII was leftover from WWI. The canteen was crushed and corroded but still easily identifiable.

