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## They've a Story to Tell

5th in a Series on Arnold's "Young at Heart" Residents



Mildred Smith holds a boxed picture frame that holds husband Don's many medals that he received during his three years of service in World War II. (Janet Larreau photo)

By Darlene Rimpley

**T**his is three stories rolled into one. The first is the love story of Mildred Bailey and Don Smith; the second is some remembrances of World War II, and which is to be a tribute to all the veterans of any war that our country has been embroiled in; and the third is one of history in the Arnold area.

Mildred Bailey was born in Bertrand, Nebraska, to Lee and Zelma Bailey. When Mildred was still a baby, the family moved to Arnold, where Mildred grew up. She was baptized when she was eight years old in the river by Old Mill Park by Rev. Burnham. She graduated from A.H.S. in 1939, where she took Normal Training, a class which allowed students to

begin teaching in rural schools immediately. She taught in several schools in the Arnold area: Yucca Valley, Tallin and Lower Powell Canyon. Some of "her students" still live in the area, including: Earl and Don Dailey, Croghans, Charles Blowers, Sunbeam Oman Swanson, Betty Bean Cole and Janet Olson Blowers.

Don Smith was born to Mynor and Cecil Smith in the home of his grandparents, Godfrey and Sarah Nansel, which was where the Methodist parsonage now stands (in later years Don would make the remark that he didn't travel too far). He graduated from A.H.S. in 1940, and went into farming.

On March 7, Don and Mildred drove to Western, Nebraska (located near Lincoln) to stay at the home of a Rev. Zimmerman and family. The pastor was a former Arnold minister and a close friend of Don's parents, and told them that he would like to marry their children. Mrs. Zimmerman prepared a "wedding supper" that evening, and the next morning, March 8, 1942, at 8:00 a.m., Don and Mildred were united in marriage. When asked what he wanted for his wedding breakfast, Don told Mrs. Zimmerman that he wanted a piece of the lemon pie that they had for dessert the evening before.

Don and Mildred spent their honeymoon in North Platte, where they attended a movie and spent one night. Then it was back to a three-room house near the family farm on Garfield Table.

In October of that same year, Don was drafted into the U.S. Army. He received his training at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, in the 12th Armored Division. He was sent to Morocco, Africa, in April 1943, where he joined the 2nd Armored Division, 67th Armored Regiment, 2nd Battalion, Reconnaissance Platoon. The first people that Allied troops fought in Morocco were

## Don Saves His Jeep

Designated as D-Day, on June 6, 1944, the 2nd Armored Division was the first Allied armored division to land on the continent at Omaha Beach; however, Don was in a later group of the division, and he left England on June 8. He told the story of when his group was being unloaded, the landing craft had pulled up as close to the beach as they could get, but when the tank from the next landing craft had rolled off the ramp that was dropped down from the craft, it sank clear into the water, as did the jeep that followed. There happened to be a rope near Don's jeep, so he quickly tied it to the tank ahead of him, which then drove off into the water, pulling his jeep behind it. The jeep went completely under water, Don stood up with the water reaching to right under his chin, and he was pulled ashore, and on up the hill a ways. When the tank stopped, Don got off and untied his rope. Although wet, he and his jeep were safe.



the French, who were easily vanquished and united in fighting with the U.S.

While still in Africa, intensive training was done on amphibious landings. Equipment had to be unloaded from transports to landing craft, and from landing craft to beach. Following the African campaign, the 2nd Armored was sent to Sicily, a campaign which lasted from August to November of 1943. In Sicily they were an occupation force which had to patrol and govern the island. They had to repair and maintain its vehicles, and they continued strenuously training. Patrolling

streets, controlling looting and watching for sabotage was the often dangerous work they had to do.

The 2nd Armored Division sailed for England the first week of November and landed at Liverpool on Thanksgiving Day, 1943. Very intensive training followed at Tidworth, England, preparing for the greatest intensive amphibious attack in history - across the Channel to France - which would soon come.

Don took part in six of the seven major campaigns of World War II, including the

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## Seven Ribbon Cuttings Set for Friday, May 22

Nebraska Lt. Gov. Foley will be on hand this Friday, May 22, for seven ribbon cuttings in the Arnold community. The event is being planned by the Arnold Economic Development Corporation and Arnold Chamber.

