

James Bickers

VOL. XXX

POST OFLAG 64 ITEM

JANUARY, 1994

**COLUMBIA, S.C.:** Bill, what a nice narrative you composed on your capture and movement from Mortain, France to Oflag 64. It was mailed to your old Division, the 30th Infantry - the Tar Heel Chapter in Raleigh, NC, just as you asked. Hopefully, as soon as it returns to me some extracts can be made of some of the most interesting parts for the next ITEM. Thank you also for the check for the Postage Fund. With best regards. Duna and Bill Harrell.

**HILO, HI:** Fred, many thanks for your letter and the spirit in which it was written. We tried real hard to make the Memorial List as accurate as possible, yet in your case an error was made. My apologies. (It shows in The List his wife's name, Terry Livingston and went undetected.) On one occasion, John and Mary Slack had visited the Livingston's in Hawaii, and surely they will be glad to hear from you. Thank you for the generous check for the Postage Fund. (Fred was captured at Salerno in the spring of 1943 and arrived at Szubin a little later.) Fred Livingston.

**MONTSERRAT, B.W.I.:** Frank, your 24 December note and the Book Review which we agreed upon is in this Issue. It is not only aimed at those who have bought one or more copies, but especially toward those not having shown an interest in it, but may upon reading some of the highlights within the Review. Thank you for the lunch and warm hospitality in your Arlington, Va. home. A very pleasant and warm winter in the Caribbean which you so well deserve for your editorial prowess as shown in our book. Elizabeth and Frank Diggs.

**DENVER, CO:** Jack, thank you for your card but on the next note make a slight adjustment in the P.O. Box No., to read 1693. By now you are back home and I hope it was a pleasant trip and

holiday for you. Thank you for the kind words about the ITEM. Look forward to the arrival of the book of yours. Lois and Jack Rathbone.

**FAYETTEVILLE, NY:** Ed, Bill Cory sent me the letter in which you had made an inquiry about Albert Jenkins. My first approach was a note which was dispatched to Jane Graffagnino, Peter's wife, for a hand from the 45th Inf. Div. Assn. Second, is this appeal to our members at large to please write directly to you: Ed Joiner, 906 Kimry Moor, Fayetteville, NY, 13066. (These two were captured near Maxieuy, France on September 1, 1944.) Best wishes. Ed Joiner.

**DES MOINES, IA:** Bob, many thanks for the photos of the excellent model of Oflag 64. What a fine piece of workmanship and so close to the real thing. Please plan to bring it to Fort Worth this year so that we all can enjoy it. Lillie and Bob Eckman.

**LAWTON, OK:** Martin, what a fine wrap -up you sent me about Lawton of the 90's. It is a city with which so many memories are held by me and my family. Hope, as I said in an earlier reply, that the Fort Worth Reunion may spill over to give us a chance to see Fort Sill and Lawton again. Thanks also for the story on Russell Crooch, who was of such great assistance to me on my educational program out there. Best wishes. Martin Keiser.

**LONDON, ENGLAND:** Ken, your letter was most welcome and certainly touching. How or why Hitler failed to slaughter the British on the Beaches of Dunkerque simply escapes me. Perhaps it was the only civil and decent act he performed in WW II.

Yes, Ken, I will be in Normandy in June, 1994, sailing out of Plymouth, so let's try to rendezvous, even if it is for a short time. The Oflag has been reproduced on a small scale by Bob Eckman in a professional way. Hopefully, you can plan to come to Fort Worth and to see the model. You may rest assured that our maps are in storage rolls and will be on easels - for many of us to retrack some of our trails. Thank you for the gift to the Postage Fund. (Ken was a British subject and served honorably as an orderly in Oflag 64 but has kept in constant touch with us since 1945.) Ken Finlayson.

**CLEARWATER, FL:** Blondell, thanks for your note of November 16, 1993 and the items that you had enclosed. You were very good at the "note-taking" and awful lucky that they were not taken from you. When I get a chance, I will select some of the interesting ones and include them in another ITEM. Thank you for your contribution to the Postage Fund. Blondell T. Benton.

**MIAMI BEACH, FL:** Sid, thanks for the most generous donation of the \$200 for the Postage Fund. This transaction was a very happy one on "The Belle of Louisville". In the November ITEM, no details were provided about this gift and that is the reason it is mentioned here. The amount stated has been held by Sid for some time since a most recent trip that he made to Szubin with some others. Then it was decided to free it from escrow and release it to the Postage Fund. I am very grateful to you and the other members of the tour who made it possible and am pleased to make the brief explanation. Best wishes. Sidney N. Thal.

