



VETERANS

★★★ HALL OF FAME ★★★

JAMES GILLEN

James Gillen served in the United States Navy. At the time of discharge, he achieved the rank of Seaman 2nd Class.

A lifelong resident of Warsaw, New York, Mr. Gillen was born February 13, 1927. As a 17-year-old senior at Warsaw High School in Wyoming County, he was eager to support the war effort. He skipped school one day in February, traveled to the Federal Building in Buffalo, and joined the U.S. Navy under the Delayed Enlistment Program. After graduating from high school in June 1944, he departed for boot camp in Jacksonville, Florida, in August.

Mr. Gillen attended the United States Navy Technical Training Station at Norman, Oklahoma and served as an Instructor at Florida's Jacksonville Naval Air Station, teaching 50-caliber machine gun training for future Aerial Gunners.

He transferred to the United States Navy Auxiliary Air Station at Modesto, California, where he was part of a team effort practicing night carrier landings for cadet pilots. The war with Japan ended in September 1945, and three months later, Mr. Gillen was sent to Ford Island Naval Air Station at Pearl Harbor. He also served aboard the USS Saratoga as an Aviation Ordnance man until his discharge from the Navy in June 1946, as a Seaman, 2nd Class.

In 2019, Mr. Gillen authored the book, *WWII Gold Star Veterans of Wyoming County, New York*, which honors the lives of 103 service members who were missing or killed in action during the War. It includes short biographies of every service member who died, along with several others associated with the County. With the help of the Wyoming County Historian's Office, Mr. Gillen has dedicated years of his life to going through records and newspapers. He connected with veterans' families who shared stories, military records and photographs.

While proceeds of the book benefit the Historian's Office, Mr. Gillen likes to keep his notoriety quiet, simply happy that he has detailed the lives of the 103 service members who perished or were deemed missing while serving our great Nation.



JAMES GILLEN WAS SELECTED AS A 2022
VETERANS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE BY
SENATOR PATRICK M. GALLIVAN.

2022