

By Jan Schultz

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It was a long day and a half by Amtrak, but Kaye Einspahr of Enders said it was well worth the trip east to see her uncle buried May 1 in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

It was a fitting end for Army Sgt. 1st Class Patrick J. Arthur, who died during the Korean War and its 500-mile March of Death in 1951 after being captured by the enemy.

Arthur was a brother of Kaye's mother, who provided DNA several years ago in the event his remains could be identified. Another sister of Arthur's did the same thing, Kaye said.

"She had the DNA removed in case he was ever found," Kaye said of her mother.

She and husband, Alvin, boarded the Amtrak train in McCook Monday night, April 27, arriving two days before the services.

One of the highlights of the trip, Kaye said, was listening to the stories from Obie Wickersham and Fred Liddell, fellow POWs who served with Arthur, and also attended last week's services.

"They were pretty emotional about it," she said.

Family members were able to meet with Wickersham and Liddell the night before the May 1 services. It was a night full of stories.

"We were only going to stay a little while," Kaye said, "but we ended up there three hours."

Arthur's service at Arlington was filmed, Kaye said, and there will be lots of pictures. A niece of Wickersham's is also planning to write a book about the Korean War experience that will likely include Sgt. 1st Class Arthur.

Prior to the Arlington Cemetery funeral, family members and his fellow POWs also said good-bye at a full funeral Mass at a chapel in Arlington.

Kaye said the experience will be a fond memory.

"It was impressive, not just because uncle Pat is a family member. It's a great story," she said.

Originally from Broken Bow, Arthur will also be honored in his home community on Flag Day, June 14, with a special memorial service.

And, Kaye said, she expects the days ahead to include a lot more.

She was on the phone most of the day Tuesday this week, after she and Alvin returned home.

One call was from a woman in Missouri, Jean Kleman, who was also trying to find the remains of her uncle, Jack Harrison Koch. He was reported missing in Korea in 1953.

Kleman had read the story about Patrick Arthur, and hope was born again. She found Kaye's number and called.

Kaye said Kleman told her, "Like you guys, we want him back on U.S. soil."

They exchanged addresses and phone numbers and plan to keep in touch.