As part of downsizing possessions accrued over 40 years, we come across paperwork that has been packed away. The papers have not been forgotten. They were just put aside for later due to the daily demands of life at that point in time.

In one box, there was a manila envelope with my name written on it by my Mom, Bessie Lee (King) Yankulic. It is always bittersweet finding these things again as both of my parents have passed away. As time has passed the scale does tip more to the sweet side than the bitter.

I honestly had forgotten the details involved in creating the items enclosed. The letters and notes and newspaper copies in the envelope jogged my memory. My brother and I had worked together to get Dad’s remembrance of VJ-Day, Aug. 10, 1945 printed in the newspaper for the 50th Anniversary. We were living on opposite sides of Pennsylvania and we had contacted newspapers in our respective areas to submit our idea. Happily, my brother, Paul, had more success than I did. Happily also, Mom and Dad went out and purchased several copies of the paper for that day. They also kept together the letters that my brother and I had written. I guess we can all see where my penchant to save papers originates.
Our Dad, Paul Yankulic, Sr. had kept notes from his time as a Signalman, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Class, US Navy. He enlisted on October 2, 1942 and was discharged on February 17, 1946. His notes were mostly technical directions for Naval Signaling. He also kept a chronological list of places where he was stationed, and the names of ships he had been on. There is a single narrative entry in his notes. The date of that entry is Aug. 10, 1945 - 2100 (9 PM). It is Dad’s description of the celebration aboard the U.S.S. Fillmore (A-P-A 83) when it was announced to the Troops that the War with Japan was over. His note includes an addendum that the War finally ended 0700 (7 AM) on Tuesday, Aug. 14, 1945.

Part of what excites me about finding these notes again is the opportunity I have to preserve some memories about Mom and Dad for their five grandchildren. I am very happy that Mom and Dad were alive and got to see this article. The complete contents of that manila envelope will make a nice gift of family history for my children and my brother’s children to cherish and share with future generations.

Today, twenty-four years later, with access to information via the internet and the ability to save all these materials in Dad’s own handwriting, I am looking forward to researching and writing more about Dad’s journey with the US Navy.

An example of the detail that can be added to Dad’s story in 2019 follows. The back of this photograph gives the Studio name and address but not the date. From what I can read of the faded stamp, this picture was taken at Falk’s Studio, Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Pairing that information with Dad’s notes, he was stationed at the Fargo Building, Boston, Mass. from Nov. 6, 1942 through Jan. 7, 1943. It seems likely then, that this photograph was taken between Nov. 6, 1942 and Jan. 7, 1943.

Pages from Dad’s Navy notebook.
As I mentioned earlier, seventy-four years ago, my father, Paul Yankulic, was a sailor in the US Navy. His log has him stationed in 15 different locations in 1945. Dad wrote that he was on the U.S.S. Fillmore (A-P-A 83) from Aug. 5, 1945 to Aug. 21, 1945 when he was transferred to the U.S.S. Fuller (A-P-A 7) for one single day for the trip to Samar. His next log entry is Samar, P.I. R. S on Aug. 22, 1945. He spends about three weeks at Samar before the next location is logged.

From his notes, I believe he was in the South Pacific when the announcement came that WWII ended. His list of locations for 1945 shifted from San Bruno, California to Honolulu, Hawaii to Sydney, Australia to Manus Island to Samar in the Philippines. In August, he travelled from Manus Island to Samar.

This map gives an idea of the general area mentioned in the notes. You can see the West Coast of the United States on the right; Australia at the bottom; and the Philippines located near the center of the map above Australia but below China. Manila, Philippines is marked Point A.
Here, we see that Manus Island is north of Australia and New Guinea.

From this map, we see more detail of Southeast Asia including that the Philippines are located closer to China than Australia.

Finally, we see that Samar is southeast of Manila in the Philippines.
The names and numbers in Dad’s log help us to understand also the class of ship he was on at that time. The pictures help me connect the names and numbers to those examples of retired ships we have visited on vacation. In my mind, I can then better understand the vast size of these vessels.

Per Wikipedia, the Fillmore was a Gilliam-Class Attack Transport that was commissioned late in the war. It was initially assigned to transport duties and consequently did not participate in combat operations. The Fuller was a Heywood-Class Attack Transport acquired by the US Navy just prior to WWII. The ship had nine battle stars to her credit, which were earned prior to April 1945.

U.S.S. Fillmore A-P-A 83

U.S.S. Fuller A-P-A 7
Aug 10, 1945 – 2100 (9 P.M.)

War with Japan is over. Peace has returned to earth & we are free men once again. Thank God!!

We were seeing movie “Saratoga Trunk” when the Captain broke the heavenly news. Picture ceased immediately & the men went wild. They all started shaking hands and hugging each other.

Suddenly searchlights appeared all over the horizon & Flares of all colors began to decorate the sky. Just the sight of them gave me a lump in my throat, & I have never seen such a wonder all my life.

