

# ATTENDANCE RECORD

506

SP—Sick with pay  
SN—Sick with no pay

V—Regular vacation  
SV—Special vacation

CODE

L—Leave  
A—Absence

ID—Injured on duty  
IO—Injured off duty

Month	1923		1924		1925		1926		1927		1928		1929		1930		1931		1932	
	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days	Why	Days
JANUARY																				
FEBRUARY																				
MARCH																				
APRIL																				
MAY																				
JUNE																				
JULY																				
AUGUST																				
SEPTEMBER																				
OCTOBER																				
NOVEMBER																				
DECEMBER																				
TOTAL																				
REMARKS																				

NAME <b>Kingsley, David</b>	Date of Appointment <b>July 18, 1942</b>	Date final Disposition
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Position	Co.	Salary	Remarks	Date	Signature
		165 40	Mil. Leave Killed in Action	7-18-42 6-18-44	
					<i>no photo</i>



## Enduring sacrifice

**During World War II, a young Portlander gave up his life for a comrade; next week a Mass will be held to remember the Medal of Honor recipient**

Sunday, May 01, 2005

NANCY HAUGHT

Sixty years ago, enemy fire crippled the American bomber in which 2nd Lt. David R. Kingsley crouched as bombardier. The pilot pushed the B-17 to its target: oil-storage tanks near Ploesti, Romania. Kingsley dropped the bombs and then rushed from his station to give first aid to two wounded gunners.

By then, the battered bomber had lost an engine and a fuel tank. The pilot gave the order to abandon the plane. Kingsley helped one injured man jump, but he couldn't find a working parachute harness for the second crewman. Kingsley took off his own and wrestled the wounded man into it.

On that day, Kingsley laid down his life for another, the ultimate sacrifice, and it earned him a Medal of Honor. But as his sister remembers it, the 25-year-old simply did what came naturally to him, a young man who grew up acting as father to eight brothers and sisters and as an altar boy at a small Roman Catholic church in downtown Portland.

On Wednesday, 60 years almost to the hour of Kingsley's funeral, members of his family and of St. Michael's Parish will remember the act of heroism that sets this Portland man apart from other World War II aviation heroes.

"Other airmen risked or lost their lives, trying to save their friends," says Barrett Tillman, an aviation historian who has written about Medal of Honor recipients in a culture that he says confuses celebrity with heroism.

"David Kingsley knowingly abandoned any hope of survival when he gave away his parachute harness in a doomed aircraft," Tillman wrote in "Above and Beyond: The Aviation Medals of Honor" (Smithsonian Institution Press, \$29.95, 294 pages).

"Kingsley did have a choice, time to think about it, weigh the risks against the benefits," Tillman said in an interview. "And, in an ultimate moment, (he) determined that he valued the life of a friend in peril more than he valued his own."

Witnesses said that Kingsley tried to bank the plane, by now over Bulgaria, turning away from a group of laborers who had spread out their lunch on a blanket in a field. They said Kingsley, who had had some flight training, may have been trying to land the plane. But the fuel-laden wing of the plane touched a tree, or perhaps the ground, and it exploded. Seven people on the ground and Kingsley died in the blaze.

### Part of parish history

The Rev. Paul Peri, pastor of St. Michael's, remembers reading the parish history and being struck by Kingsley's story.

"I've always felt that the word 'hero' has been totally trivialized in our culture," Peri said in an interview. "Here is a man who was not a hero by accident. He chose to save another life.

"There is a nobility, a selflessness to this story. I don't want him ever to be forgotten. His self-sacrifice was born of his faith and of his family."

Kingsley was the second-oldest of nine children born to David and Ann Kingsley. Every day he and his siblings filled a front pew at morning Mass and then split up, the boys to St. Michael's school, the girls to St. Mary's Academy.

David was 10 when his father, a police investigator, died in an automobile crash. His mother was determined to keep all the kids together in their home at 24 S.W. Montgomery St. She relied on Dave to help keep order.

When she came down with cancer and soon was bed-ridden, Dave, who was then 18, made sure his brothers and sisters carried out his mother's wishes. Like her, he never raised his voice.

"Mom wants it done this way," Phyllis Kingsley Rolison remembers her brother saying. "And that's how it's going to be done."

## Checking up on siblings

When his mother died, Dave was 21, and his older brother, Tom, was already in the Navy. Dave was a Portland firefighter, working long and odd hours, so their aunts divided up the younger children; the youngest at the time was 11. Rolison remembers her brother picking up each of his siblings, one at a time, "in his old jalopy."

"He'd ask if we were OK, if we were happy, if we needed anything. He was still trying to take care of us. He was our hero."

Kingsley became a military hero on June 23, 1944. The man whose life he saved, Staff Sgt. Michael Sullivan, died a year or two ago, Rolison said. In Tillman's book, Sullivan remembered the last time he saw Kingsley.

"Before I jumped, I looked up at him, and the look he had on his face was firm and solemn," Sullivan said. "He must have known what was coming because there was no fear in his eyes at all."

Rolison, who lives in Tualatin, and her husband, Joe, traveled to Bulgaria last fall as part of a military delegation. They walked the rough field of brush where her brother and seven Bulgarians died.

She listened to a trio of survivors tell the story: how they saw the U.S. bomber approaching, low over the distant hills. How they saw several parachutes fall from the plane, two with the help of another man who stayed on board.

"What else do you want to know?" one survivor asked through an interpreter.

"Was Dave thrown from the plane?" she asked.

No, came the answer. They had found his body in the pilot's seat. "We took him out and buried him here."

Rolison stood on the spot and laid down a spray of yellow lilies and crimson roses.

"Then, after all these years, I knew what had happened, what it looked like," she said.

The pain of her loss of her older brother, her only dad since she was 2, is still fresh. "I think about him every day, not just about his death but about how he lived, for all of us kids."

Sixty years later, the wing of the plane has been made into a monument in Suhozem, Bulgaria. Kingsley lies in a hero's grave in Arlington National Cemetery. The Air National Guard base at Klamath Falls bears his name, and after Wednesday, St. Michael's Church will have a bronze plaque that tells his story.

"If saints were still made by acclamation, by simply being proclaimed so by the people, David Kingsley would be one," Peri says.

Rolison is a little taken aback by the priest's enthusiasm, and she thinks her brother would have been, too.

"Dave grew up listening to our mother," she says. "She taught us to love each other, take care of each other and help people in need. Sometimes I wonder if Dave even had to think about it all."

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