



MAY 2019

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Together in Scripture Reading:
This month: the book of II Samuel

Friendship
BAPTIST
CHURCH

Slipping the Surly Bonds

High Flight by John Magee

*Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunwards I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds - and done a thousand things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared & swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hovering there,
I've chased the shouting wind along and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air,
Up, up the long delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
Where never lark, or even eagle, flew;
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.*

Early in World War II, America was a neutral country in a war that was sweeping across Europe. Following Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939, both Great Britain and France declared war on Nazi Germany. Violating the terms of the Armistice ending World War I, Germany had been building its military since Adolph Hitler became Chancellor in 1933. As the war began, other European countries were woefully behind in armaments and wartime training. As Germany began its "Blitzkrieg - lightning war," one nation after another began to fall before this new modern warfare of armored and mechanized infantry with close air support. When France capitulat-

Colonel Steve Martin

ed in 1940, Great Britain stood alone against the Nazis.

The "Battle of Britain" became a desperate struggle for the very life of the British Empire as German fighter and bomber aircraft began hitting strategic targets and cities throughout England. Desperate for young men to fly against Nazi Germany's air force, the Luftwaffe; Great Britain accepted pilot applicants from within the British Empire and those from other countries friendly to their cause. During America's neutrality, hundreds of Americans crossed the border into Canada to enlist with the Royal Canadian Air Force expecting to go to England and become active in the war. One such young man was John Gillespie Magee, Jr. (pictured above, right, circa 1940).



John Magee, Jr., was born in 1922 to Anglican missionaries in Shanghai, China. Magee's father was an Episcopal priest and his mother was a missionary from the Church Missionary Society. When Magee turned 18, he crossed the border into Canada and entered flight training. In June 1941, Magee was assigned to the No. 412 Fighter Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force, stationed at RAF Digby in England.

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MILITARY TERMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND ACRONYMS

Lock and load: To insert a magazine of ammunition into a weapon and chamber a round

LOM: acronym for Lack of Motivation - a type of letter or memorandum signed by U.S. Army Ranger School students who drop out of the course by their own choice and not for medical reasons or performance.

Pray for our Military Family:

- ◆ **Chaplain Brian Palmer and Family** - US Army, serving the Lord in Fort Hood, TX
- ◆ **Merry Dare Goodwin** - US Navy, serving aboard the USS Decatur
- ◆ **Justin & Kimberly Reece** - US Air Force, stationed at Pensacola NAS
- ◆ **Timothy & Hope Robinson** - USMC, stationed at Camp LeJeune, NC

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

John 14:6



A Tribute to Military Moms

Editor's Note: This was adapted from an article in the National Guard News by Senior Airman DeJon Williams, 136th Airlift Wing, Texas ANG.

Mother's Day is a holiday that is celebrated in one way or another in many countries around the world. On the second Sunday in May, Americans celebrate by giving their mothers flowers, cards and various other gifts.

While motherhood itself can be a full-time job, some mothers make the choice to also serve in the United States Air Force. These women juggle the trials of parenting with the responsibility of maintaining operations, coping with deployment tempos and upholding the core values: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do.

There are almost 2 million children around the world with military parents. Of those 2 million, Charissa Menken, a student flight trainee with the 136th Airlift Wing, grew up around the Texas Air National Guard and will soon be serving alongside her mother at the wing.

"As a family, we all supported her," said Charissa Menken. "It is awesome to get to see a woman and my mom be all these different things and still be strong, beautiful and be able to accomplish so much. That was inspiring for me."

Charissa Menken grew up as a "military brat" and developed an appreciation for service early on, thanks to the influence of her

mother. When the opportunity arose to follow in her mother's footsteps, pursuing a military career herself, the decision was an easy one.

"What's special about our relationship is that we get this little moment where we're working in the same wing together," Charissa Menken said. "I get to learn from her and not only be with her at home but be with her at the start of my military journey."

Tech. Sgt. Lisa Menken, a contract specialist with the 136th Mission Support Group, Texas Air National Guard, and mother of Charissa Menken, (*pictured side by side above, right*) has had many opportunities to share the responsibilities, joy and hardships of military service with her daughter.