**SOUTH EASTON, MA:** Paul, thank you for the note concerning your father, Paul V. Lowell. (He is in a mild stage of Alzheimer's in a V.A. Hospital near Boston.) Paul, if he would like to continue hearing from us, please get a note to me of his close friends and we will see that he gets some mail and the ITEM if he wants it still. (Paul was taken among many others of the 106th Inf. Div. in mid December 1944 near Schoneberg, Germany during the Battle of the Bulge and was in Oflag 64 about a month.) With kind regards and our best wishes. Paul V. Lowell, 117 Church Street, South Easton, MA, 02375.

**SHAKOPEE, MN:** Ken, what a really interesting letter from another late arrival to Szubin. It had enough to merit my inclusion of it near the end of this issue. Thank you for your remarks and the first good impressions of the 50th Anniversary you just received. Thank you also for the donation to the Postage Fund. Ken W. Hyatt.

**HIGH POINT, NC:** Tony, it was great for Bob Cheatham to have located you and asked me to get in touch. Then

#### POINT

your nice article in THE HIGH ENTERPRISE with its attendant article on Francis Hargis was almost unbelievable. Welcome to the Oflag 64 Group, Tony and Francis. Tony Libertore.

**ST. PETERSBURG, FL:** Russ, your letter of October reached me by a circuitous route. Sorry that you were not up to Louisville for it was a good one. Your part in the Glee Club was well covered in The 50th Anniversary Book and your story of your capture near Sfax, Tunisia. We all appreciate the success you enjoyed in making life much more livable in Szubin. Our prayers are with you and we hope you will be able to make Fort Worth. Russ Ford.

**BATON ROUGE, LA:** Gordon, your kind note of October came and later the pretty card and the package of goodies from The Smith Kitchen. WOW! Hope the cruise to the Caribbean was restful and real pleasant. You got away from real bad weather that extended all the way up from Louisiana to North Carolina.  
Gordon Smith.

**LADY LAKE, FL:** Harold, though I have written to you and personally thanked you for the article that you mailed to me on Jack Van Vliet, this is to let the membership also thank you. It was well done and concerned one of the most widely known of our membership. As you stated to me, it is stories such as this one that stand out. Keep them coming to me. Many thanks for the contribution to the ITEM. Harold Tallman.

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA:** Clarence, thank you and Helene for your card. Wish you would do for all of us a progress report on your new book. My offer still holds to give you any assist that you may need in its preparations. (For our readers, it is a new one in which Clarence will address Men of Oflag 64.) As soon as you can put together a short precis of the book, send it along and I will include it in the next ITEM. Best wishes and good luck. Clarence Meltesen.

**ASHEBORO, NC:** Francis and Bob, thank you for the thoughtful card and the fine photo taken of us at the Festivities at the V.A. Hospital Center in Salisbury. It is a real great credit to the V.A. and the way it is managed. Keep up your volunteer work for they seem to appreciate your care and attention to them.

Thank you especially for the lead that you gave me on Tony Libertore and Francis Hargis over in High Point. Hope to get with you three real soon. Bob Cheatham.

**COLUMBIA, SC:** Don and Dottie, thank you for the pretty card and the check for the Postage Fund. Your review of '93

filled with some joy and a sprinkle of pain with your hip dislocations. It simply has to get better, let's hope so. Our best wishes. Don Graul.

**HENDERSONVILLE, NC:** John, what a provocative idea you have come up with. Escape, survival and hope are possibly the main concepts most always present in the mind of a person taken into custody. Your temporary break out, with four others, on the train ride out of Sfax, Tunisia, was well stated. Then to find the Arabs so untrustworthy and capricious - always willing to sell their souls to the nearest buyer, is heartbreaking. Back to your shortly lived escape I readily welcome the plan to have others send in some of their own and in a short time we can edit them and let the Village Printers here in Pinehurst make them into a nice and neat monograph which could be sold at near cost to our members. (This is the go sign and if you have an escape story that you might be willing to share with us please type it out about two pages or so and mail it to me and I will go from there). John, thanks for the encouraging words you sent on The ITEM on its format and overall content. Best wishes to you and Elaine. John Creech.

**DES MOINES, IA:** Verris, thank you for your kind note and the check for the Postage Fund. Of more importance is that we did see you and enjoyed your company in Louisville. Am surprised that Carl Coffee and Charles Jones did not show up. Have been told since, however, that they were both under the weather which may account for that. My best wishes to you and Arlene. Verris Hubbell.

