



# Port Richmond

## STATEN ISLAND

# HONORS OUR VETERANS

FIRST ANNUAL  
BANNER CELEBRATION



MEMORIAL DAY - VETERANS DAY 2021

# Port Richmond

STATEN ISLAND

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## HONORS OUR ★ VETERANS ★

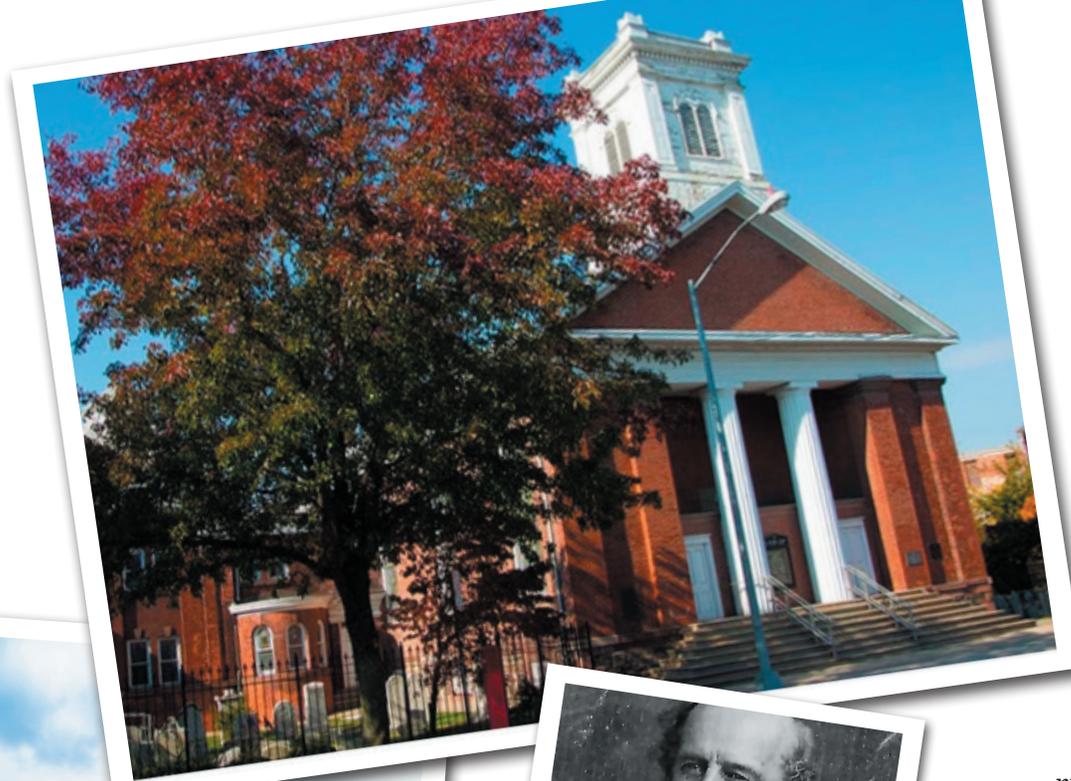
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*“I saw this done in upstate New York and thought this was something special that we could be doing in Port Richmond, which is the home of Veteran’s Park and a community that has a deep connection to many veterans.”*

**Mario Buonviaggio,**  
Port Richmond Strong Civic Association

[PortRichmondStrong.com/Veterans](http://PortRichmondStrong.com/Veterans)

# Port Richmond loves making history...



Port Richmond's historic Reformed Church began its ministry in 1656.

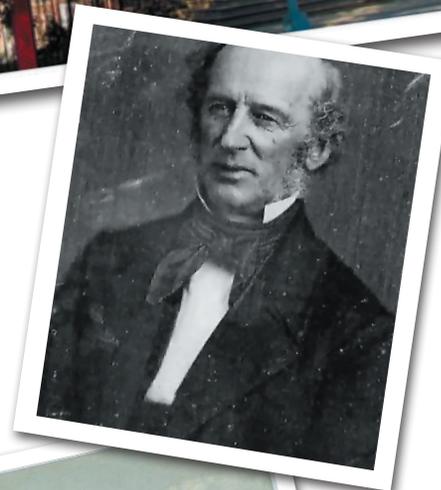
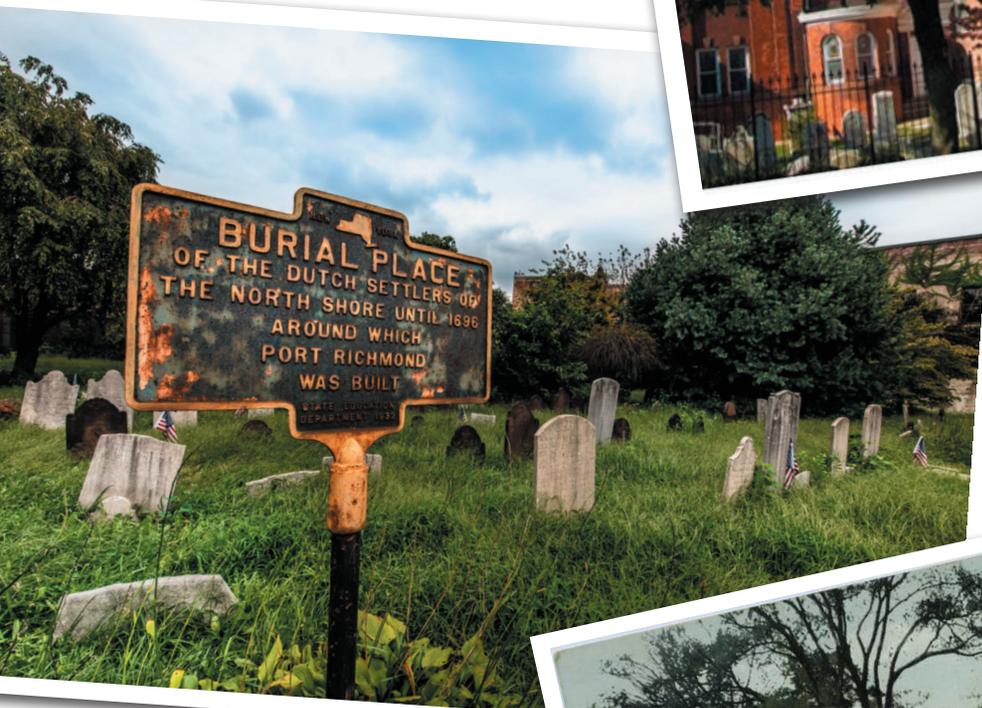
The Burial Place (*a New York City Landmark*), has 45 heroes of the wars that created America: The US War of Independence, The War of 1812, and The Civil War.

Cornelius Vanderbilt, who was a Congregant of Port Richmond's Reformed Church, gave a steamship to the Union Navy.

Staten Island oldest park is Veteran's Park--located right here in Port Richmond on Bennett St. and Park Ave!

To our knowledge, this is the first time that Veteran's Banners have been done in NYC!

We welcome you to get to know our local heroes past and present, and to join us in celebrating another historic moment for Port Richmond.



Historic Port Richmond



Preservation Association



# Meet the Port Richmond Veterans

*who fought for & fashioned this nation*

## United States War of Independence

**Five Mersereau Brothers** fought with Washington. The Daughters of the American Revolution honored them with the plaque on your right as you face the Church.

**Joshua Mersereau** is cited on the Central Intelligence Agency website as a Founder of American intelligence. At Washington's request, he left his two teenage sons on Staten Island to spy on the British.

**William Bernard Gifford** owned the Rose & Crown Tavern where the British first read the Declaration of Independence.

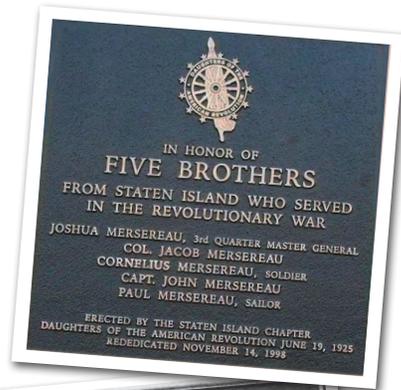
**Isaac Ledyard** was an elector in 1800, the year Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr tied for President, and the Constitution had to be amended.