Sometimes, as military members, the cost of service may involve missing important holidays or events. While deployed to assist with the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Lisa Menken wasn't able to physically attend her daughter's enlistment ceremony, but with advances in technology and the support of her fellow Airmen, she was there via video chat.

"I was in a van coming back from Beaumont, Texas, while



Sr. Airman DeJon Williams

the ceremony was taking place," said Lisa Menken. "It wasn't something we could control, but I was just really proud of her making that decision to get in. Being a good citizen, being respectful, trustworthy, and having strong values are things we hope and wish our kids take on. I was proud."

As unique as having a mother and daughter serving together at the same unit may be, many mothers across the wing are faced with leaving their families and even young children behind to ensure their state and nation's safety. Senior Airman Briana Boggs, a public affairs administrator with the 136th Airlift Wing, Texas Air National Guard, maintains this selfless perspective though she understands the gravity of a mother's sacrifice.

"It is all a part of putting service before self and getting the job done," said Boggs. "My daughter is turning two this year and luckily I haven't missed any major milestones like her walking, her first words, or anything like that. It's something other mothers have to deal with as well, but being a mother is great. It's stressful, exciting and every emotion you could think of combined, but knowing that I serve my country to not only keep my daughter safe, but also the rest of the nation too, makes all my sacrifices worth it."

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Slipping the Surly Bonds

The heavy Nazi bomber operations ended in May 1941 as the fierce defense of England echoed the inspired words of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill: "if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.'" The brave men who fought in the skies over England had ended any Nazi plans of invasion and had inspired a spirit of defiance in the British people. When John Magee arrived, the threat of invasion had ended, but England had expended so much of their available manpower that they needed additional pilots to provide escorts for British bombers who were now hitting Nazi targets in Germany, France and Belgium.

John Magee was trained to fly the improved version of the Supermarine Spitfire Mark II (*depicted at right*). Although German hopes of invasion had been turned back, the Luftwaffe still crossed the English Channel to bomb cities and factories hoping to severely limit British offensive capabilities. Magee flew frequent missions and on September 3, 1941, took a Spitfire to 30,000 feet to test its

capabilities when the inspiration came to him to write a poem he called, "To touch the face of God." A few days later, he wrote a letter to his parents. He stated in part, "I am enclosing a verse I wrote the other day. It started at 30,000 feet and was finished soon after I landed." He copied the verse onto the back page of the letter.

On December 11, 1941 (three days after America entered the war), John Gillespie Magee, Jr., lost his life in a mid-air collision. Although he was able to open the canopy on his plane, he was too low for his parachute to open and he died instantly. This young man who volunteered to go to war, who was fascinated with the epic adventure of flight, and who vividly described the unbounded joy of flight that few of that time had experienced, died on foreign soil defending freedom from tyranny. His poem, later titled "High Flight" has captured the imagination of the generations that have followed - a testament to a young man who soared beyond the clouds.



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To soar beyond the clouds is both the dream of believers and the promise of Jesus himself. Our assurance is found throughout scripture. We shall all depart this life either through physical death or by the rapture of the church. Jesus said in John 14:3, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." A few verses later, Jesus set

the criteria for going to heaven: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."

Jesus not only gave the promise of Heaven, but the criteria to get there. Death in this life is never the final word. Psalm 116 tells us about the death of a child of God: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The Apostle Paul tells us that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (II Cor. 5:8).

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Editor's Note: *Picking up where we left off last month with the last four deals suggested by Heather Sweeney's article.*

3. Hang out on base (continued).

We all love the "dinner and a movie" date, so after dinner, head over to the base movie theater that offers reduced prices on movies. You can find movie schedules and other special events on your installation's website.

Bowling is another fun date night. Bowl for two, double date with friends, or sign up for a tournament. Some locations also have arcades and snack bar facilities as well as coaches for instruction.

Can't find a night to get away, but you're both free on a Sunday afternoon? Have a golf date. Golf courses on base offer open course play, tournaments, driving ranges, pro shops, cart rentals, snack bars and instructors for classes and private lessons.