**ENGLAND, AR:** Billy, sorry that we didn't have much time together in Louisville but if you promise to bring Bess with you to Fort Worth, I'll make it up to both of you for that. Your nice letter to Bill Cory was sent on to me and you will find it in this ISSUE. It portrays vividly your love of travel but, moreover, it shows some of your upbeat and optimism of life in general. Having visited Newfoundland enroute to Liverpool in WW II, I enjoyed the story so wonderfully left with us called EVANGELINE. Thank you again and keep up the good work. Billy Bingham.

**HAMILTON, GA:** Jane, thank you for the delightful letter and your treasured enclosures of some of Graff's writings. I am so pleased that you sent them and will begin with this Issue with one and continue with other issues with some others. Can't believe that he wrote them so well over the four year period (1941-45). (Peter had planned to put these short stories into a book form but after closing his practice he died at age 67 in January of 1984.) Thank you so much Jane and our best wishes. Enjoyed seeing you and our long chats in the Hospitality Room at the Louisville Reunion. Jane Graffagnino.

**BLOOMINGTON, IN:** Hilda, this is a late reply to your very interesting letter to me in the late fall. I was able to get a copy of your other book THE MAGIC GLASS and enjoyed it tremendously. In the spring of last year, her new book BLITZKRIEG OF BOOKS told of the near total devastation of libraries in the Nazi's Occupied Territories. THE MAGIC GLASS is an examination of the life of the early whalers under Captain Ahab on his ship The Pequod. Hilda, I had the book for an inter-library loan and barely finished reading it before it was due so my review for you is on hold until Rubena Press sends me a desk copy as requested a short time ago. Many thanks for the fascinating vitae you kindly included in the letter. Oops! The book came today but will be in the next ITEM. Thanks. Best wishes. Dr. Hilda Stubbings.

**ESSEX JUNCTION, VT:** Mary Crandall Cavanaugh, the daughter of Albert J. Crandall, many thanks for the telephone response to my inquiry over a returned ITEM. The short biography you did by hand and the handsome article in the UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT's Alumni Magazine were so welcome and interesting. The fact that he had been in a MASH Unit attached to the 101st Abn. Div. made it so much more personal to me since it was my outfit. In short, Mary, I will have some nice extracts ready for the next issue. So glad I made the call and your acquaintance. We thank you and wish you the very best. Mary Crandall Cavanaugh.

**EVERETT, PA:** George, thank you for the September letter and the note of Dorothy Richard's correct address. Am even more delighted that you have been on the phone with Chaplain Bob Scott and Marion out in Scottsdale. I was saddened by his stroke which she told me. Sorry that you could not come to Louisville to be with us and please try for Fort Worth. All the best. Army Times this past week began a profile - The Chaplains. Sent it to Bob. George Thomas.

**WEST BOYLSTON, MA:** Ormond, thank you for the nice letter back in November and your recollections of Hammelburg. John Slack sent me a small envelope of some photos taken, presumably, there which I will mail out to you shortly and ask your help in places and people if you can make some sense of it after Chap Daniels returns it.

As to Joseph Matthews, I still have had no reply to my appeal to him. So perhaps you might jack him up if you are sure the address is correct, I can mail him a copy of THE ITEM.

Ormond, this is to let the full membership know, if they do not, of the loss of Dorothy, your wife, in last July. We all send our condolences. With best wishes. Ormond Roberts.

**VALLINGBY, SWEDEN:** Henry, a short note here to tell you that from Thanksgiving up to now my time hasn't been my own. Yet at the top of the desk sits your pleasant story of your bucolic life this past summer up at lovely RINFORSA, along with manuscript of the highlights of last year since we were in Colorado Springs. Especially, the Douglas Tanghy story, which is intriguing. By the time of next preparation of THE ITEM, it will be in good order. Henry, will you give some thought to try and meet Ken Finlayson and me in June 1994 when I return to England and Normandy for the D-Day celebrations. In a separate letter, I will forward the details of the itinerary and, hopefully, we can find a few precious minutes together. Best wishes to Claire and you. Henry Soderberg..

**NORTH TONAWANDA, NY:** Dick, thank you for yours of November 29th. Once again I am so glad you brought to my attention the loss of Sol Levy, a close and personal friend of yours. As you examine the 50th Anniversary Book you will find it was taken care of in timely manner.

Dick, Wilbur Hooker is still on our mailing list and his address which you showed corresponds with mine.

My congratulations on the service that you are doing with the V.A. Hospital and the American EX POW's. No doubt it is very much appreciated. Your nice letter is enclosed in this Issue. Warm regards. Richard Manton.