## Merchant Seamen and Privateers

**Privateers** were government sanctioned pirates. They played a role in all the wars.

## The War Of 1812

**Cornelius Vanderbilt**, son of Port Richmond, supplied the New York state fortifications for fellow Reformed Congregant, Daniel Tompkins, fourth governor of New York and sixth vice president of the United States under James Monroe. Vanderbilt also supplied the Battle of New Orleans.



**Jeremiah Baker** lived to be 101. He is listed just beneath Vanderbilt as a regular contributor to the support of our **Pastor, Rev. Peter Van Pelt**.

**Jacob Tyson** served in the US Congress.

## The Civil War

**William Henry Housman** and **William Ebbit Kohler** both survived the war and returned home. Both their families were wealthy enough to have hired someone to serve in their place. They both died just a few years later. Housman in 1867 at 36 years; Kohler in 1870 at 26 years.



## United States War of Independence

**CORNELIUS MERSEREAU**, SOLDIER  
**COL. JACOB MERSEREAU**  
**CAPT. JOHN MERSEREAU**  
**PAUL MERSEREAU**, SAILOR  
**HARMANUS CROPSY** *Moved to Moravian*

**ISAAC LEDYARD** MEDICAL PURVEYOR  
**JOHN TYSON** *CAN NOT LOCATE*  
**SIMON VAN NAME**  
**JOHN VAN PELT**  
**JOHN WENDELL** *CAN NOT LOCATE*

**MAJ. WILLIAM BERNARD GIFFORD**  
3RD REG. OF NEW JERSEY AIDE DE CAMP TO GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON  
*BURIED BENEATH THE SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF CHURCH*

**JOSHUA MERSEREAU, SR.** **MARY CORSON MERSEREAU**  
PARENTS OF THE FIVE BROTHERS

## Merchant Seamen and Privateers

**CAPTAIN PETER VAN PELT**  
**CAPTAIN NICHOLAS LAWRENCE**  
**CAPTAIN JACOB CORSEN**  
**CAPTAIN JOHN DANIELS**  
**MATE EPHRAIM C. DANIELS**

**CAPTAIN ANTHONY HOUSMAN**  
**CAPTAIN ABRAHAM P. HOUSMAN**  
**CAPTAIN JOHN J. HOUSMAN**  
**CAPTAIN JOHN TYSEN**

## The War of 1812

**JEREMIAH BAKER** LIVED TO 101  
**JAMES COZINE BARNES**  
**JOHN BODINE** SENATOR  
**JOHN BODINE** ESQ.  
**EDWARD BUSH**  
**MATTHEW CHRISTOPHER**  
**WILLIAM CHRISTOPHER**  
**ABRAHAM CROCHERON**  
**EDWARD DE HART**  
**HARMANUS GARRETSON**  
**JOHN C. GARRETSON**

**EGBERT HOUGHWOUT**  
**JOHN JONES**  
**DAVID LATOURETTE**  
**JOHN POST**  
**SIMON POST**  
**JACOB TYSON** US CONGRESS  
**JOHN TYSON**  
**SIMON VAN NAME**  
**JOSEPH WOOD**  
**JOHN ZELIFF**

## The Civil War

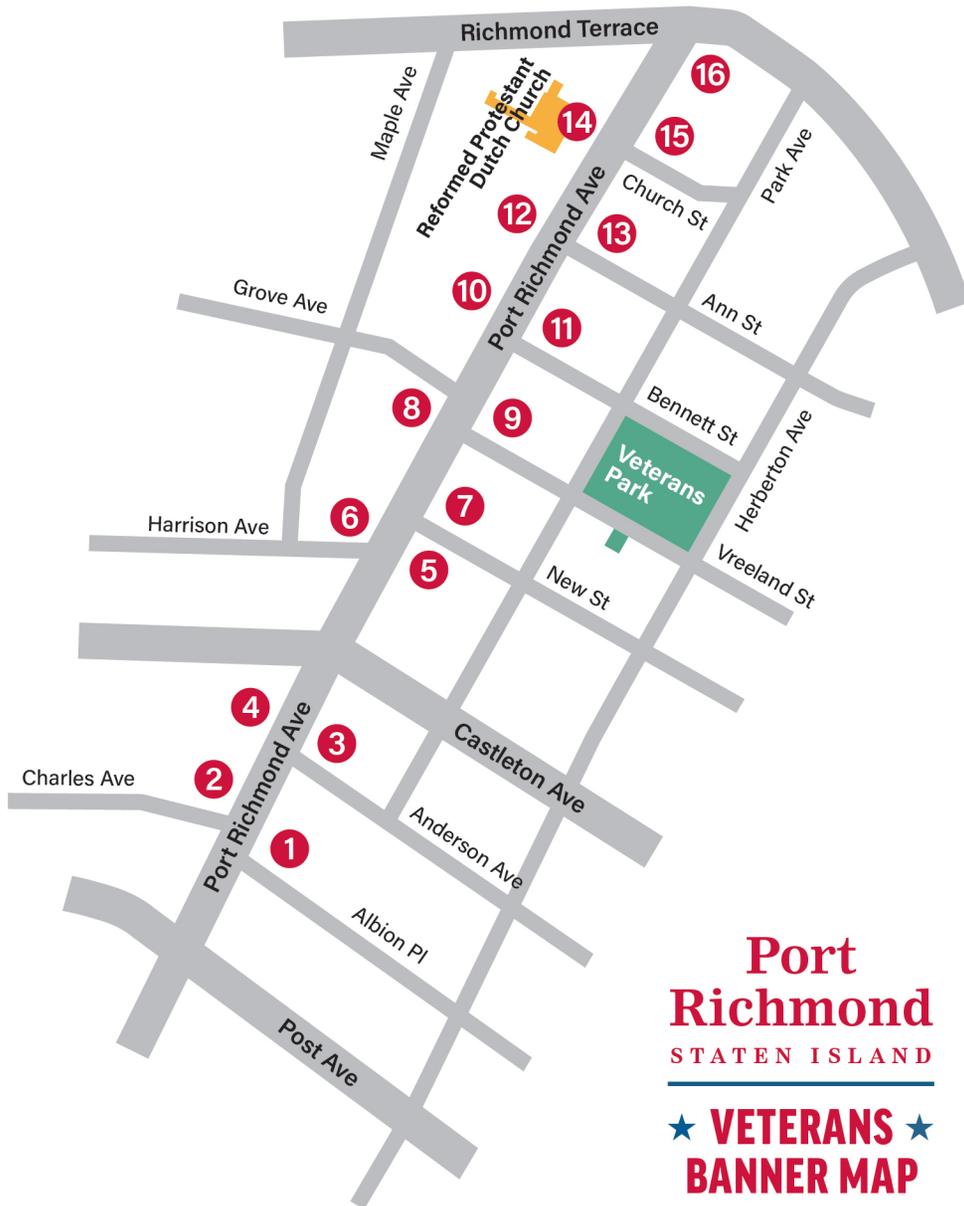
**WILLIAM HENRY HOUSMAN**

**WILLIAM EBBIT KOHLER**



# Port Richmond's HONORED VETERANS

— 2021 Directory —



## Port Richmond STATEN ISLAND

★ VETERANS ★  
BANNER MAP

● LIGHTPOLE

>> **Fun Fact** - We were only permitted to use metal lightpoles to hang our banners.

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## Kenneth C. Amatrudo

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1967 - 1969

Kenneth Amatrudo played baseball and basketball at both St. Teresa School in Castleton Corners and the Port Richmond CYO. He was a talented musician and artist. He graduated from Port Richmond High School class of 1967. His tank training was in Fort Knox Kentucky.

