

Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor, which is often referred to as the Congressional Medal of Honor, is the absolute highest military Medal our country awards for valor in combat against an armed enemy of the United States of America. It is very rarely awarded, but when it is, it is presented only to members of our military whose bravery under fire in the presence of an armed enemy goes way above and beyond the call of duty.

Important to note: Navy Ensign Francis C. Flaherty was one of only two men from the tri-county area to ever be awarded a Medal of Honor for performing an act of extreme bravery while engaged in combat with the armed forces of a foreign nation. Second recipient: Marine Lieutenant Sherrod E. Skinner.........
(Tri-county = Eaton, Clinton and Ingham counties, which includes Lansing.)

Navy Ensign Francis C. Flaherty

Francis was born and raised in Charlotte and he lived at 212 East Harris Street ......He graduated from Charlotte High School in 1936....... Following graduation from the University of Michigan, he entered the Navy as an Ensign in the Naval Reserve......He was stationed on board the Battleship U.S.S. Oklahoma at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii....... His ship took about nine direct and fatal hits from torpedoes that were dropped from airplanes during the first wave of the attack by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941,.......While they were trapped in a gun turret in almost complete darkness, Francis grabbed a flashlight and shined its beam on the corridor exit while guiding his crewmates to safety as his ship was capsizing ......One of the officers said the last time he saw Francis, Francis was knee deep in water pushing his men toward an exit, and the water was rising at a rapid pace.......He helped several of his crewmates escape certain death on December 7, 1941, but he lost his own life in the process . ..............He was only 22 years old when he was killed in action at Pearl Harbor......Ensign Flaherty was the first of only 13 Michigan men to be awarded the Medal of Honor during all of WW II.........His body was never recovered.

Marine Lieutenant Sherrod E. Skinner, Jr.

Although he was born in Hartford, Connecticut, he attended grammar school in East Lansing and he entered the service in East Lansing.....Attended Harvard University........ Lt. Skinner is the only Medal of Honor recipient credited to Ingham County for all of the major foreign wars our country has fought in.........Killed in action in Korea on October 26, 1952, at the age of 22...... Lt. Skinner was a forward artillery observer with the 11th Marines, 1st Marine Division, in a vital forward outpost when it was attacked by the enemy ......He continued to defend his position until his unit's ammunition was exhausted ......He then directed his men to feign death as the enemy overran the position......When a grenade was thrown among the Marines, Lt. Skinner threw himself on it, sacrificing his own life to protect his men.......He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.......His father was a Vice President for General Motors.

(Michigan was credited with two recipients of the Medal of Honor during WW I........13 during WW II........ Seven during the war in Korea.......Eight during the war in Vietnam)

Don Colizzi 3.20.11
Ens Francis C. Flaherty (1919 - 1941) - Find A Grave Memorial

World War II Records
www.ancestry.com

Ens Francis C. Flaherty

Memorial Photos Flowers
Birth: Mar. 15, 1919
Charlotte
Eaton County
Michigan, USA

Death: Dec. 7, 1941
Honolulu
Honolulu County
Hawaii, USA

World War II Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient. Ensign Flaherty was stationed on the USS Oklahoma (BB-37) which was moored on Battleship Row in Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked on December 7, 1941. Immediately after the first bombs fell, three torpedoes hit her broadside and the great ship began to capsize. Even more torpedoes struck as the men were trying to abandon ship. He remained at his station on one of the gun turrets and held aloft so that his crew might escape. The Oklahoma rolled completely over and trapped him inside the hull with many others. Over the next few days thirty-two were rescued from inside the hull, but Ensign Flaherty was among the 429 members who were entombed inside the hull until the ship was raised for salvage in 1943. The remains were recovered and buried in mass graves marked "Unknowns" at the National Memorial Center of the Pacific in Honolulu. His name is inscribed in the Courts of the Missing in that cemetery and a memorial headstone placed at the Maple Hill Cemetery in his hometown of Charlotte, Michigan. His citation reads: For conspicuous devotion to duty and extraordinary courage and complete disregard of his own life, above and beyond the call of duty, during the attack on the fleet in Pearl Harbor, by Japanese forces on 7 December 1941. When it was seen that the U.S.S. Oklahoma was going to capsize and the order was given to abandon ship, Ens. Flaherty remained in a turret, holding a flashlight so the remainder of the turret crew could see to escape, thereby sacrificing his own life. (Bio by: Tom Todd)

Search Amazon for Francis Flaherty
Note: Medal of Honor Winner Ensign US Navy WWII

Burial:
Maple Hill Cemetery
Charlotte
Eaton County
Michigan, USA
Plot: Section 3
*Cenotaph [2]

Maintained by: Find A Grave
Originally Created by: Mark Pawelczak
Record added: Sep 18, 2001
Find A Grave Memorial# 5783769

Added by: Anonymous
Added by: Mark Pawelczak

Cemetery Photo
Added by: Sandra Moore

Photos may be scaled. Click on image for full size.

