

# V19. 75 Years Later: Creating Wartime Family Reunions Using Genealogy & DNA

by: Bonnie Wade-Mucia



*Keeper of the Past Genealogy, LLC*

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Forensic Genealogy research is conducted for legal proceedings and often involves living people.

Military Repatriation: The U.S. Armed Forces has a branch called the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

- Mission: “Provide the fullest possible accounting for missing personnel to their families and the nation.” <https://www.dpaa.mil/About/Vision-Mission-Values/>
- Objective: To locate living family members.
  - PNOK – Primary Next of Kin
    - Oldest living member of the family, which includes:
      - Spouse
      - Natural, adopted, step and illegitimate children
      - Parents (no living parents from WWII cases)
      - Siblings, including adopted or half-siblings
      - Grandchildren
      - Other relatives in order of relationship to the Soldier according to civil laws
  - SNOK – Secondary Next of Kin
    - The second oldest living family member under the same criteria
  - Nuclear DNA (Parent-child relationship or sibling relationships)
  - Three mtDNA (mitochondrial) candidates – Follows the maternal line
  - One Y-DNA candidate – Follows the paternal line

Forensic Genealogist’s role:

1. Identify and confirm living family
2. Fully documented family tree
3. Fully documented and sourced report including complete contact information of living family members
4. First contact with family
5. Answer any questions they may have
6. Reunite cousins that lost touch long ago
7. Gives family closure

Information on Soldiers and cases:

- DPAA Families: <https://dpaa-mil.sites.crmforce.mil/dpaaFamWeb>
- DPAA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa>
- Stories Behind the Stars: <https://www.storiesbehindthestars.org>

Resources:

- Council for the Advancement of Forensic Genealogy  
<https://www.forensicgenealogists.org>
- Book: *Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice & Standards* by Elizabeth Shown Mills. Chapter 15 – Forensic Specialization by Michael S. Ramage
- Forensic Genealogy Facebook Group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/25598261937>
- Genealogy Institutes like GRIP, IGHR, and SLIG offer specialty courses dealing with DNA and Forensic genealogy.
- International Society of Genetic Genealogy (ISOGG) wiki: <https://isogg.org>
- Books:
  - *Genetic Genealogy in Practice* by Blaine Bettinger
  - *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy* by Blaine Bettinger
  - *Advanced Genetic Genealogy: Techniques and Case Studies* by Debbie Parker Wayne
  - *Genetic Genealogy The Basics and Beyond* by Emily D. Aulicino
  - *NextGen Genealogy The DNA Connection* by David R. Dowell