Sergeant Kenneth C. Amatrudo was killed on August 10, 1969 while attempting to rescue passengers in a capsized boat in Raritan Bay. He was posthumously awarded the Empire State Medal of Honor.

Ken was survived by his parents, Emanuel K. and Marie R. Amatrudo. Brothers: Gary, Emanuel, Victor and John. Josephine Street in Four Corners was named in his honor in 2009.



## George W. Brown, Jr.

★ U.S. NAVY ★

WWII  
Korean War

George W. Brown, Jr. was born December 11, 1926, the only child of George Sr. and Anna Brown. At the young age of 17 he had his father sign him into the service of the Navy. He served in WWII as a tail gunner aboard Navy PBM aircraft search and rescue. He was called back into the Navy for the Korean War. He served as an ammunition personnel.

George lived and worked in Port Richmond for his entire adult life. He is the founder of local business Brownie's Pro & Sport Hobbies. George died April 20, 2016.

Brownie's celebrates its 50th Anniversary this summer.





# John T. Brown

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1968  
KIA Vietnam

“John was a grammar school friend and he played basketball for Port Richmond High School, and his father was a CYO Coach. This bio may sound so simple and short, but that was because he was killed in Vietnam at such a young age... As I have reached my 74th year, I think about how much he missed, and how much he was missed.”

John was born and raised on Heberton Street, attended St. Mary’s Assumption and Port Richmond High School.

As a Private First Class, John Thomas Brown served with Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. He was Killed in Action in Vietnam.

*Sponsored by James Smith & Nancy Smith Graebe Family*



# Father Vincent R. Capodanno

★ U.S. NAVY ★  
CHAPLAIN CORPS

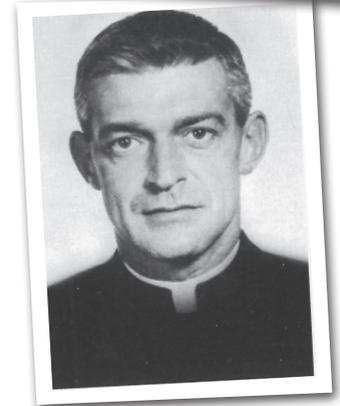
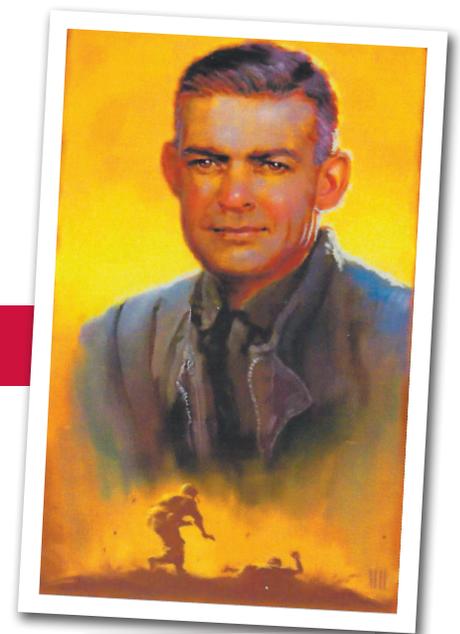
1966 - 1967  
KIA Vietnam

Father Vincent R. Capodanno, MM, was a U.S. Navy Chaplain Lieutenant who served with the 7th and 5th Marines in Vietnam.

He was born on February 13, 1929 and raised in an Italian-American family. From his Catholic upbringing on Staten Island, all the way through his foreign missionary service in East Asia, to his heroic death at the age of 37 on September 4, 1967 on a Vietnam battlefield while rushing, unarmed, to the aid of wounded and dying U.S. Marines under ambush, Father Capodanno was a revered role-model to most that knew him before and after his death.

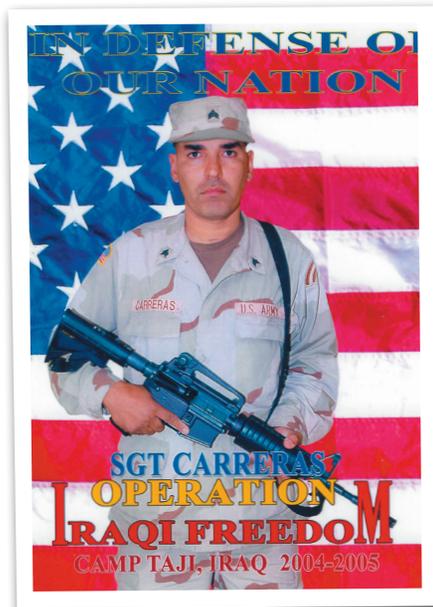
Father Capodanno posthumously received the Medal of Honor for his valor in combat and is now under consideration for canonization by the Holy See’s Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Two adult books and one children’s book have been written about Father Capodanno as well as documentary films. The Grunt Padre, Fr. Daniel L. Mode, Armed with Faith: The Life of Father Vincent R. Capodanno, MM, by the Reverend Monsignor Stephen M. DiGiovanni, H.E.D and Father Vincent R. Capodanno. Navy Chaplain, by Marianna Randazzo and William Castello. (Available on Amazon)



*Sponsored by OSDIA - Father Capodanno Lodge #212*





## Richard R. Carreras

★ U.S. ARMY ★

**1983 - 2006**  
**Operation Iraqi Freedom**

Mr. Richard Carreras was born in Staten Island New York. His parents are the late Lucille Martin and Jose R. Carreras, Sr. He has one brother and three sisters.

He graduated McKee Vocational Technical High School and took up wood working. In 1983 he joined the NYPD and the following year joined the National Guard. Richard Carreras was activated and worked at the World Trade Center for thirteen months during 9/11. In 2004 he went to Iraq and stayed for eighteen months. In 2006 he retired with an Honorable Discharge. Upon returning home, he joined different military organizations to continue serving the community.

He was H&S Cichon 1578 American Legion Post Commander. Now he is the Present Commander. At the 369 Richmond District he is the Second Vice President and life member. He is also the 2nd vice commander of USIVO DAV life member Chapter 34 S.I.

Richard Carreras is a member of St. Philips Baptist Church. He is married to Brenda L. Carreras for twenty years. Richard has a son Richard Jr. and a daughter Taneesha along with four granddaughters. He has been a foster parent for 5 years. Richard is a Chaplain and received best in class and a Bilingual Award from the FLACA (Federal Latin American Chaplain Association).

*Sponsored by Brenda Carreras*



## Christy J. Cugini

★ U.S. ARMY ★

**1950 - 1953**  
**Korean War**

Christy Joseph Cugini, a Port Richmond native, was a U.S. Army Corporal who served his country during the Korean War.

Growing up in Port Richmond, the Cugini family lived on Post Avenue. Christy and his siblings, as well as many cousins, attended P.S. 20, and later, Port Richmond High School. During that time, his parents Anthony and Donata, were active members of the community & the PTA.

Corporal Cugini, a military policeman, was stationed in Germany between 1950 - 1952.

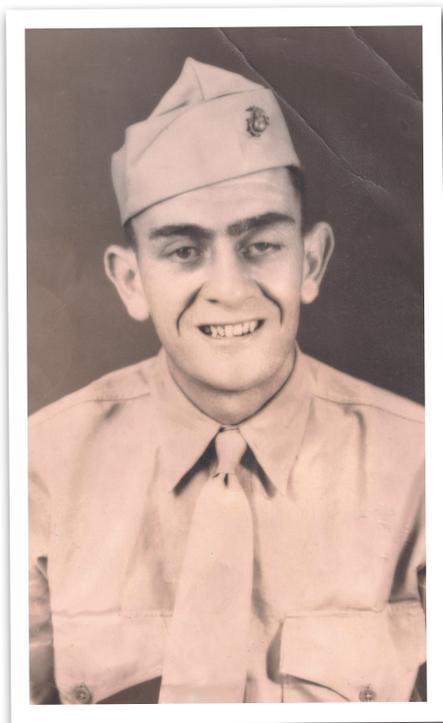
Corporal Cugini returned home and married Mary (nee Hanley) and together they raised six children, all of whom still live on Staten Island.