Kris Burns, UK
Added: Mar. 16, 2011

http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=5783769

5/2/2011
Gertrude M Flaherty (1888 - 1932) - Find A Grave Memorial

Birth: 1888
Death: Oct. 25, 1932

Burial: Maple Hill Cemetery
Charlotte
Eaton County
Michigan, USA
Plot: F-11

Created by: Laura Ranville
Record added: Dec 31, 2010
Find A Grave Memorial# 63540843

Cemetery Photo
Added by: Sandra Moore

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John Flaherty, Esperanza Chavoya, Albert Martinez

John Flaherty

Private family services will be held for John J. Flaherty, 88, of Vandenberg Village.

Mr. Flaherty was born June 14, 1913, in Charlotte, Mich., to Francis and Gertrude Messner Flaherty. A 1936 graduate of the University of Michigan, he joined the U.S. Navy shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Mr. Flaherty was placed in charge of the recruiting department of the Manhattan Project. For his service during World War II, he was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal and the Legion of Merit.

After the war, he was one of the first employees of the newly-formed Atomic Energy Commission. He served as operations manager for both the Chicago and San Francisco areas which included Argonne, Los Alamos and Livermore National Laboratories. He left the AEC in 1957 to become vice-president in charge of operation of Atomics International, a division of North American Aviation, and later rose to president of that branch, working there until his retirement in 1970. The AEC called him out of retirement and he worked as deputy director until 1973. After being presented the AEC/s Outstanding Service Award, he retired again and formed Delta Standard and helped our country negotiate with various companies internationally to aid them in the generation of safe nuclear power. He helped form and was the first president of the Village Country Club and was instrumental in the acquisition of Park Water, now the VVCSD. He also served on the boards of the Braille Institute and the Lompoc Public Library.

Mr. Flaherty died Tuesday, Oct. 30, 2001, at the Convalescent Care Center.

Survivors include his wife of 62 years, Martha, of Vandenberg Village; sons, John B. Flaherty, of Taos, N.M., and Robert F. Flaherty, of Vandenberg Village; four grandchildren and a great-grandchild.
MRS. FLAHERTY DROWNS SELF IN BATTLE CREEK

HAD BEEN HOME FROM SAWYER SANITARIUM, MARION, OHIO, ONLY A FEW DAYS, ENTERED THAT RETREAT IN JUNE.

Friends Considered Her Improved But Evidently She Still Suffered From Mental Breakdown.

Mrs. Gertrude Messmer Flaherty, for many years successful manager of the Belden Co. elevator on Lansing street, took her life some time Tuesday afternoon. Mrs. Flaherty suffered a breakdown in June and returned home Wednesday from the Sawyer sanitarium, Marion, Ohio, where she had been a patient for several weeks. While she was thought to be much improved, members of her family kept a close watch of Mrs. Flaherty, who seemed depressed despite the fact that her mind had cleared up. She announced about 2 o'clock Tuesday afternoon that she was going over to call on Mrs. A. J. Moser, Bostwick Ave., an old friend. Her sister, Mrs. Laura Rogers of Grand Rapids who has been in the Flaherty home since the sister's return suggested she wait a few minutes, until she could change her dress, and she would accompany her. Mrs. Flaherty said she wanted the walk and obeyed the suggestion that Mrs. Rogers follow her over, directly, in the car. Mrs. Flaherty did not go to the Moser home and must have walked directly to Bennett park, where her body was found Wednesday noon in Battle Creek, perhaps 1000 feet east of the band stand. Coroner Cheney was called and removed the body from the water.

Mail Messenger Gives Tip

While Under-Sheriff M. J. Krieg was at the Michigan Central passenger station Wednesday morning investigating Tuesday's train departures, Glendale Miles, the day mail messenger over.
Mail Messenger Gives Tip

While Under Sheriff M. J. Krieg was at the Michigan Central passenger station Wednesday morning investigating Tuesday’s train departures, Glendale, Miles, the day mail messenger overheard the officer’s query and said that he had seen Mrs. Flaherty near Bennett park about 2:30 p.m. Tuesday afternoon, that he had been down to the battery, and was on his way back to town. Mrs. H. A. Zimmerman, living across from the fairgrounds, afterward told the officer that she saw a lady turn in at the baseball entrance, and cut across the diamond toward the woods about the size the stranger could have been. A. Flaherty, Supt. E. H. Chapelle and Lawrence Robinson, Rotarians, who were serving the memory of Frank Flaherty, charter member of the local club, had spent most of the morning searching, accompanied Deputy Sheriff Krieg to the park and with Mr. Zimmerman and Jas. Cronk they started a search through the woods and along the banks of the creek. Mr. Zimmerman, within a short time gave the alarm indicating that he had found the body. Mrs. Flaherty was quite low in energy and members of the searching party are convinced that she threw herself in the stream as soon as she reached the spot where her body was found. She removed her hat and coat before she jumped into the water. The body had floated a few feet from where the wearing apparel was found.

Was Born In Grand Rapids

Gertrude Messmer was born in Grand Rapids August 23, 1888, daughter of Jacob and Isabel Messmer. The father was a Miller.
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