Lt. Gov. Foley will stay overnight in the area, and starting at 8:30 a.m., will meet with community leaders. At 9:00 a.m., the Lt. Gov. will be given a personal tour of the town, including the recently renovated Arnold Recreation Area lake, and the roping arena, which is currently undergoing renovation.

The ribbon cuttings for established businesses and those

that are breaking ground, will start at 10:00 a.m. The first stop will be Flowers by Shavonne, and cuttings at Flower Floral & Boutique, Homegrown Kids Daycare, Spracklin Chiropractic, Cloud Fire Services and Agri-Affiliates will follow. The last cutting will be at Jim's Bar, where the group will eat lunch.

AEDC Director Cheryl Carson encourages everyone in the community to view the ribbon cuttings.

"We would like to extend an invitation to all community members and returning alumni to come out and show their support of this special event," said Carson.

## A.H.S. Alumni will Reunite on Saturday

The Arnold Alumni Association will host its annual reunion this Saturday, May 23, at the school. The day will start out with individual honored classes holding their own reunions, and alumni and their guests will then unite for the banquet, with serving from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Lisa Beans, Class of 2004, will emcee the program that follows. In the 11 short years since graduating from A.H.S., Lisa has built an impressive resume of study, work and travel.

She is currently working at Nebraska Indian Community College in South Sioux City, Nebraska, as the General Liberal Arts Division Head, teaching writing and literature. NICC is a small tribal college that serves the Omaha Nation and Santee Sioux tribe.

Before moving back to Nebraska, Lisa worked at Louisiana State University. After finishing graduate school and earning her Master in Fine Arts in Creative Writing from West Virginia University, she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship and taught English in Krakow, Poland, at Jagiellonian University, one of the oldest universities in the world, whose alumni include Nicolaus Copernicus and Pope John Paul II. In addition to teaching, she also regularly publishes her writing in literary journals across the nation.



Lisa Beans, 2015 Alumni Emcee

Lisa says Arnold remains her favorite place to return.

The program will include a memorial and introduction of the 2015 honored classes.

"Laugh Out Loud" will be presented on stage at 7:30 p.m. This part of the program is open to anyone who would like to attend.

This year's officers are: President Chelsea Knight Hershey, 1st Vice-President Betty Halstead Yeargain, 2nd Vice-President Merri Jo Rosentrater Halstead, and treasurer Patty Purcell Goodenow.

### Tickets Available at Rialto

The treasurer will be selling banquet tickets and collecting dues at the Rialto Theatre on Thursday, May 21, and Friday, May 22, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Saturday, May 23, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

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## 102nd Arnold High School Commencement Held Saturday



Trevor Halstead gives his mom, Cindy, a big hug in the reception line following Saturday afternoon's A.H.S. graduation. Also pictured is Isaak Cole giving a high five and Grace Magill. (Ashton Weinman photo)

Seven Arnold seniors received their diplomas at the 102nd Annual Arnold High School Commencement held last Saturday in the school auditorium. Escorts Bobbi Barnes and Brandon Moninger led the seniors in the processional to the song "Pomp and Circumstance." The class colors of sky blue, black and silver and the class motto, "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." - Jeremiah 29:11, decorated the stage.

Superintendent Patrick Osmond gave the welcome, and Principal Dawn Lewis introduced Salutatorian Racheal Smith.

Racheal spoke about a college English class that she took this year, where her first assignment was an essay where she was prompted to write about the most influential person in her life and why. Racheal said so many people came to mind, but as she looks back now, she has come to realize six people have had the biggest impact on her the past 13 years - her classmates.

"Each one of them has taught me countless things and helped shape me into the woman I am today," she said.

In a heartfelt way, Racheal went on to speak about each classmate and what they taught her about life.

In closing, she left her classmates with a quote, "We came as strangers, became friends, and left as family."

"I thank all seven of you for the millions of smiles, laughs and memories and wish you the best the world has to offer. Class of 2015, we have made it," said Racheal.

Grace Magill was introduced as class Valedictorian. Grace spoke about the meaning of Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken" - one of the most often misunderstood poems in American literature - and his life that was filled with many hardships.

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