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Transcript of May 22, 2008 Glenn Munn television documentary. A radio version of the story is located [HERE](#). Both are used with permission of West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

As we prepare to celebrate Memorial Day weekend, here's the story of a World War II cadet's homecoming. Last week, the sisters of Earnest Glenn Munn saw their older brother for the first time since they said goodbye to him nearly 70 years ago. His three sisters, now in their 80s, looked at the face of a young man. Cadet Munn's body had been frozen all these years, preserved in a glacier, until hikers found him last summer. Now Cadet Munn's sisters finally have closure. Keri Brown has this story.

Voice of Ohio Congressman Charlie Wilson: We are here today not only to mourn Cadet Munn's loss but to celebrate his life and his service to our country. This is an unusual funeral, one that the Munn family has been on for more than 65 years.

Keri Brown: Congressman Charlie Wilson was among family, veterans and community members who came to the funeral of Earnest Glenn Munn last weekend. Munn was just 23 years old when he died on November 18th, 1942. He was the oldest of four children growing up in Pleasant Grove, Ohio, just across the river from Wheeling. His sisters, Jean Pyle, Sarah Zeyer and Lois Shriver have fond memories of their brother.

Jeanne Pyle: We were just like four ornery kids, playing and doing different things and working on the farm. My brother would always do something to some of the farm equipment and make something for us to get up on and ride and he would start up at the top of the hill and take us through the meadow and open gates and down clear in the bottom and we were screaming and crying we thought we were going to be killed and he just had a barrel of fun with us.

Sarah Zeyer: He was handsome yes and knowing he was older that we should listen to him you know when he told us to do something we didn't do it. So I think mother had him watch over us when she was washing clothes. He always looked after us.

Lois Shriver: I just have the memory that I was always with him at home. These girls kind of went together and I was a fly in their ointment you know because I was younger, so he took me under his wing we would do a lot of things together. He was my idol. I loved him so much.

Keri Brown: Their father was a farmer who also owned a local gas station and their mom was a homemaker. After graduating from Martins Ferry High School in 1936, Munn worked a few years at Fidelity Investment Corporation in Wheeling. Pyle says a co-worker sparked Munn's interest in the Air Force.

Jeanne Pyle: He was really excited about it. You know a little farm boy thinking about going into the air and flying an airplane, well he was all set for that. And the time that he was in there he really enjoyed it as he was on his training missions and the letters that he would write to Mother, he was just as happy as anything.

Reading of Letter: "November 5, 1942. Dear Mother, I received your lovely letter four days ago but I have been so busy that I have not had time for anything. My girlfriend and a friend of hers drove up from Santa Anna this last weekend. We had a good time, went to a dinner dance at the Hotel Senator in Sacramento. Things like that are good for the mind and soul, getting away from the regular arduous routine, it makes one feel like a free man again.

"We ran into a storm and came back. They don't like to fly over those very high mountains when it is stormy, because they are afraid of downdrafts forcing the plane into a side of a mountain. Not that I was scared, "But I was glad when they decided that we had better go back." If I don't mention any particular names at home, tell them not to feel bad because I do think o f you all constantly. I must close now. Your loving son, Glenn."

Keri Brown: This was the last letter Munn wrote to his mother. Two weeks later, a training mission over the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California went wrong. Pyle still vividly recalls finding out that her brother was missing.

Jeanne Pyle: It was November and it was a lovely day. I was working at a service station in Martins Ferry during the war time

greasing cars and changing oil all the stuff that they do at service stations and my dad drove in and I wondered what is Dad doing here and he says Glenn has been lost. And that just floored me you know. Mother was really upset well she tried to keep us from feeling bad but I would catch her in another room crying and we were all just upset about it.

Keri Brown: Five years after the crash, hikers discovered the wreckage. There were scattered remains and clothing, but no bodies. Munn's sister, Sarah Zeyer, held out hope that her brother would be found.

Sarah Zeyer: In my own mind I wondered if they were really searching as much as they should through the years. Missing there is hope and that is all that we had to depend on that some day he would be found and we would have him back here with us.

Keri Brown: Then in 2005, hikers found the body of a World War II airman encased in ice. Aviation Cadets Munn, Leo Mustonen, Melvin Mortensen and pilot William Gamber had all died when their plane crashed in Kings Canyon National Park.

Jeanne Pyle: We thought for sure it was Glenn because he was a blonde and all the pictures that we saw of the four we didn't think anybody else had blonde hair but Glenn but I guess this other fellow had blonde hair also. So that was sort of a sad time. We thought sure it was him but it wasn't.

Keri Brown: That body was Munn's fellow cadet Leo Mustonen. While Munn's sisters were happy Mustonen's family would receive closure, they wondered if they would live long enough to see their brother found. But in August 2007, they received the call they had prayed for. Author Peter Stekel was visiting the crash site to gather research for his book about the fatal flight when he discovered another frozen body.

Peter Stekel: I was walking toward that site and I saw something that looked like a tree, a little four and a half foot tall tree that had been killed by the frost and had been leaning over a rock. And so this is at nearly 13,000 feet in elevation and the air is thin and your brain doesn't work quite as swiftly as it does at sea level. It took me a moment to realize that there are not any grasses that even grow around here so how could it be a tree?

And just at that moment, the sun was shining on an object on what I thought was a tree; and it looked like a gold ring. So I was drawn closer to the object and as I got closer, maybe 100 or 200 feet away, I realized of course that it wasn't a tree - that the ring was on a finger that was attached to a person. That's when I realized I found the second of the four airmen.

Keri Brown: DNA testing at the POW-MIA Accounting Command in Hawaii confirmed this was the body of Cadet Earnest Glenn Munn. Munn's long journey back home finally came in May, when his body was flown from Hawaii to Pittsburgh International Airport where his sisters were waiting.

Jeanne Pyle: Did I tell you I just wanted to get out and hug that casket. I just feel like he is there and I just want to hug him so.

Keri Brown: A special military service followed a few days later near Munn's hometown of Pleasant Grove Ohio. Reverend Martha Bamberger read a poem she wrote.

Rev. Bamberger: The Wooden Box. The Wooden Box holds the remains of a veteran finally brought home. From 1942 all these years hoping, wondering, gladness tears. Many years have slipped away not knowing where he was. He is now home with his family today. Earnest Glenn has been brought home in full uniform finally to be laid to rest as his sisters waited for him as while he was on the mountain crest. Welcome home Earnest Glenn Munn. Welcome home, son.

Wayne Renn [singing and playing guitar]: Life goes on here on Maple Street people come and go some they will never meet.

Keri Brown: World War II veteran Art Panepucci says Munn's homecoming should give hope to other families.

Mr. Panepucci: To find someone after all of these years, it's just unbelievable. I mean there is always hope for people who have someone missing this is a reminder that there is hope and that somebody may find one of there missing sons or daughters yes.

Jeanne Pyle & Lois Shriver: It's really a relief to know that he is home. I think so to, I think it is an answer to our prayers.

Keri Brown: Two other airmen who were in the plane with Munn have not been found. According to the military, there are 78,000 World War II soldiers still missing, but Glenn Munn makes one less. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery next to his mother and father.