**LADY LAKE, FL:** Harold, your most recent note just reached me and I am pleased to tell you that William A. Guest of Savannah, GA has been added to the address list of THE ITEM. You were very thoughtful to do that for him. Yes, I am having trouble in securing the Giffin Book, so please let me borrow your copy. Thanks. Harold L. Tallman.

**JACKSON, MI:** Vinton, I want to ask you a favor. Many of the photos shown in the 50th Anniversary Book are included in the collection that you kindly loaned to me. If you have an opportunity, I would surely like to see if we can match some names with photos shown at a time convenient to you. Thank you for the check for the Postage Fund. Vinton Thompson.

**ALEXANDRIA, VA:** Ned, this is a follow-up on our telephone call this past week while I was in the D.C. area. Pleased that you, first off, had such good luck on the photos taken on your trip to Szubin, Poland last summer and to see what is left of Oflag 64. The quality of the pictures in color, of course, make it all the more impressive. I have not received the copies you had made for me yet but herewith want to share your name and address for those who

want to get in touch with you to have some made. Suppose I let it go at that and as you get a request go either one, by lending the negatives out, or figure up an order and let's use the services of Gene Sharrick whom Henry Soderberg introduced to us in Louisville. He does pretty work at a very reasonable cost. Thank you for the copies and I will mail you the two taken at Louisville that I promised. Nat Hoskot, 404 Cambridge Road, Alexandria, VA, 22314.

**HILO, HI:** Fred, your nice late note just reached me and I am sure the Circles of Hell touched the same tender nerves of you that are shared by many others in the renowned 36th Inf. Div. in the costly Italian Campaign in which in one battle 1900 KIA's resulted in an area of one square mile. Try to reach Bill Paty and I assure you that he will be one of the most hospitable people you may ever meet. Fred Livingston.

**VALLINGBY, SWEDEN:** Henry and Claire, your welcome letter of January 1st just reached me in time for the ITEM. The good news about your holding some old medals to spare and entitled THE YMCA FLAME OF FREEDOM MEDAL sounds great. (These Medals and a copy of the Certificate of Appreciation is shown in this Issue were presented to some of our own in Oflag 64 and have been lost.) Your idea to present the dozen or so that you have on hand in Fort Worth in October is a splendid and thoughtful gesture and we are pleased. In short, Henry has offered this service and if you meet the qualifications stated above, please send Henry or me the request and it will certainly be taken care of in Fort Worth with a short appropriate ceremony.

Glad that you shared the overall consensus of opinion of the books fine quality and interesting reading. I, too, am well aware of other newspapers in the theater, but like you, there certainly was none of the quality of THE ITEM.

Thank you for the kind words about the presentations of THE POST OFLAG 64 ITEM and with great contributors like you the task is extremely enjoyable for me at this end. Many thanks and our best wishes for Claire and you in 1994. The Soderbergs.

**WHISPERING PINES, NC:** Carl, as this is about to be mailed to John Slack for publishing, it deserves the news which you share with me last night in your home. That your lovely wife, Barbara, has suffered a heart attack at home on early Sunday morning. She was entered into Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst and was treated in time and the prospects are good for a recovery even at this critical time. Carl, our prayers and best wishes go out to you.

Barbara and Carl put together a small indexed guide to assist the members in Louisville in tracing their own and other names of those

who were in Oflag 64 at one time. More recently, they did the envelopes for this mailing which you are about to receive in the proper Zip Code order as required for a Bulk Mailing. The address to which you may send a get well card is: Mrs. Barbara Christensen, 267-B Pine Ridge Drive, Whispering Pines, NC, 28327. Thank you both and our best wishes. Carl Christensen.

*Cedar Falls, IA Enclosed letter  
just received from relative of  
Ed Moschel. Drop him a card  
or a letter.*

## Waller's 'Slow Waltz' Better Than 'Bridges'

BY HERBERT L. GARRIS  
SLOW WALTZ IN CEDAR BEND by James Waller. Warner Books, New York, 197 pp., 1993, \$16.95.

The review is undertaken with some small trepidation in that this same author has just done the impossible with his place in over 60 weeks in the top position, among the nation's best sellers with "The Bridges Of Madison County."

Yet even with such a phenomenal rating, Waller has been severely criticized in reviews of that book. Perhaps this review has missed something that others found in it. Somehow, with his having earned over \$11 million from that single source it would seem your reviewer is on track and it doesn't need fixing.

First off, "Slow Waltz" has two unique differences from "Bridges." It is only remotely in the same venue of bucolic southern Iowa not far from Madison County. Right away he carries the story well beyond the venue of Cedar Bend to an international circuit. Michael Tillman, an established professor of economics, possibly with tenure, at a university at Cedar Bend.