Want to plan a vacation or find out about local events like concerts and athletic games (for future date nights)? Head over to the Information, Ticket and Tours or ITT office. (Depending on the service, it may be called the Leisure Travel Office or Information, Ticket and Recreation.) They also provide discounted tickets to parks, museums and vacation hot spots like Disney World.

Shopping. That may not be the most exciting and romantic date night, but sometimes shopping without the kids is a treat worthy of the effort to book a babysitter.

Go to the commissary (without using one of those rocket-inspired kid carts) and find some deals at the NEX/AAFES/MCX .

4. See a play.

Through the Blue Star Theatres program, military personnel and their families (and veterans) can get discounted or complimentary admission to over 150 theatres, including Arena Stage in Washington, DC, San Diego Repertory Theatre in San Diego, California and Virginia Stage Company in Norfolk, VA.

5. Plan dinner and a movie.

You can't go wrong with the classic dinner and a movie date night. Make sure to ask for military discounts at the restaurant you choose. Some restaurants, like the Melting Pot, offer discounts for military members, and you might discover your favorite local joint honors military families as well.

Then go see that new romantic comedy that just hit theaters. If it's not playing on base, remember many movie theaters offer military discounts, including Cinemark, and Regal theaters.

6. Relax.

Massages are a great way for busy military couples to forget about deployments and PCS moves and simply relax. Take ad-

vantage of Massage Envy's military discount program, and book an appointment for a couple's massage.

7. In-house date.

Can't get a sitter? No good movies playing? Too tired to go out? No problem. Create the cheapest date of all: stay home. But don't put the kids to bed and turn on the tv like you always do. Mix it up. (Although if catching up on the shows that are overloading your DVR is something you never have time for and sounds like the perfect date night to you, go for it.)

Play board games. Do a puzzle. Have a photo shoot. Look through your wedding pictures. Make a scrapbook. Buy a few bottles of wine and a variety of cheeses beforehand and create your own wine-tasting. Take an online cooking class.

Date night doesn't necessarily mean leaving your house. It means spending time together. So get creative and come up with a list of ideas for dates you can enjoy at home.

About the author: Heather Sweeney is a military spouse, writer, and Associate Editor for Military.com.



For more info, visit www.military.com

Did You Know: Facts About Women in the Military (Part 2)

Susan Scanlan

Editor's Note: *Continuing with the second installment of our adaptation of Susan Scanlan's article, this month's focus is on international historical facts regarding women in the military.*

According to Herodotus's *The Histories*, a woman, Artemisia, served as one of Xerxes naval commanders during the Persian Wars including at the Battle of Salamis. Herodotus reports that Artemisia "sailed in command of the men of Helicarnassus, Cos, Nisyra and Calydia and furnished five ships of war...not one of the confederate commanders gave Xerxes sounder advice than she did."

Turkish women have fought voluntarily in several wars as combatants. One, Nana Hatun, fought so gallantly in the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War that a memorial was erected in remembrance of her courage and patriotism in Erzurum in Eastern Turkey.

During World War II, Soviet women engaged in combat in every branch of the armed forces. Their service as combat pilots was especially notable. The most famous of these were the Night Witches,

an all women squadron of bomber pilots, who flew only at night because their canvas and wood bi-planes were too slow to fly day-light missions. (NOTE: The "Night Witches" got their nickname from the German Luftwaffe because they feared them.) In fact, these Russians were the only women in the world who engaged in aerial combat during World War II.

Marina Raskova is often regarded as the Russian Amelia Earhart. She was born in 1912 and became the first female navigator with the Soviet Air Force in 1933. A year later she was teaching at the Zhukovskii Air Academy, the first woman ever to have achieved this level. A Soviet woman became the first woman Ace with 12 kills. 30 Soviet women pilots were declared "Heroes of the Soviet Union."

Women commonly serve as combatants in irregular and guerilla forces. They were combatants in El Salvador. They are involved in combat on both sides of the Sri Lanka fighting. A woman, Maryan Rajavi, commands Iranian National Liberation Army operating on behalf of the government in exile and opposed to the current regime.



