

HONORING THOSE WHO NEVER MADE IT HOME

By Shelly Horan, Editor/Co-Owner

Bikers are a pretty patriotic group of folks... and we're no exception. In 2009, our second year into the publishing business, we caught wind of an interesting event. I love this country and everything it stands for. I love and honor all who fought for it and my freedom. With that in mind, we have stuck by this group's side from the beginning. Now, in its third year, the [Allied Memorial Remembrance Ride](#) (AMRR) continues to grow by leaps and



bounds. And, with this being our Memorial Day edition, we are pleased to once again focus on this event. We hope you'll take time off to join in on the ride... or at the very least, take a moment on July 2 and pray for the safety of these riders and remember our fallen heroes.

During World War II many soldiers never made it home – ever. This ride recognizes the service of those servicemen by riding to honor them in places they are either buried or memorialized. Worldwide, there are 14 cemeteries for American WWII dead on foreign soil. These account for approximately 93,200 Americans Killed in Action (KIA) during the war. The cemeteries and monuments are administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission ([www.ABMC.gov](#)). There are an additional 10 cemeteries on foreign soil for American KIAs of all wars. You can visit the ABMC website to search their "Honor Roll" databases of the names of those interred or memorialized.

While American soil saw no action, there are foreign military members buried here. Most of them came to the US for training. These men and women died during their time training here and never made it home. Thousands of British pilots learned to fly at six British Flying Training Schools in the US. The first and largest of the schools was in Terrell.

In 2009, the Royal British Legion Riders organized a ride to

the Madingley Military Cemetery outside Cambridge, UK. More than 3800 American soldiers are buried, representing 42 percent of those buried in England and Northern Ireland, along with a memorial for more than 5,000 MIA. A Fort Worth resident, George "Tank" Sherman, is a member of both the American Legion Riders and the Royal British Legion Riders, so he was privy to the announcements about this ride. He is currently a member of the US Air Force, an F-16 crew chief, with time spent in the UK. When "Tank" heard about the ride, he spoke with his close friend, Scott "Pech" Pecikonis who responded with "If they can ride for our fallen, why can't we ride for theirs?" So, the two organized a US ride, July 4, 2009, taking place simultaneously (well, on the same day), heading from Fort Worth to Terrell, where 20 members of the British Royal Air Force (RAF) are buried in the Oakland Memorial Park Cemetery (see related articles from 2009 and 2010 on our website).

That first year, the UK ride had more than 200 in attendance and the Texas ride had about 60 bikes. Year Two, July 3, 2010, the UK ride doubled in size (400 riders), while the Texas ride grew to more than 200 riders. This year, expansion goes beyond the two rides, capturing the attention of the Canadian Veteran Freedom Riders, adding a third country; and American Legion Riders in six other states are adding rides, making a total of seven participating US states.

In the US, all ride destinations are to BFTS sites or cemeteries/memorials for members of the RAF.

Texas once again heads to the Oakland Memorial Park Cemetery in Terrell, with two starting points.

Oklahoma has two rides going, one heading to the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Cemetery in Miami, OK where 15 cadets from the No. 3 BFTS are buried. A second is heading to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) Cemetery in Ponca City, OK, where 7 cadets from the No. 6 BFTS are interred.

Kansas riders are riding to the Ponca City memorial service.

Arizona's ride destination is the Mesa City Cemetery (Mesa, AZ) with 24 cadets (23 UK / 1 US) are laid to rest from the No. 4 BFTS.

New Hampshire's entire American Legion Riders force are organizing a ride. Details are still being worked out.

Riders in Iowa are participating. Details still to come.

And a small group in Illinois (Tank said "it might be a small group, but I don't care") are organizing their ride.

This year, there are two starting points for the Texas ride, one in Benbrook (SW of Fort Worth) and one from Canton (east of Dallas). A memorial service is planned for 2:00 p.m. at the cemetery. Anyone interested is welcome. The Terrell Marine Corps League will provide a color guard that includes the flags from all three participating countries, US, UK and Canada. The service will open with an address from Doug Smith and George Sherman and a prayer and poem offered by John Retos. A wreath is then laid at the RAF memorial, honoring those buried there. They will play "Last Post", the British version of "Taps"; then closing remarks. After the ride, the group will head west on Highway 80 for lunch at East Texas Choppers. That evening, accommodations are available at the Holiday Inn Express at I-20 and Highway 34 (972.563.7888). The hotel has graciously agreed to block off a whole section for



motorcycle-only parking. That evening, the group will host a BBQ get-together with live music and beer kegs for participating riders.

In Canada, the destination is the Ottawa Memorial (Commonwealth Air Forces Memorial). This memorial commemorates 809 men and women of the Commonwealth Air Forces who gave their