Soon fate throws him into a spin with a most attractive Jellie Braden, a 40-year-old wife of Jimmy Braden, who is also a professor in the same department as Michael. Jimmy that fall secures a much sought after appointment to teach the following spring semester at a university in London. It was one he had applied for a year before. Michael, as often the case, will assume the classes which Jimmy would leave, which is a normal procedure with a colleague who is on a sabbatical of this sort. Soon any likelihood that Jellie will undoubtedly have to leave with her husband leaves Michael very despondent since their die has been cast from August before.

Strangely his only recourse is toward his motorcycle, which he keeps parked and being worked on in his living room. Having seen many Harley Davidson Reunions in North Myrtle Beach and their devotion to their bikes, that is not odd at all. So here we see a development which will be much longer than the whirlwind romance of "Madison County" of four days into one of almost a year's duration.

After the sabbatical was completed the couple returns to their old environs of Cedar Bend, though with some sizable marriage problems, with Michael at the heart of it, but more and underlying Jellie's unhappiness is an urge to return to India, where she has spent some time before.

The rupture takes place near Thanksgiving and she leaves from Syracuse and her family. Soon a poignant talk takes place between Michael and Jimmy and it is unrewarding. What it shows clearly is that Michael is a man of action, a solid citizen and well respected for his talents, with even his Dean, Arthur Wilcox, as uncomfortable as he can be with this one of a kind

academic. And in sharp contrast is Jimmy, a spoiled rotten brat who is wired for sound with the Dean and not nearly so successful as Michael.

The search by Michael for Jellie began at the end of the fall semester when Michael flew to India and from Madras began a trek which led him to a university in Pondicherry, where he was warmly welcomed by its leaders who placed a copy of his recent and productive article in "The Atlantic" on a coffee table in full display. It was in his specific expertise of tax incentives. Soon a member of the staff and a professor in Anthropology, whom it turned out knew Jellie well, having assisted her on her thesis preparations. She out of respect for Jellie's privacy was only able to tell Michael some vague guidelines where he might further search for her into Thekkady in the southwest countryside of India, having just departed.

The surprising and most unsuspecting is the reunion in Lake Palace where they greet each other warmly. Before his departure for home he is invited by Dr. Dhavaletto to be a guest lecturer for a group of classes who are always anxious to hear someone from outside and especially a renowned professor like himself. In addition Michael feels a heavy indebtedness to her for aiding in his nearly aborted search for Jellie.

The book ends in a strange way and that is left for the reader's to enjoy. The fact is that Jellie receives her doctorate in Anthropology and in his regalia Michael joins in the celebrated and distinguished award ceremony. You will see the deep bitterness come to an unusual ending in which Jimmy and his Dean head out to appointments in the Northeast and Jellie takes off on another of her involved and complex responses.

This is a great book and with an easy to read story that is packed with such interesting and tempting sets of action. The human side of Waller came out clearly to about a hundred of us who saw him in a personal appearance at St. Andrews last spring under the auspices of Dr. Thomas L. Reuschling, its President, will long be recalled. He read his works well, sings and plays guitar with a fine talent, and answered all of our questions with respect and with a humility rarely seen.

Please try to find a way to come to the Sandhills again, James Waller.

(Dr. Herbert L. Garriss is a resident of Pinehurst and a frequent contributor to The Pilot.)

FALLS CHURCH, VA.: Al, Thanks so much for the nice note and the detailed research you made on our mailing list. "Where do we come from?" With over 450 members, who receive THE ITEM, 46 states are listed, leaving four that are not represented. Arkansas has had an incorrect zip code but Billy Bingham and Garvin Fitton have nonetheless been served. Possibly it is their importance that may have caused this miracle. Also, in the Reunion at Louisville we had 36 states represented among nearly 180 registrants. So in the eyes of a late house painting commercial, Al says that "We cover the U. S.A."

Al, thanks again for your loyal support over the recent months. I am sorry that we were not able to get together in my Thanksgiving or early January visit to D. C. Next time we will do it, hopefully. Sincerely, H. Alexander (Al) Casner.

CHEYENNE, WY.: Bill and Evelyn, appreciate your note of last week. Your visit toward Szubin and slight detour at Luckenwalde most surely gave you a better insight of Story of The Holocaust I referred to in a recent issue.