Christy graduated from Wagner College, and began his career in education at Intermediate School 51. As a teacher there, he had a great impact on his students and their families. His talents were quickly recognized and he was promoted to the district office, where he ultimately was selected as the Community Superintendent. Following his retirement as Superintendent in 2003, the Cugini family was honored to participate in the naming ceremony of P.S. 20 as the Christy J. Cugini School.

In 2011, Mr. Cugini was inducted into the Port Richmond High School Hall of Fame in recognition of his lifelong service to the community.

*Sponsored by Constance & Allison Cugini*





## Frank D'Agostino

★ U.S. MARINE ★  
CORPS

1941 - 1945 | WWII  
Iwo Jima and other  
Battles of the Pacific

Frank served during WWII in the following Pacific battles: Iwo Jima, Saipan, Tinian, and Marianna Islands.

Known by the nickname, "Chappy" he grew up in Mariners Harbor, married and moved to Maple Avenue in Port Richmond.

Chappy rarely spoke about his time overseas but he did mention that while in a foxhole on Iwo Jima he noticed someone painting during the battle. He approached him and found out that he was from Staten Island! And Chappy always spoke about the can of spam that he buried on the beach on Iwo Jima.

*Sponsored by Mary Ann D'Agostino & Paul Stallone*



## Anthony J. Galano, Sr.

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1949 - 1952  
Korean War

Anthony was born in 1930 in Jersey City. After graduating in 1949, he volunteered to serve in the US Army. He was in the frontline during the Korean War from 1949-1952.

At the age of 24, Anthony met his wife Anna, who is a Port Richmond native. They married in 1956 and raised their four children, Anthony, Bernadette, Joseph and Marianne in Port Richmond. Presently their family has grown to eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Anthony worked at Western Electric after returning home from the war. Anthony belongs to the Cichon Post Veterans Organization. Anthony is a history lover and antique collector who enjoys playing lotto and coin collecting. He also enjoys watching Jeopardy and The New York Yankees.

*Sponsored by The Galano Family*





## George Kokell

★ U.S. AIR FORCE ★

1962 - 1966  
Vietnam

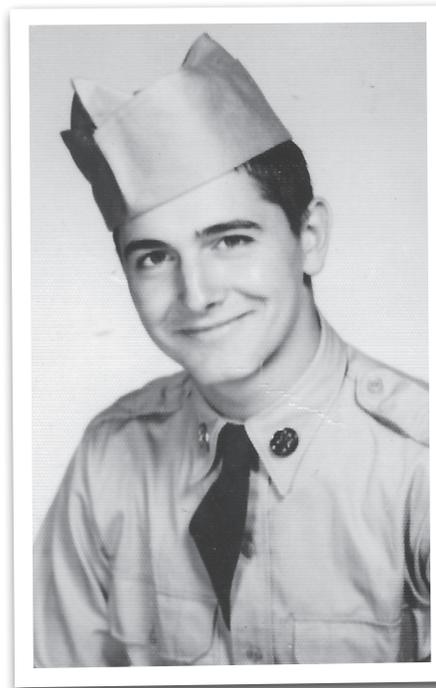
George W. Kokell, Jr. was raised on Cottage Place. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1962-1966 as an Aircraft Mechanic attaining the rank of Crew Chief Sergeant. He had

a thirty-year career as Vice president of Operations for the Arthur Lipper Corporation. Among his many duties was the Publication of the Lipper Mutual Fund. He was an allied member of the New York Stock Exchange.

After retiring from the Lipper Corporation, he spent ten years as Administrative assistant at New Dorp High School's Custodial Office. He is married and has three children and four grandchildren.

Kokell's sixth generation maternal ancestor, Hendryck Kroesen, was the Lay Pastor or Vorleezer of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church ca. 1696. Located then in Richmondtown, in a house similar to what is today known as the Vorleezer's House, he led Sunday worship, taught the children and kept the records of the fledgling colony. Today, his descendants are still members of the Congregation.

*Reformed Protestant Dutch Church Congregant Family Since 1665*



## Anthony J. Lepardo

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1955 - 1958

Anthony J. Lepardo was born and raised in Rosebank. His parents were Anthony & Helen Lepardo. He enlisted in the Army, serving from August 19, 1955 to August 12, 1958. He did his basic training in Fort Dix, N.J. He was stationed in Heidelberg, Germany in the Machine Records Unit.

He joined The New York City Department of Sanitation and served for 26 years as a Sanitation Worker. He married Virginia Bartiromo. They have been married for 57 years. They bought a home in Rosebank and raised two children. He has three grandchildren John, Jaclyn and Lori. His hobbies are gardening and cards. In 2003 they moved to Jackson, NJ, where they still reside.

My Dad is a true American Patriot who was proud to serve his Country.

*Sponsored by The Mooney Family*





## Joseph A. Librizzi

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1966 - 1969  
Vietnam

Born in 1944, Joseph attended Xavier High School in Manhattan and was part of the JROTC for all four years. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in February 1966 and received an Honorable Discharge in February 1969. He served in Vietnam from June 1967 to June 1968 with the 577th and 815th Engineering Battalions as a construction surveyor (SP5/E5 rank).

He attended Pratt Institute and received a Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1974, and his New York State license for Architecture in 1975.

Joseph met his wife Rosemarie in 1969. They married in 1971. They have two children and four grandchildren. They have lived in Westerleigh for 43 years.

Joseph joined the Thomas J. Tori Chapter 421 of the Vietnam Veterans of America on Staten Island and has been a member of the Color Guard since joining the Chapter. He is currently a member of the Chapter Board of Directors.

*Sponsored by Loving Wife, Children and Grandchildren*



## Frank J. Mango

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1940 - 1943  
WWII

Frank J. Mango enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1940 and served in the 44th Division, 114th Infantry under the command of Col. Norman Schwarzkopf Sr. of the Western Defense Command in Fort Lewis, Washington, until his honorable discharge in 1943.

Upon returning home, he worked in the Bethlehem Steel Shipyard as a riveter - ship fitter as part of the war effort.

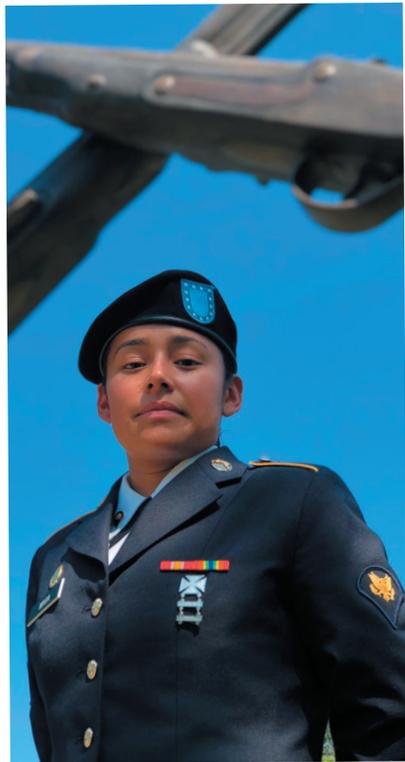
Born and raised in Port Richmond (Bennett Street and Harrison Avenue), he married his Rosebank Sweetheart, Helen Violet Brusco. They bought a home in Port Richmond (LaForge Avenue - 65 years) and raised three children in St. Roch Parish. Helen and Frank were blessed with eight grandchildren, and so far, 11 great grandchildren.

Frank was a member of the Cichon Post American Legion (but he didn't stay for the beer and sandwiches). Frank volunteered at St. Vincent's Hospital for 26 years. St. Roch Holy Name Society, Assumption Counsel Knights of Columbus, Friends of St. Vincent's, and The Bruno-Paulo Retreat Band at Mount Manresa were among his favorite community organizations.