The ships are sending V’s by light, fog horn, & radio. I only wish Ruth & the family could see this wonderful show of mother nature!!

I know it wont be long before I’ll return. I’ve decided to complete my schooling – from there I have no idea at present.

I thank thee our lord for ending this mess of wasting human lives. I pray that there shall never be another one. Let us love peacefully forever. Bless all those that paved the way for us, & now cannot be here to see this immortal event. Amen!

I know I’ll never be able to sleep tonight, & I wonder who will. I am now going topside to see how my pals are making out.
This evening my friends & I were discussing the ending of the war. I said 9 mo.? & my friend didn’t have an answer. I’m sure we never dreamed of this great spectacle which took place tonight.

The war finally ended 0700 Tuesday, Aug 14. The fellows accepted it very quietly. Most of the boys have departed since the first celebration. I wonder how long we’ll be out here before we’ll return?

My buddies ship (L.C.J. 1075) came by & fortunately I was able to send him a sem. msg. His darn ship went by so fast I hardly had time to say hello. Am hoping I’ll be able to see him shortly!!
Herald Standard, Thursday, August 31, 1995, Page B-6, Uniontown, PA

Dad was part of a group of five different Fayette County Veterans whose memories were shared in the article written by Cindy Ekas-Brown, Herald Standard Staff Writer. She notes that Dad was 70 when this article was written. The article and all of the others on Page B-6 are very interesting. I like that the paper included the perspectives of the soldiers overseas and the citizens back home.
Dad lived until he was almost 82. He died on July 16, 2007, twelve days shy of his 82nd Birthday. John Maykuth, Director of Maykuth Funeral Home from Masontown, PA, submitted the entry below to the World War II Memorial on behalf of my brother, Paul Yankulic, Jr.
As I do when I am writing most anything, I turned to the computer to search for some basic information on VJ- Day, and the ships Dad was on in August 1945. I noted earlier that I found information on the USS Fillmore and the USS Fuller at Wikipedia. I found the photos of the ships and maps at Google Images.

I found some basic facts about the date that VJ-Day is celebrated in an article from History.com: https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/v-j-day, A&E Television Networks, 14 Oct. 2009.

“On August 14, 1945, it was announced that Japan had surrendered unconditionally to the Allies, effectively ending World War II. Since then, both August 14 and August 15 have been known as “Victory over Japan Day,” or simply “V-J Day.” The term has also been used for September 2, 1945, when Japan’s formal surrender took place aboard the U.S.S. Missouri, anchored in Tokyo Bay. Coming several months after the surrender of Nazi Germany, Japan’s capitulation in the Pacific brought six years of hostilities to a final and highly anticipated close”

Another interesting thing that the search engine generated was an article from Mar. 23, 1995, titled “Abourd the USS Fillmore” by Stan Schaffer, published in the Morning Call, Allentown, PA. Reading it gave me chills because the account given by Navy Veteran, John F. E. Carr from Allentown, PA mirrors the exact events that my Dad described from Aug. 10, 1945.


In conclusion I have enclosed a few more photos below of Dad and his brothers from WWII that I have found in my research.

All five of the Yankulich brothers served in the military. Four of the brothers served in WWII: Uncle John (born 1916)-Army, Uncle Charlie (born 1918) -Army, Dad (Paul, born 1925)-Navy, and Uncle George (born 1927)-Navy. Uncle Pete (Born 1927) served in the Army Air Corps from 1946 to 1949.

We also have the WWII draft registration card on Ancestry.com for their father, Charles Yankulic, Sr., who was born in 1888 and immigrated from Rokosno, Czechoslovakia in 1905.

We have a strong heritage of military service across the branches of our family tree.
Memories of VJ-Day, August 10, 1945
Paul Yankulic, Sr.

This photo is Paul Yankulic and his brother Charles Yankulics from WWII. Paul went to the Navy while Charles enlisted in the Army. Photo shared by Charlene Yankulics in 2013

Sons in Service
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Yankulic, Adah, have three sons in the service. Corporal Charles Yankulic, Jr., 24, enlisted in the regular Army in 1941 and is now stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Seaman Third Class, Paul Yankulic, 17, has been in the Navy since October of this year and at present is located at Boston, Mass. He was home on a short furlough recently. He received his boot training at Newport, R.I.

Pvt. John Yankulic went to the Army on November 18 and after receiving some training at New Cumberland he was sent to McQuaide, Cal., where he is now located.

A very good friend of the Yankulic boys, Seaman Third Class, Edgar Nelson Helmick, Jr. also of Adah, has been in service since October of this year and stationed at Boston, Mass. with Seaman Paul Yankulic.

29 Dec 1942 ....Adah boys....Yankulic Sons in Service
Charles in Army, Paul in Navy, John in Army and family friend...Edgar Helmick in Navy, stationed in Boston Mass with Paul

Clipped By: mjanddaj
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