The handsome photos of your presenting the American Colors to The Ghost Riders at Francis E. Warren AFB were very impressive, especially the pretty Air Force Nurse, a vet of the Persian Gulf Campaign, who received them from you

Now to chide you a little bit, a grade slip was in the midst of the contents of the envelope and it had a grade marked B. This in your course on Current Issues in American Government at The Laramie County Community College, there in Cheyenne. Let's get with it you are A grade material and I expect an improvement. Congrats, even so.

Bill we never discussed the fact that you were a recruit and took you basic with E Troop of the 5th Cav. Regt., in the 1st Cav. Div. Then on to the USAAF and inadvertently placed with the Ground Pounders in Oflag 64. That background must have put you in good stead from North Africa onward.

Bill, thank you for the set of 3x5 cards, an old roster that John Slack furnished you. That, plus a "B" List which Bill Cory sent me awhile ago will be of great help in tracking the members more accurately.

Bill, I have mentioned this to you before, but want to repeat it for the entire membership, your Reunion was a super one. It was made possible by the fine work of you and Evelyn. From the Registration all the way thru the Memorial Service, it is one many of us will recall with much pleasure. Thanks. Bill Korber.

CALIFON, N. J.: Jim, what a nice note of last week. It made me real proud to read of your recent success in the campaign and election as the New Mayor of Califon. As Win says, it is good to have it over. She is right for campaigning is not an easy task. Certainly, it a newsworthy piece and it is included in this issue.

Second, the cash you sent along for the P.F. is appreciated as well.

The David A. Englander story about your escapade to Moscow is super and it will just have to wait until the next issue. Thank you anyway. Upon reading the by line name of the writer, it rang a bell and as you see my note to Glenn Brooks, a little later you will see why!

Hate to tell you this while you suffer the Arctic Weather in New Jersey, but here at North Myrtle Beach today I am in short sleeves and aim to drive some golf balls tomorrow. We have a week at our time share and it is truly delightful. Poor Baby! His Honor Mayor Jim Ball.

CHARLOTTE, N. C.: Harold, your note to me was so welcome in early December. You fully qualify as a member of the Oflag 64 and your first ITEM is being enclosed. Thank you also for the check for the P.F.. Am so glad that Charles Moore out in Phoenix, AZ sent you the news about us and his notes on Phil Gage, Gordon Smith and Bill Paty. With at least two others of us there in Charlotte why not let's plan a lunch up there soon? They are Ormond Hessler and Chaplain Eugene Daniel. In your next note fill me in on your unit and what has

happened to you in the past fifty years.  
Sincerely. Haward L. Huggett

GROVE CITY, OH.: Brad, what a pretty card you sent in mid-December along with a check for the P.F.

So pleased for you bringing Gail, your daughter and your wife to join us in Louisville. Glad too that she seemed to make welcome and learned a lot about why we all enjoy them so much. A rarity is with your wife and her recovery from the sickness in 1988, enough to travel and to make it to Fort Worth this year.

Brad, I am out of sync with the 1st Onsn, F. A. Bn., at the moment, but will try to make one of their quarterly 'do's" soon over at Bragg.

Brad, thank you for the remarks on THE ITEM and our new fiscal reporting system. Got some mighty good advice on it before hand. Sincerely. O. L. Bradford.

ATHENS, GA.: Clementi and Boomer, thank you the pretty card and the WNGC and WGAU logo. Your kind words about John Slack and his being the "glue" of this outfit were true and very well stated. Whatever success we will have ahead will be in a great part due to his, and Mary's patient and unswerving devotion to it. Best wishes in '94.  
H. Randolph (Boomer) Holder

BERMUDA VILLAGE, ADVANCE, N. C.: General Dobson, to save my reputation a short note of explanation is submitted herewith on my not calling or coming to see you as we agreed upon in early January. A important appointment at Walter Reed for Ethelene-my wife took a precedence. The results were good and we are both very happy about that. Your phone calls are such a joy, always full of the same optimism that you showed us in Szubin, but a trip pretty soon will be even better.

Your football days at the Univ. of Richmond, just before you went away to West Point have left some great friends down here in The Sandhills, especially with that gang over at Hampden Sydney, three live nearby me.  
Sincerely, Brig. Gen. John Dobson

ABERDEEN, N. C.: Glenn, since The Pilot has not furnished me a little better copy of your OCS Hall of Fame Induction and the presentation, I will hold off until the next issue to run it.

As we had coffee one morning in a MacDonald's about three weeks ago you brought up the name of a NEW YORK TIMES reporter whom we recalled at Oflag 64. It was David A. Englander, a 1st Lt. In the Jim Ball report mentioned above and a reference to his trip from Szubin to Moscow, Englander wrote the article which will appear in the next issue. My question to the members at large if anyone can provide any information about him to us? At once I thought his name had been on a Memorial List, and I hope it is incorrect. If anyone can help us please send us a note at your convenience.