Group of "Night Witches" during down time

NEXT MONTH: CONCLUSION

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MAY BIRTHDAYS:

- Dianna Perez - 4
- Gene Hayden - 6
- Andy Ralph - 16
- Andrew Parchue - 21
- Ashley Shaut - 22
- Catherine Carver - 24
- Kiah Reece - 26
- John Woods - 29
- Eric Alsmeyer, Dana Anderson - 30
- Steve Martin, Annette Parchue - 31

MAY ANNIVERSARIES:

- Gene & Pat Mesley - 19
- Brent & Debi Brondyke - 30
- Ken & Cheryl Folz - 31

THIS MONTH IN MILITARY HISTORY:

1 May 1898 - At Manila Bay in the Philippines, the U.S. Asiatic Squadron destroys the Spanish Pacific fleet in the first battle of the Spanish-American War.

4 May 1917 - First Navy ships, Destroyer Division 8, arrive at Queenstown, Ireland, to provide

convoy escorts against German U-boats.

8 May 1987 - Coast Guard units, including the CGC Ocracoke, make the largest seizure of cocaine by the Coast Guard (to date). They located 3,771 pounds (1.9 tons) aboard the La Toto off the north-

west coast of St. Croix.

10 May 1776 - The persistent Army-Navy siege and assault on Vicksburg compelled Confederate strategists to withdraw much needed troops from the eastern front in an effort to bring relief to their forces in the west.

Slipping the Surly Bonds

The Apostle Paul also gives us a glimpse of the homecoming of the church when Jesus will call His children home. *"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we*

which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:13-18).

If you are reading this article and do not have this assurance in your life, right now is the time to believe in Christ Jesus and accept Him as your personal Savior. Reverend Billy Graham used to have the song "Just As I Am" sung during altar calls at his services across the world. You don't have to make changes or wait for a better time. Jesus wants you "just as you are at this moment" with all the chaos, confusion, dirt, imperfections, and struggles

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your life is experiencing. You will never be good enough to gain Heaven. You will never be able to do enough to earn your way in. Heaven is a gift of God - unmerited grace and favor to those who do not deserve it. The death of Jesus Christ paid for your sins and all you must do to gain heaven is to accept Jesus Christ in your life. It will be a decision that will change your ETERNITY.

One day, either through death or by rapture - you can join those who believe in Christ Jesus and have the assurance that you will slip the surly bonds of earth and pass the sun-split clouds - to put out your hand and touch the face of God as you see your Savior face-to-face.

A Tribute to Military Moms

During the Texas Air National Guard's response to Hurricane Harvey, Boggs worked tirelessly for many long days through her civilian job to assist with evacuation and rescue operations in areas where victims could not

access medical facilities. Her response, as well as that of many other Airmen moms, shows the heart of a mother and the character of an Airman transcends the uniform.

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Moms like these show the true meaning of what it is to be a Citizen-Airmen, and we wanted to take this moment to wish all our moms a very Happy Mother's Day.



Quote of the Month: *"And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod the high untrespassed sanctity of space, put out my hand and touched the face of God."*

John Gillespie Magee, Jr.



Prayer Notes, Event Announcements

First of all, I want to say thank you to all who attended our Yellow Ribbon Ministry Luncheon on March 31st. We had 65 in attendance!

Please pray for Missionaries Brian and Ivey Palmer at Fort Hood, Texas (son-in-law and daughter of Albert and Becky Watkins). Merry Dare Goodwin serving aboard the USS Decatur (granddaughter of Dale and Dixie Ulmer and niece of Rachel Vradenburgh). Merry Dare just announced her engagement to Noah Price. Congratulations Merry Dare. Justin and Kimberly Reece stationed at Pensacola NAS (son and daughter-in-law of Dan and Becky Reece).

Timothy and Hope Robinson station at Camp LeJune, NC (son-in-law and daughter of Bran and Michele Kennon, granddaughter of Jerry and Lynn Kennon). Timothy and Hope recently had their second child, Sophie Lynn Robinson, born on April 8th. Congratulations to Timothy and Hope and the entire Kennon family!

If you know of anyone who is a Veteran that I've missed in the Prayer Notes, please add them to the list. I always feel like I'm probably missing something or someone I should have mentioned.

- Colonel Martin



The Brian Palmer Family