Frank went home to God on July 16, 2006 at the age of 93.

*Sponsored by Loving Daughter, Son-in-Law and Grandsons*





# Yesenia Mata

★ U.S. ARMY RESERVE ★

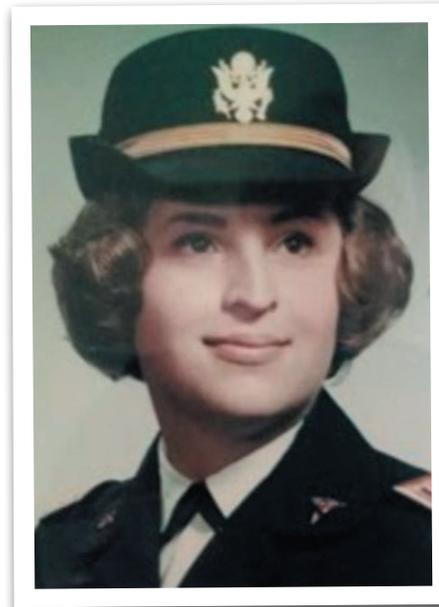
## Active Service

As the daughter of formerly undocumented immigrants and the sister of an Army veteran, Yesenia has been a strong advocate for immigrant rights and works to bring more resources to support our men and women in uniform. She currently is the Executive Director of La Colmena an Immigration/Day Labor Rights organization and serves in the U.S. Army as a Military Police Specialist.

As Staten Island’s undocumented immigrant workers toiled on through the height of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic — risking their health as they kept residents safe, businesses clean and stocked, and families fed — Yesenia Mata had their back. The brand-new executive director of La Colmena said the decision to remain open and offer even more services when much of the city and other immigrant rights organizations were closing was a “no-brainer” for her and her small, dedicated staff.

Yesenia organized food pantries to support immigrant families, donated face masks to help protect immigrant workers, nurses, bus drivers, and police officers, and raised money to support struggling local businesses and essential workers who worked in supermarkets and pharmacies. For this work, Yesenia was named a “Woman of Achievement” by the Staten Island Advance. Yesenia credits her military training in confronting the COVID-19 economic and health crisis. Yesenia goes jogging in her free time. She also loves to invite friends so they can taste the delicious cuisine on Port Richmond Avenue’s restaurants row.

*Sponsored by Robinson Iglesias*



# Mary LaManna McLoone

★ U.S. ARMY NURSE CORPS ★

1968 - 1970  
Vietnam

Mary (LaManna) McLoone lived in Mariner’s Harbor on Simonson Avenue. She graduated Port Richmond High School in 1965. She went on to graduate Elizabeth General School of Nursing in 1968. During her senior year in nursing school she joined the Army. Upon graduation as a Registered Nurse, she was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps. Her initial duty station was Patterson Army Hospital in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. One year later she received orders for 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon, South Vietnam (November 1969-1970). She completed active duty as a 1st Lieutenant.

Throughout her forty year nursing career, Mary worked in many hospitals and held various staff, management and administrative positions. Mary worked in Richmond University Medical Center (formerly St. Vincent’s Hospital) for the last 29 years of her nursing career.

Mary is a member of several Veteran Organizations, American Legion, VFW, AMVETS, VVA, and Catholic War Veterans. She was The American Legion County Commander in 2010-2011.

She was the Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshall in 1996.

*Sponsored by Dennis McLoone*



# Joseph F. Milazzo

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1961 - 1963  
Berlin Crisis



Joseph F. Milazzo was born on May 8, 1937 to John and Anna Milazzo in Manhattan before moving to the Bronx. In 1950, his family settled in Great Kills and he attended Tottenville High School.

Joseph married the love of his life, the former Regina Luzzo of Port Richmond, on December 3, 1960, and was drafted to the United States Army two weeks later. He served for two years in Germany during the Berlin Crisis as a Private First Class, and after returning home he started his career with Con Edison, where he worked for 35 years.

In 1964, Joseph and Regina moved to Beekman Street in Port Richmond where he lived for nearly 50 years, eventually settling in Westerleigh in 2010. He was a dedicated homeowner, took incredible care of his house and yard, and was a terrific neighbor. He enjoyed taking his time on various home improvement projects, always looking to fix something or take something apart at his workbench, and was the first person on the block to offer assistance in any situation.

Joseph was a proud father and grandfather, and he loved nothing more than spending time with his family. He enjoyed attending his grandchildren's school sports games, concerts, graduations, family functions, and seeing live performances at the St. George Theatre. In his younger years, he traveled extensively throughout the United States with his wife, including annual family vacations to Wildwood, NJ right up until 2020. He had a great sense of humor, was a passionate Yankees and Giants fan, he loved watching old movies and listening to music, and enjoyed golfing.

Joseph was a faithful parishioner of St. Roch Church, Port Richmond, and was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Assumption Council, the New Dorp Friendship Club, AARP Chapter 3862, and the American Legion Five-Star Post #1857. He took great pride in attending functions as a representative of the American Legion, including the annual Veterans' Day ceremony held by the Nicotra Group.

Joseph succumbed to COVID in 2021. Surviving are his beloved wife of 60 years, Regina; his loving daughter Regina Innocente and son-in-law Vinny Innocente; his grandchildren Vincent, Joseph, and Laura Innocente; his sisters-in-law Ann Femia, Gloria Santo, Jean Luzzo, and Malvina Milazzo; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, family, and friends.

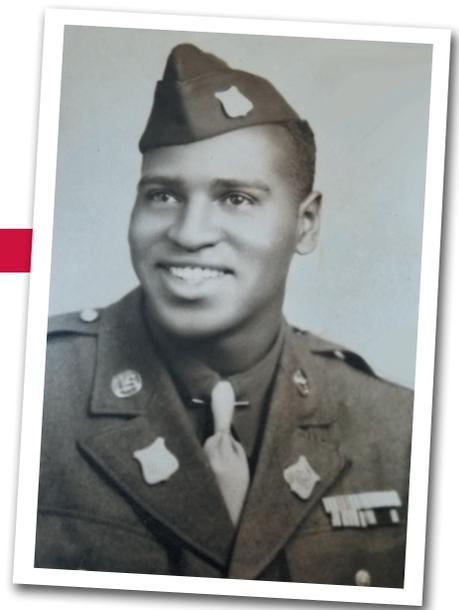
*Sponsored by The Innocente Family*



# William A. Morris, Jr.

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1939 - 1945  
WWII



William A. Morris, Jr. was born on Staten Island on April 13, 1919. One of nine children, his family heritage on Staten Island dates back to the early 1700s.

He was a descendant of the last slave sold on Staten Island. Intermediate School 61 is named in honor of Mr. Morris's father, William A. Morris, Sr. Mr. Morris married Norice Allen in 1943 and raised four children and two foster children together. He graduated PS 18 and Port Richmond High School and attended Wagner College before serving our nation with the U.S. Army during World War II. After enlisting in 1939, he served in the Pacific and European theaters of operation, including the Normandy Beach D-day invasion, Battle of the Bulge, and served five years in the 369th as a sergeant until his Honorable Discharge.

Other highlights of Mr. Morris's life: He was an active member of the Faith United Methodist Church, where he founded and operated the church food pantry for 40 years, with his wife, Norice Allen Morris. In addition, he served as a Boy Scout leader of Troop 47 for 35 years, culminating a successful scouting career when he received the Silver Beaver Award, the highest award of service and scouting. Also, Mr. Morris founded and facilitated the Morris Softball League in 1973. Housed on the PS 19 schoolyard, Mr. Morris mentored 900 area children each summer until 1990. In 2017, the PS 19 playground was dedicated in his honor. Another honor bestowed upon Mr. Morris was a 2008 proclamation from then Council member Michael C. McMahon, for Mr. Morris's outstanding contributions to the Staten Island community.