Thank you Glenn for your kind remarks about the 50th Anniversary Book and I concur with you completely. It made my review much easier.  
Sincerely. Glenn Brooks.

WHISPERING PINES, N. C.: Carl, you have given us some good news about Barbara, your wife. The heart problem was severe enough, but with the rapid response on Sunday a week ago, 23d January, she was admitted to the Moore Regional Hospital here in Pinehurst. Two successful and timely procedures were the answer and she has returned home now for recuperation. Carl, all of share in the good news and wish her a rapid recovery.  
Barbara and Carl Christensen.

HUNTERDON REVIEW, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1993

## Ball wins by 1 in cliff-hanger

**CALIFON** — In a cliff-hanger, former mayor Democrat James Ball defeated Republican mayor Merwin Grimes, 269-268, in Tuesday's general election.

Not until the absentee ballots were counted was the winner known. It appeared from the voting machine count that Grimes had won. Then it was found that Ball had 11 absentee votes, Grimes 6.

It was not known at presstime whether Grimes would ask for a recount.

There was a 73 percent turnout — 532 of the 713 registered voters.

Republicans Ronald Forsberg and Raymond Yanofchick, both running

uncontested for three-year terms, tallied 371 and 364 votes, respectively. Both were appointed to the council this year.

Ronald Torsky, a Republican running unopposed for a one-year unexpired term, drew 353 votes.

*From now on call me  
'CLIFFHANGER' Jim:*

### Hunterdon Review

HUNTERDON REVIEW, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1993



(Photo by J.J. Drauzman)

#### Mayor Ball Sworn In

Having been declared the winner by one vote in a recount after the Nov. 2 general election, Califon Mayor James Ball, left, was sworn in on Monday, Nov. 22, in his home. He was sworn in early in order to complete the unexpired term of former mayor Jeffrey Welch, to which Merwin Grimes, his opponent, had been appointed. Attorney Peter Jost administered the oath while Winifred Ball held the family Bible.

## Elect...Jim Ball for Mayor



Califon's Own  
"Ambassador for the Boro"

- Outstanding Service and Experience Having Previously Served 2 Terms- 8 years - as Mayor of Califon
- Negotiated State Aid for Road and Sidewalks on Main Street totalling \$55,000
- Negotiated with NJBRC on Sale of Califon Water Company to The Garden State Water Co., Saving Boro in Excess of \$1 Million
- Brought Cable TV to Califon
- Negotiated with Elizabethtown Gas for the installation of gas in Califon
- Served as treasurer of the New Jersey State Conference of Mayors
- Served as President of the Hunterdon County Municipal Officers Association
- Vice President, Califon Historical Society
- Member, Califon PTA
- Retired Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army POW in Poland
- Recipient of 2 Silver Stars for Valour; Bronze Star for Gallantry; 3 Purple Hearts

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# High Point Enterprise

109th Year

High Point, N.C., Sunday Morning, November 7, 1993

Daily 50c, Sunday \$1

## Luck graced POW

By Scott Sexton  
STAFF WRITER

On June 6, 1944, furtive whispers quickly passed the word among the American prisoners of war.

The Allies had landed in France.

For 27-year-old Lt. Tony Libertore, the reports filled him with hope and the renewed confidence that his captivity would soon end.

Many gut-wrenching ups and downs lay ahead however. His first letters from home, two unsuccessful escape attempts, the arrival of a cablegram announcing the birth of his first born son Donald and a brutal evacuation march through the unforgiving Polish winter would test his emotional health.

On D-Day, though, only joy and pride coursed through OFLAG 64, a German POW camp in Szubin, Poland. Thanks to a radio smuggled in piece-by-piece by bold members of the Polish underground, the imprisoned American and British officers could keep up with war reports.

"We got the news twice a day — once in the morning and once in the evening," said Libertore. "The senior officers would listen to the BBC and pass it on by word of mouth."

"On the day of the invasion, we knew it before the Germans did. When the commandant assembled all of us, we had to act surprised and not make a scene (when he told us)."

Today, Libertore knows how fortunate he was during World War II. Sitting in his living room, thumbing through the brittle, yellowing pages of his Kriege (prisoner's) log book with his wife Louise by his side, he still marvels at his fate.

"I hit it lucky," said Libertore, now a youthful, active 76-year-old. "I was just that one guy out of a thousand. This is what was meant to be. The Good Lord had his reasons."

