

Welcome New Friends and Old

We are here today at a small country church. We come to honor two of Marshville's own, Lyle Timmerman and Jackson William Findling. Each joined the legion of those defenders of our freedom. Who made the supreme sacrifice all through the ages.

I lived in Marshville and knew both of them. We were members of this church. Lyle was my senior by several years. I was only eleven years old when the attack on Pearl Harbor started the conflict in which Lyle gave his life. I well recall reading of his tragic loss of life for his county. Jackson Findling was nearer to my own age and we were like brothers. I had no brothers until eighteen years after I was born. Jack had no brother or sister. Marshville was a close-knit little community clustered around the church and a country store. We were brought up during the days of the Great Depression, though we knew little about it. Our world was a small one and only fate plunged some of us into a greater arena.

To attempt to outline the bounds of this small community called Marshville, I will compare it to a wheel. The church was the hub. Radiating out from it we can follow only a few of the spokes. Others have been eliminated from the passage of time. We now know some of those spokes led to far off places. Places we had never heard of in those days of the 1930s and 40s. I will guide you along the spoke directly across from this church. It leads past Mr. Findling's beehives beneath the apple trees and along the garden to the Findling kitchen. It was here that could be found fresh baked bread and cookies. It was adjacent to where we rode downhill in winter.

Another spoke pointed up the state road, half a mile or so to where I lived for sixteen years of my life. Jack often came there since there were two things there that were special to young boys. The first was the creek that flowed near the house. There were the fogs, turtles and other of nature's creatures.

Just across the road on the hillside was woodland where we searched for wildflowers in the spring. A large boulder overlooked the road. Behind it, Jack and I warded off Indians and all sorts of imaginary invaders. Little did we know that someday one of us would be called on to do so in reality.

If we now retrace our steps to the hub, we find a spoke that leads us to District #10 country school. It is here that Jack, I, and the local students attended as my mother and grandfather had done years before. The students were like our family and when a family moved away it was a sad day.

Christmas was a special time. Decorations were made not bought. Christmas programs were selected and practiced at school but produced here in this little church. Each year we advanced a little and felt grown up when we could sit in the balcony. Country school days ended. High school in Canajoharie began and each of us pressed forward toward our destiny.

I will end our travels along the spokes of our imaginary wheel with a short trip to the creek where we trapped muskrats in the winter to get a little spending money to do our part for the war effort. At that time the muskrat was used to line aviator's jackets. When summer came the swimming hole was there. Many happy hours were spent there.

The carefree days of our youth would one day be behind us. Much of Marshville remains to this day. Many of our friends, relatives and schoolmates have gone beyond the sunset. Yet Lyle, Jack and our long-ago friends made their mark upon us and remain indelibly etched in our memory.

May God bless those who have and are defending our nation, our own footsteps, and the United States of America.

Skip Barshied

Memorial service at Marshville church

July 31, 2011