

From Pauline Natividad in July 2011:-

I am writing to share a message with you all that I have received from Allan, the son of a very special American GI. Mr Sidney Greenwald.

I live in Southampton and a few years ago there was an exhibition in our local art gallery showing various pieces of WW2 memorabilia. Southampton was badly bombed during the War and much of the town centre was destroyed. One exhibit that immediately caught my attention was a house brick displayed on a plinth in a glass case. The brick was recovered from a house that had been demolished. It is engraved as follows:

' On way to France, Sidney Greenwald 32081546 USA Bronx New York' (You can see a photo of the brick on the end of the GI Trace 'Success Stories').

I noted the above information and that evening located Mr Greenwald . I then ran it past John Munro and NPRC who confirmed I had the right man. Just 3 days later I was on the phone talking with Mr Greenwald! The next thing was far more difficult! I went back to the Art Gallery to take a photo of the brick. It took 6 weeks of Town Hall bureaucracy to finally get permission to have a photo! I framed it and sent it to Mr Greenwald together with a cover letter explaining my initial interest in the brick.

Later I got a letter from Mr Greenwald's son Allan telling me it had brought joy to his father. From time to time Allan has updated me with family news which now brings me back to the message below...

Love Pauline

Message from Allan Greenwald in 2011:-

Dear Pauline:

*Although we do not communicate often, I think of you and pray for your welfare
You opened to me an facade of my father that was mostly hidden.*

*My father passed away in May after a short bout of pneumonia.
He was 98 and was really quite good until the end.
On that May day, we saw the hand of God saying to us that this is the
end and nothing that we did made a difference. HE is still
running the world.*

*During the mourning period, I looked at the brick that you were so kind
as to share with us. I realised then that his inscription on the brick
was really a tombstone. He never expected to return from Europe.
He was army infantry and an engineer to boot. Almost nothing would have been left
of
a young man at 28 years old except his name and dog tag number*

*However in the subsequent 70 years, he raised a family which today includes
children grandchildren and 29 great grandchildren
#30 was born two weeks after his demise.*

He developed a sterling business reputation as a most honest and trustworthy business partner and associate

In the 35 years of his retirement, he went every day to visit the sick in the hospital and see that their needs were taken care of.

When walking in the street, people (whom I don't really know) frequently come over to me and kiss me because I am my father's son and to acknowledge their thanks for how he saved their life.

The hospital that he walked to everyday, was the messenger of God to save his life just 15 years ago. A car driving at 60MPH(90 KM) hit his car. It is not possible to survive the trauma. Yet my father survived and was just about good as new.

My father studied Bible and Jewish rabbinical literature every day for over 4 hours a day for the last 35 years.

He was loved not just by his family for his sunny optimistic personality but by the everyone in his study class, all of his neighbors and the entire community in which he lived

All of this can not be written on one brick. Yes God knew what he was doing on June 6, 1944. We of course feel a void with his passing. We enjoyed being with him for the full 98 years in which he did not walk with a cane and was fully cogent until the end

Thank you once again for adding a dimension to my father's life that we might have overlooked

*Fondly,
Allan Greenwald*