In 2015, Mr. Morris's daughter, Dolores N. Morris, honored her father's WWII service in her book, "The Soldier that Wagged Her Tail."

Mr. Morris passed away in May 2018 at 99 years old.

Mr. Morris, Jr. received the Albert Maniscalco Award from Borough President Oddo. His name is now emblazoned on one of the pillars in Borough Hall's entrance way.

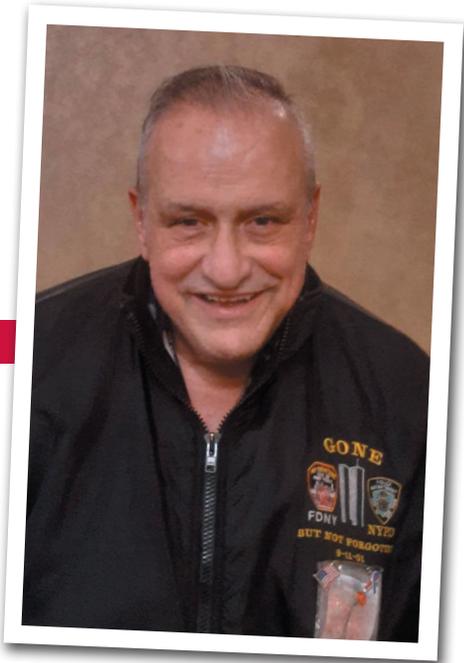
*Sponsored by PS19 - The Curtis School*



# Dominick Mossa

★ U.S. NAVY ★

1973 - 1977



Dominick Mossa was a Seaman First Class in the U.S. Navy from 1973-1977.

In 1986, Dominick moved to Port Richmond Staten Island, NY. where he was a resident for more than 32 years.

He worked for AT&T for 32 years as a General Custodian and Maintenance Coordinator.

Dominick was a constant participant with St Roch's Church and Parish, as an active usher for the Church and an event coordinator for the Parish -- later becoming a coordinator for Senior Citizen events at St. Roch's.

He was a member of Skylight for 15 years and an active member of Catholic Charities located in Port Richmond for 22 years. Dominick was a member of Port Richmond's Cichon Post and he is currently a member of the American Legion Post 1424. He is also an active member of the Kiwanis Club of Howard Beach, Queens, N.Y.

As of 2020, due to his declining health, Dominick Mossa relocated back to Queens to an Assisted Living Home, to aid with his physical challenges.

*Sponsored by Buonviaggio Family*



# James L. Mulligan

★ U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS ★

1942 - 1946  
WWII



James Louis Mulligan was born August 13, 1921. He was the youngest of six siblings: Kathleen, Mathew, Amelia, Francis, Paul and James.

His father was James Joseph Mulligan, born in Manhattan in 1876. He also served in the US Army for the Spanish American War as part of the Fighting 69th Militia out of New York. His Mother was Carrie Prato, born in Ossining, NY in 1886.

James Louis was drafted in November, 1942. He served as a T-4 (Technical Sergeant) in the U. S. Army Air Corps.

His wife is Caterina (Catherine) Maria Sgro, born in Calabria Italy in 1923. They were married for 55 years when she passed away in 2003.

James lived and raised his family in Port Richmond. For 35 years (1951-1986) he owned M&S Service Station on Clove Road and Castleton Ave. He was a member of the VFW in Mariner's Harbor.

He played sports, especially baseball/softball. He would attend as many games any of his grandchildren played as he could whether it was soccer, baseball, softball etc. He was a NY Jets, and NY Mets fan.

He had four children: James L. Mulligan Jr., Grace C. Mulligan (now Gniewkowski), Arlene Mulligan (now Vuotto) and Jeffrey T. Mulligan. He also has eight grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren.

James died August 11, 2010.

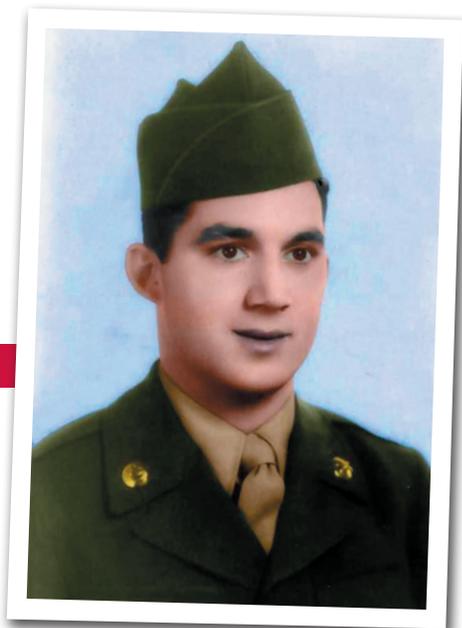
*Sponsored by The Family of James Mulligan*



# Charles Navarino

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1951 - 1953  
Korean War



Charles Navarino was born at the old Staten Island Hospital in Tompkinsville on February 5, 1931.

Charles grew up in New Brighton with siblings, twin brother Vincent, Phyllis (Castaldi), Dolores (Merrill), and Anthony Jr.

He graduated from McKee Technical High School in 1949 and was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War conflict in 1951 and became a Jeep driver in Anchorage, Alaska. In June, Charles 1953 received honorable discharge after his father died of a heart attack.

In 1955, Charles married Angie Perno and moved to Dongan Hills. They became the parents of three, Anthony J., Carolyn (DiMartino), and Gina (Simas); five grandchildren, Joey, Charlie, Michael DiMartino, Kayla, and Troy Simas, and two great-grandchildren, Aria and Nicolette DiMartino.

Charles worked as a truck driver for the New York Daily News and the former New York Mirror, the Richmond County News, and the Hudson County News and later took on a position as a bus driver for Pioneer Bus Company.

Charles is active in American Legion Granito-Smith Post 1296. Both he and his brother are active with Veteran's Day services, and working hard for the community, especially helping families in need during Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

*Sponsored by Barbara Sanchez*



# Jerome X. O'Donovan

★ U.S. MARINE CORPS ★

1968 - 1973  
Vietnam War



Jerome X. "Jay" O'Donovan was a lifelong Staten Islander, a hero in war and a dedicated public servant. He holds the distinction of being the first Vietnam War veteran elected to the New York City Council.

A U.S. Marine Corps Captain and advisor to the South Vietnam Marines, he was awarded two Bronze Stars and Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star and a field promotion to the rank of Captain during a one-year of action in Vietnam in 1972. Mr. O'Donovan often told tales of seeing action with a unit of the South Vietnamese military near the DMZ and at the Mychan River, where he earned his decorations.

After his return from Vietnam, he began his career of public service working as an assistant to the Staten Island Borough President in 1974. He married his wife Vita (nee Cannavo) in 1976 and he served in the City Council representing the North Shore from 1983 to 2001 fighting for all Staten Islanders.

While in City Council, O'Donovan passed legislation that ended the fare on the Staten Island Ferry, and was pivotal as sponsor of the city's law which closed the Fresh Kills Landfill. He fought to pass the "Safe Streets/Safe City" law, putting thousands more police on our streets. He sponsored legislation for tax exemptions for veterans, and to freeze property tax rates.

O'Donovan fought hardest against over-development on Staten Island. He was a supporter of local environmental concerns, such as the creation of the Special Hillside Preservation District and the acquisition of Jones Woods Park and the Chapin Woods addition to Reed's Basket Willow Swamp Park.

In 2013 Jerome O' Donovan was a strong supporter of the effort to save Mount Manresa, a beautiful and historic 15 acre property on Fingerboard Road that was at risk of being sold to developers. At the group's first rally, O'Donovan described Mount Manresa as a beautiful, natural, pristine landscape, and said if he were borough president, it would be saved. He was an inspiration and a valuable member of the Save Mount Manresa Committee.

O'Donovan was also a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Marine Corps League and other veterans groups. He served as the Grand Marshal of the Memorial Day and St. Patrick's parades on Staten Island.

