



ROLLING THUNDER[®], INC

CHAPTER 2 OF ILLINOIS

Wauconda, Illinois

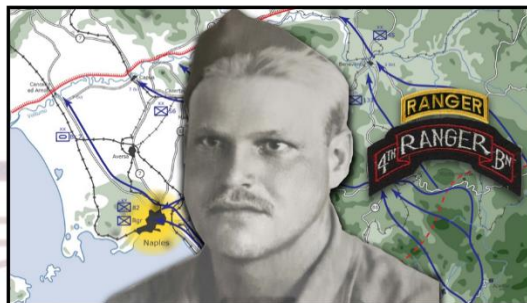


“MISSION COMPLETE”

12 APRIL 2025

PFC Robert Bryant

U.S. Army PFC Robert Bryant was born on February 20th, 1920 in Sedalia, Missouri and moved to Bloomington, Illinois in 1930 where he lived until he enlisted in the United States Army on December 7th, 1939 and became an Army Ranger.



MISSING: In September 1943, PFC Bryant was assigned to Company B, 4th Ranger Battalion, “Darby’s Rangers,” serving in the Mediterranean Theater in World War II.

He participated in Operation AVALANCHE, the amphibious invasion of Italy near Salerno, and engaged in fighting near the Chiunzi Pass on the Sorrento Peninsula. He was one of approximately 70 Rangers in his company who, along with the rest of the Allied invasion force, landed on the beaches close to Salerno, Italy, during Operation Avalanche.

On 23 September, 1943, PFC Bryant was reported missing in action following a four-man patrol searching for wounded Rangers west of Pietre, Italy deep in enemy territory. His body was not recovered and German forces never reported him a prisoner of war. On 25 September, 1943, PFC Bryant was reported KIA. The War Department declared PFC Bryant “non-recoverable.” on July 19, 1949.

RECOVERY: In March 2022 members of the Department of Defense and the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) disinterred battlefield remains and sent them to the DPAA laboratory for identification. Using anthropological and mitochondrial DNA analysis, Pfc. Robert Bryant was identified and accounted for in September 2024.

DIGNIFIED TRANSFER 3 April 2025



The Illinois State Police provided the traffic control, supported by Bloomington and other local Fire and Police departments. The hearse was led by, Rolling Thunder, Chapters 1 and 2-Illinois Mounted Color Guard supported by American Legion Riders and other groups, who escorted PFC Bryant 128 miles from Midway Airport to Calvert and Metzler Funeral



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Home, 1115 E. Washington St, Bloomington, IL. where an overwhelming crowd of spectators lined the streets to welcome PFC Bryant home.

The procession was along a 128- mile route where hundreds of local citizens, fire and police departments turned out to view the procession and to honor PFC Bryant.

ROLLING THUNDER CHAPTER 2-IL ATTENDEES (9) Ted Makarewicz, Scott Miller, Nick Bender, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Greg Smith, Dave Bakke, Rich Gruener, Ron Carpenter, and Bill Fulton.

INTERMENT 12 April 2025



Staging at Calvert and Metzler Funeral Home, 1115 E. Washington St, Bloomington, IL., PFC Bryant finally came home to rest on 12 April 2025 Park Hill Cemetery, Bloomington, IL.

The funeral procession was along a 7 - mile route where local citizens, fire and police departments and the public turned out to view the funeral procession and to honor PFC Bryant who was buried with full military honors for his sacrifice in WWII.

American Legion Post 635 provided the 21-gun salute and bugler playing taps before the next of kin received the folded American flag from the Honor Guard of the US Army 75th Ranger Regiment who attended the funeral from Fort Moore, GA.

A POW/MIA Flag, flown during the Dignified Transfer, was presented to the next of kin by Al Miller, Ted Makarewicz, Tony Schmidt and Dave Skinner, of Chapters 1, 2 and 3 on behalf of the members of Rolling Thunder, Illinois.

Despite decades of time, the ceremony brought a sense of closure to the family, comfort to his friends, warmth to his fellow Americans, and pride to his Veteran brothers and sisters.

ROLLING THUNDER CHAPTER 2-IL ATTENDEES: (12) Ted Makarewicz, Anthony Yarborough, Scott Miller, Nick Bender, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Mary Kirkpatrick, Bill Fulton, Andy Haszlakiewicz, Paul Hebein, Dave Bakke, Mark Mazurkiewicz, and Ron Carpenter.

POW/MIA FLAG: A National POW/MIA Flag, flown during the Dignified Transfer, and subsequent escort, was presented to the next of kin and family members. The POW/MIA Flag symbolizes a “test of



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our metal” in supporting the on-going efforts to ensure the remaining 81,000 plus servicemen, servicewomen, and civilians, unaccounted for, are returned to our Country and to their loved ones.

MEMORIAL BRICK: A Commemorative Brick will be added to the KIA / POW / MIA section of the Veterans Memorial at Woodstock Harley-Davidson, memorializing U.S. Army Ranger PFC Robert Bryant.