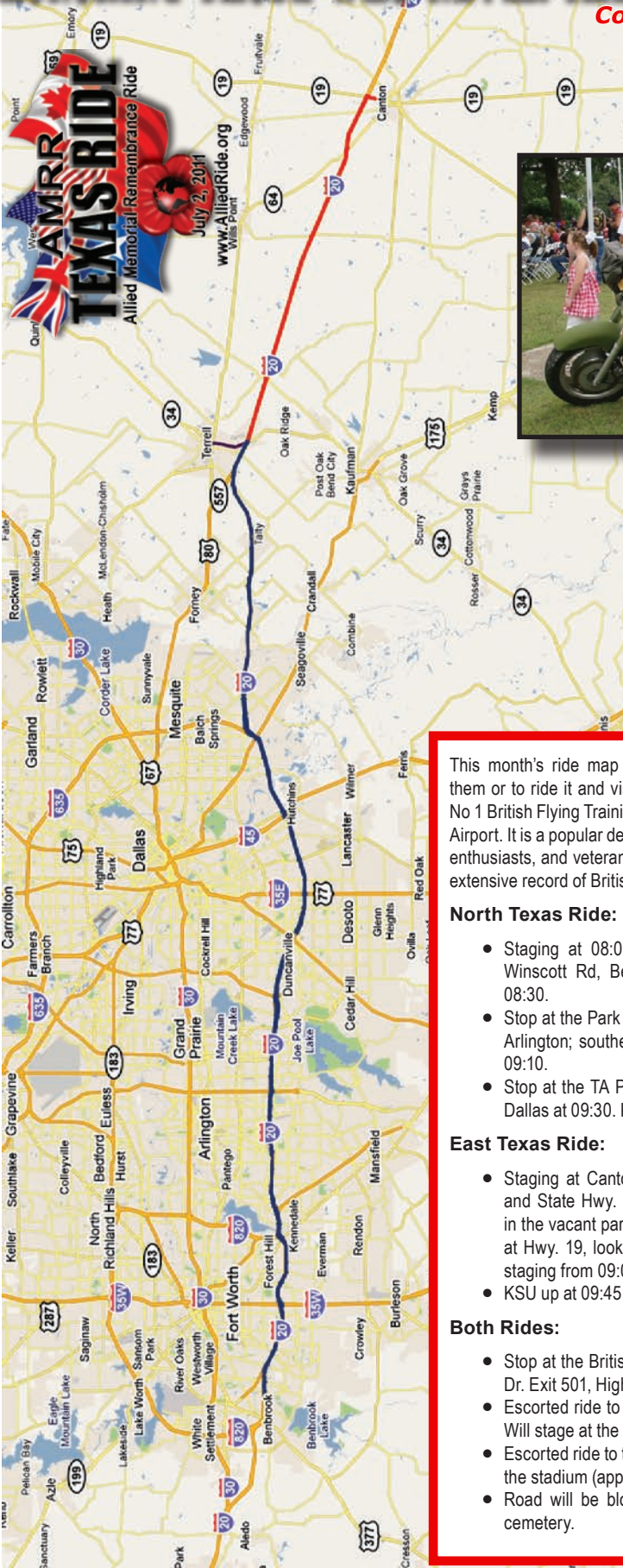
lives during WWII while serving in units operating in Canada, the British West Indies, and the United States, or while training in Canada and the US. Those named here have no known grave or were buried at remote crash sites which are deemed to be un-maintainable.

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Additionally, as of this writing, there are tentative plans in three additional countries (Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa) and three more US states (Vermont, Florida, and California). So riders across the nation... keep on the lookout... there's an AMRR ride coming to you soon! If you're interested in organizing a ride from your area to join an existing memorial service or you wish to organize a ride to a WWII Allied Forces memorial in your area, visit AlliedRide.org and contact the appropriate person(s).

Tank makes sure he recognizes the good people of Terrell, who welcome the riders with open arms, including the City of Terrell,

This month's ride map features this event. Feel free to join them or to ride it and visit the Terrell cemetery, memorial and No 1 British Flying Training School Museum at Terrell Municipal Airport. It is a popular destination for WWII history buff, aviation enthusiasts, and veterans. The archives here contain the most extensive record of British Flying Training Schools that exists.

North Texas Ride:

- Staging at 08:00 at Ridge Community Church, 930 Winscott Rd, Benbrook, TX (817) 244-1117. KSU at 08:30.
- Stop at the Park Springs Road and I-20 Park and Ride, Arlington; southeast side of the light at 08:50. KSU at 09:10.
- Stop at the TA Petrol Station at I-20 and Bonnie View, Dallas at 09:30. KSU at 09:50.

East Texas Ride:

- Staging at Canton at the intersection of Interstate 20 and State Hwy. 19, on the north side of the interstate in the vacant parking lot. When you pull off the freeway at Hwy. 19, look for the group and join us. We will be staging from 09:00 to 09:45.
- KSU up at 09:45 SHARP!

Both Rides:

- Stop at the British Museum in Terrell, 119 Silent Wings Dr. Exit 501, Highway 34.
- Escorted ride to the airport at 10:30. KSU about 11:00. Will stage at the airport.
- Escorted ride to the cemetery; parking on the outside of the stadium (approximately 11:20).
- Road will be blocked for entrance and exit from the cemetery.

Terrell Chamber of Commerce, No. 1 British Flying Training School Museum, Terrell Marine Corps League, and the Terrell Police Department. Tank also throws out some 'big thanks' to Doug "Streaker" Smith, who has been instrumental in organizing the ride from the east (Canton), making last year's ride a big success. Also, Jason Skeen, John "Padre" Retos, Chip & Shelly Thurston, Bob "Uncle Ziggy" & Kathy "Chatty Kat" Vickers, and Bill "Mr. Bill" Whetmore (author of our first article in July 15, 2009 Web-zine) who are instrumental in planning and organizing this ride. The entire AMRR group also thanks new coordinators: Kim Horn, Miami, OK; Michael "Smokey" Blow, Canadian Veteran Freedom Riders National President; and Mike "Chevy" Chiviendacz, Ottawa, Canada.

All bikers (and cages) are welcome to participate in the ride. All they ask is that you "Ride with Pride, Ride with Respect, and Ride to Remember." Net proceeds from the Texas event are donated to the Terrell Veterans Memorial Fund.

As I close out this article and we take time to remember our fallen heroes on Memorial Day, we also wish to send out our thoughts and prayers to the families of Prisoners of War and military Missing in Action (POW/MIA). We have Memorial Day to honor the fallen and Veterans Day to honor those who served (past and present), but no day set aside to remember those who never came home and no one has an answer for the families as to what happened to their loved ones.



RIDE MAP