Jerome X. O'Donovan died in 2014 at the age of 70. His dedication to his country and his community will never be forgotten.

*Sponsored by Friends of Mount Manresa*



# Joseph J. Parise

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1943 - 1945  
WWII



Staff Sgt. Joseph J. Parise led a long full life in Port Richmond from his birth in 1909. He died at 95.

In his younger days he was surrounded by his family, Italian immigrant parents Giuseppe and Maria and siblings Vincent (Jimmy), Humbert, Mamie, John and Julia on the family farm.

In 1943 he enlisted in the U.S. Army and saw the world from Camp Upton, LI to Camp Suon, NC then to California; Tasmania, Perth, Australia; Bombay, Dubree, Dickom, Oakley and Assam India.

While serving in India he helped run a 70 warehouse network spanning from Popagani to Dickom. He was in charge of food supplies for the China/Burma/India area. He was very proud to tell everyone that he supervised 600 civilian workers, two sergeants, two corporals, sixteen privates and two cooks!

He returned home in 1945 and built a new home on the family property where he grew up. He married Rose "Rita" Evans, who herself had experienced the war as a survivor of the London Blitz. Joe worked as a maintenance engineer for the NYC Transit Authority for 22 years, fixing turnstiles until his retirement in 1979.

He was a devoted member of the Gold Star Post and attained honors and lifetime membership and was a fixture at Cichon Post on election days.

At first glance Joe was a cantankerous man but those who were lucky, were allowed to see the soft side of him. He was kind and generous to children, animals of all sorts and often tended to strays. Although he had no biological children, he had a myriad of nieces and nephews, many that he treated like his own.

For decades, Joe could be seen outside his home tending to his beloved garden, sitting in a chair listening to a baseball game or talking to neighbors or passers by. He died in 2004. Two of his great nieces still live on the original family property today.

*Sponsored by The Petrizzo and Tierney Families*



# Michael R. Petrizzo

★ U.S. ARMY ★

1943 - 1945  
D-Day | WWII



Born in 1920, Michael lived in Port Richmond with his parents Cono and Carmella and siblings Matthew, Anthony, Frank, Vincent (Jimmy) and Mary. The family owned a grocery store and butcher shop on Port Richmond Avenue.

In 1943 he was one of four brothers who entered the military to fight in WWII. US Army Corporal Petrizzo landed on Utah beach on D-Day with the 3891 Quartermaster Truck Company during the Normandy Invasion, code named Operation Overlord. His company traveled throughout Europe: England, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Germany and Czechoslovakia carrying troops, munitions and other cargo in large trucks while engaging the enemy in other battles: Ardennes, Central Europe, Northern France and Rhineland.

In 1945, when Mike returned home, he married the love of his life Marie Carolla, and started a beautiful family, Anthony (a veteran of the Vietnam War) and Marie. He was a Teamster, Local 283 and eventually co-owned My Way Trucking, East Brunswick, NJ with his son.

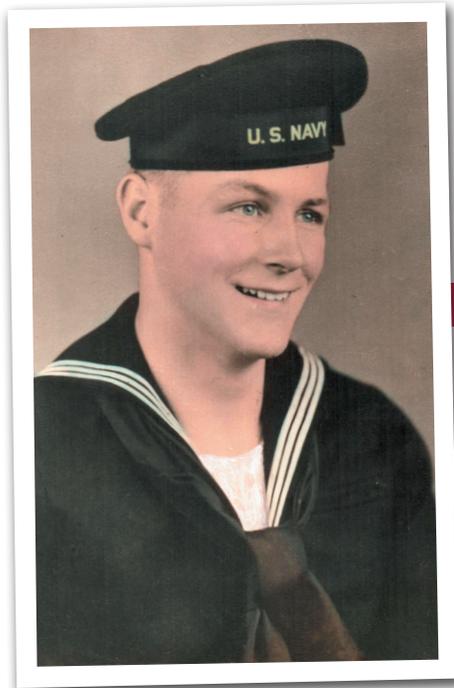
Mike was an exceptional landscaper, taking care of plants and animals was second nature to him. He was a professional groundskeeper for the former Halloran Army Hospital, Staten Island and instrumental in implementing the original landscaping for the Rutgers University football stadium, Piscataway, NJ. After he moved to East Brunswick, NJ in 1970, Mike would tediously manicure his property. His oldest granddaughter's fondest memories are spending time with him, in the spring, on freshly cut grass, overseeing the budding flower and vegetable gardens and peeking at the newly hatched baby pigeons in the coop. Mike's lifelong passion was racing pigeons. He was regarded as one of the best racers and breeders ever. The birds from Petrizzo & Son loft were raced from Staten Island to Europe even winning a division pigeon race at the 1964 World's Fair.

Unlike many veterans, Mike didn't mind talking about his time in Europe during the war and because of his sense of humor and outgoing personality he was often invited to speak with elementary and high school students. He even gave a radio interview on a D-Day anniversary. His children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews would visit to hear his stories and see his prized possessions from the war: a map from the D-Day landing and a device that made a clicking sound to identify allies while in enemy territory. His stories were less scary because he not only spoke of battles but of the interesting people he met and beautiful places he visited along the way.

Mike passed away in 2003 and is missed everyday by many.

*Sponsored by The Petrizzo and Tierney Families*





## Francis W. Quin

★ U.S. NAVY ★

1943 - 1945  
WWII

Francis William Quin was born and raised in Port Richmond. He graduated from Port Richmond High School in 1943 where he was an All City basketball player and also starred on the baseball diamond, hitting the first home run in the new ball field.

During WWII Frank served as Seaman First Class (Gunner's Mate) aboard the U.S.S Tennessee (BB43). The BigT participated in 13 major operations in the Pacific during the War. It was a highly decorated battleship. His three older brothers also served in WWII; Jerry and Al in the Army and Jeff in the Navy. His mom Loretto, dad Jerrold and sister Flo kept the home fires burning back in Port Richmond.

Frank came home after the war and married his high school sweetheart, Barbara Marie Takach. They settled in Sunnyside, raising five children while Frank worked for the NY telephone company.

Frank passed away peacefully in 1981.

*Sponsored by his Sons and Daughters*



## Diana Ramos

★ U.S. ARMY RESERVE ★

1981 - 1993

Diana Ramos is a resident of Port Richmond and her family lives on Staten Island.

She served from 1981-1993 in the U.S. Army Reserves as a SP4 Medic including one tour of duty during Desert Storm.

Diana continued to serve her community as a board member of the North Shore Waterfront Conservancy of Staten Island.

NSWCSI was formed in 2000 by a group of environmentally concerned citizens living near the manufacturing zones located on the north shore of Staten Island. They are committed to the revitalization of our communities and waterfront making them sustainable, healthy, and viable. NSWCSI is proud to have Diana in their service.

*Sponsored by NSWCSI*





## Nils George Thompson

★ U.S. ARMY ★

**2004 - 2005**  
**KIA Iraq**

Nils George Thompson was born on August 3, 1986 to Nils and Frances (nee Kamienowski) Thompson. He attended St. Teresa's Elementary School and St. Stanislaus Kostka Church. He was a deeply religious Catholic and New Brighton native who grew up playing with GI Joes. He wanted to join the military as a young boy as his grandfather and uncles had all served.

He moved with his family in 2000 to Confluence, PA a farming community southeast of Pittsburgh where they raised cattle, sheep, goats, chickens and eventually ran their home as a Bed & Breakfast. Nils loved the outdoors and helped build fences, sheds, a new porch and treehouse and tended the livestock. He graduated from Turkeyfoot Valley High School.

As soon as he turned 18, he enlisted in the Army becoming a member of the Stryker Brigade based out of Fort Lewis, Washington. In February 2005, he was deployed to Iraq. He loved to read the Bible and attended Bible study up until his death. His squad members and his squad chaplain said they witnessed Nils talking about the Gospel to others trying to bring them closer to Jesus.

In his brief time in the military, he received the Army Service Ribbon, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service medals and the National Defense Service Medal. He was killed by sniper attack in a "guard hatch position" in the Stryker vehicle on August 4, 2005 a day after his 19th birthday. He was survived by his parents and sister, Lillian.

Nils' platoon had been scheduled to return to the US that October. He told his cousin, Jeff, when he returned to Staten Island, he wanted to "...buy \$100 worth of Ralph's Ices."



## John V. Tighe

★ U.S. ARMY ★

**1943 - 1945 | WWII**  
**Battles of the Pacific**

A lifelong Staten Islander, John "Vince" Tighe was born on August 5, 1912 to Irish immigrants John Joseph Tighe and Margaret Connolly. Vince grew up with two brothers and two sisters and lived in Tompkinsville, New Dorp, Grasmere, and Stapleton. As many kids did at the time, Vince started work at an early age delivering groceries in Stapleton and working at the docks as a young teen.

In 1942, Vince married his 'love', Isabel Burns, and moved to Locust Ave. in New Dorp.

After being drafted into the U.S. Army in 1943, Vince was promoted twice to the rank of Sergeant. He served in the Pacific Theater with the 8th Army from 1943-1945. He was involved in many battles in the region, including the Battles of Leyte and Luzon. By the time the war was over, he had been recognized with several awards, including the Purple Heart.

One of the stories that has come down through the family involved the sinking of the troop transport ship he was on in the Coral Sea. Hit by torpedoes, the men on board had to tread water for nearly eight hours until they were rescued by the Australian Navy. He lost his wedding ring during his extended time in the water.

When Vince returned home, he settled in nearby West Brighton to raise a family. Isabel and Vince had three children, Patricia (Tighe) Fleming, John "Jack" V. Tighe, Jr, and Michael Tighe. Vince worked as a longshoreman at the Staten Island Docks in Stapleton. After his wife Isabel died on December 31, 1954, Vince's sister Margurite and his father, John, helped to raise the family in their home on Hartford Avenue. Both of his sons were drafted; Jack served in Vietnam from 1967-1968 and Michael was at the DMZ in Korea from 1968-69.

Vince was always very proud of his Irish heritage and his military service. He passed away on October 16, 1993.

*Sponsored by The Tighe Children and Grandchildren*





# Anthony M. Tuff

★ U.S. NAVY ★

2000 - 2015

## Operation Iraqi Freedom

Chief Petty Officer Anthony M. Tuff was born and raised on John Street in Port Richmond. He graduated from Port Richmond High School and attended the College of Staten Island, where he studied computers.

He was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout in Troop 791 of Christ United Methodist Church, Graniteville. He resided in Port Richmond until he enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 2000.

He attended the Surface Warfare Officers School in Great Lakes, IL, and served aboard the U.S.S. Carl Vinson and U.S.S. Sacramento. In 2010, he served in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Until his death in 2015, at the age of 35, he proudly served on the U.S.S. Gerald Ford (CVN-78) in Norfolk, VA. In addition to serving on the U.S.S. Gerald Ford, he was also a plank owner. Unfortunately, he had already passed by the commissioning of the ship on in 2017, but the Navy invited his family to attend and “they” did. The ship has several plaques in his honor.

A family man, he was dedicated to his children, Mathew and Katelyn. He liked to work with computers and watch movies. Tuff went by the nickname “Tuff Enough.” His crewmates recalled him as quiet but possessing a great sense of humor.

*Sponsored by The Tuff | Holmes | Bushman Family*



# Cesar Vargas

★ U.S. ARMY RESERVE ★

## Active Service

Born in Puebla, Mexico, Cesar and his family immigrated to the U.S. when he was just five years old. His

family, including two sisters who live in Port Richmond, call Staten Island home. Cesar excelled academically in both college and law school. As an undocumented law graduate from the City University of New York School of Law, he led the fight for equal opportunity and access to the practice of law.

Cesar applied to join the New York bar in 2012, but the Second Department’s Committee on Character and Fitness recommended against his application because of his immigration status. In June, 2015, and after a nearly three-years legal battle, a five-judge panel in New York ruled that Cesar can be admitted to practice law in the state he has called home for most of his life. In February of 2016, he was finally sworn-in as a licensed attorney making history as the first undocumented lawyer in the state of New York.

Vargas’ enlistment in the Army Reserve marked the culmination of a remarkable, nearly two-decades-long journey from undocumented immigrant to trail-blazing attorney and activist. Nationwide and on Staten Island, Cesar has been an advocate for a better immigration policy. Mr. Vargas has also educated immigrants on their rights, represented military families dealing with immigration issues, and provides pro-bono representation to children facing deportation in immigration court. Cesar is proud to be the first in his family to serve in the military and show the contribution of immigrants in the Armed Forces.

*Sponsored by Robinson Iglesias*



# THANK YOU

My Grandpa (John Charles Trapp) was born and raised in New Jersey and fought in World War II. He kept a piece of shrapnel on the mantelpiece and that's about all I knew about his war experience. Mom said he never talked about his time in the war.



In 1996, I visited Grandma and Grandpa in Florida. One night he confided to me that he had written his “life and times” beginning with being drafted into the Army at 18 years old, to his assignment to 806 Ordinance Co. (LM) of the 106th Infantry Division in Camp Atterbury in Indiana and to his adventures from England, to France, and Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge.

As I finished reading, Grandpa came out of his bedroom wearing his five WWII medals on his signature army green t-shirt. I distinctly remember being so proud to be his granddaughter, and feeling so special that he shared his story with me.

My work on this project is inspired by that day. I just love celebrating Veterans with beautiful banners on Port Richmond Avenue, so more people can feel the way I felt that day! Thank you and God bless our veterans!

## **Barbara Sanchez**

*Veteran's Banner Project Team Member*

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## SPECIAL THANK YOU'S

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*Veteran Banner Project Team Members:*  
**Mary Bullock**, Port Richmond's guardian angel and history buff and **Deirdre (Tighe) Redel**, our dedicated and amazing designer.

*Our Advisors:*  
**Mary and Dennis McLoone**, and **Loretta Drogon** who provided priceless “technical support” as we planned details of this project. And to all the families that shared their stories and veterans with us!

*Booklet Printer:*  
**Bob DeSantis** of Royal Press Printing, for his patience as we prepared the booklet for printing.

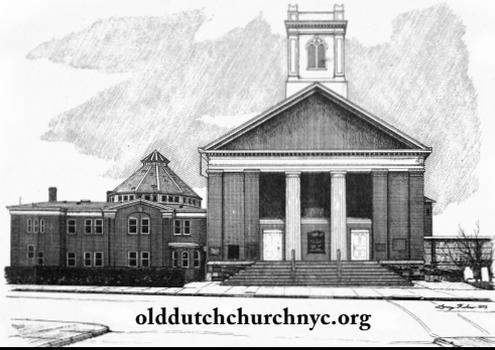
*Banner Approvals:*  
**Kali Lawson** from the DOT Banner unit and **Vaughn Simmons** of 5 Star Banners, who helped us become the first town in New York City to honor their veterans in this way!

*Port Richmond's Guardians:*  
Port Richmond Strong's **Mario Buonviaggio** (who declared this project a priority for Port Richmond) and The Reformed Church of Port Richmond's **Warren MacKenzie** for all they do to improve the quality of life in Port Richmond.



— SINCE 1656 —

## Reformed Protestant Dutch Church on Staten Island



[olddutchchurchnyc.org](http://olddutchchurchnyc.org)

Historic Port Richmond Preservation Association  
BUILDING THIS COMMUNITY SINCE 1680



[portrichmondstrong.com](http://portrichmondstrong.com)

[visitportrichmond.com](http://visitportrichmond.com)

 Port Richmond Strong

Visit our website for upcoming events.

We are planning ahead for 2022.

If you are interested in a banner for your veteran,  
let us know.

[PortRichmondStrong.com/Veterans](http://PortRichmondStrong.com/Veterans)