He's especially thankful that three of his brothers and three brothers-in-law who also saw combat made it home. His wife, Louise, shares that sentiment.

"When you're young like that, you just don't realize the depth of what



(Staff photos by Howard Tillery)

Tony Libertore thumbs through his World War II POW log

### ■ OFLAG 64 POWs meet in High Point — 12A

can happen," she said, her blue eyes sparkling as she, too, recounted her blessings.

The scrappy, 5-foot-6-inch Lt. Libertore certainly didn't imagine what his future held as he headed off to battle the Nazis in Europe.

In early February 1944, he found himself in the middle of an American assault on a heavily-fortified hill protecting the German-controlled town of Cassino, Italy.

Crawling in ruts dug by mammoth U.S. tanks, Libertore and 80 to 90 other soldiers slowly made their way up the hill toward the German encampment. Without suffering a single casualty, the Americans took 57 German defenders prisoner and



captured the objective.  
"After an hour or so of daylight."  
(See POW On 12A)



the

## DOCTORS' LOUNGE

by: Peter C. Graffagnino



1944: By Train to Munich

The most memorable portion of our first three months as a German war prisoner was the train ride from Italy to Bavaria. Our Pullman was a standard boxcar of the 40 and 31 variety which we shared with an unusual group of fellow prisoners. In the five days it took us to make what should have been an overnight run, we learned the essentials of communal living in diverse circumstances.

After our capture on the Anzio beachhead in late February, we were detained for two weeks on the front lines where we helped run the medical aid-station for a German combat unit. (*Bulletin*, Feb. 1964) All during that interesting interval we had been pounded day and night by our own ground and naval artillery. It was a great relief, finally, to say goodbye to the sounds of combat, the 1027 Panzer Grenadiers, and ride their supply truck into Rome. In Rome we were cooped

up for ten days in one of the sound stages at Cine Citta, where the Germans had established a temporary prisoner collecting compound. When they had accumulated enough officer-prisoners to make up a load, we were off again by truck to a camp on the outskirts of Siena, about 60 miles away to the north. It was from Siena, two weeks later, that our train journey began.

A few days before leaving Rome, we were joined by the bumptious group of officers who were to be our box-car companions on the trip through northern Italy and the Alps. They arrived in a hunch, assured and unimintimidated; a mixed bag of individualists. Excepting two young American sirmen, they were all British or British Colonials. Most were English, but the group also included two Scotsmen, four Indians, a Welshman, a Canadian, a Rhodesian and a New Zealander. They sported a few odds and ends of battle dress, but for the most part they were clothed in disreputable peasant rags. They had many bonds in common. All had been captured more than a year before during the African campaign, and all had once been in the same camp at Chieti on the Italian Adriatic. In September 1943, during the brief interval between Italy's capitulation and the German take-over, they had taken advantage of the confusion and escaped into the mountains. There for six months, alone or in groups of two, they had hidden out with friendly peasant families and lived off the countryside. After the Anzio landings, expecting Rome to be liberated momentarily, they had worked their way toward the Eternal City and freedom, only to be picked up by an extensive Fascist drive and recaptured.

They were wise in the ways of prison camp life. All were great scroungers, magnificent conversationalists, and adept in the techniques of German-baiting. Like all "old prisoners," their many months of confinement, along with their period of isolation in the mountains, had given them plenty of time to philosophize, day dream about the future, and develop eccentricities. John Mayne, a Regular Army Commando and veteran of the Dieppe and Tobruk raids, planned to emigrate to Australia. Peter Foussman would return to London and study law. Howard Davies would come to the States, buy a Packard roadster, return with it to Rhodesia, and write animal stories. Richard Edmonston-Low, the Canadian, would seek his future in New Mexico. Keith Eason longed to return to Christ Church in New Zealand and open a book-store. Jack Creighton would go back to Edinburgh. Kalyan Singh planned to stay in the Army and become a General, as did Athon Naravane; Dudley Saker, whose father was Director of Education for India's Central Provinces at Nagpur, would enter the Diplomatic Corps. They all had interesting stories to tell.

On leaving Siena, our visions of travelling through northern Italy in troop-train fashion disappeared when a 14-car freight pulled into the siding. Lt. Col. Trendel, the ranking officer in our group, insisted that as officers we be kept together. He demanded special accommodations from the German train commander. After much loud argument, the thirty of us were given a box-car to ourselves and, as a concession to comfort, the bare flooring was covered with fresh straw. As all other cars were strawless and packed with 50 prisoners, we considered our lot fortunate.

Even with thirty men, there is not much room to spare in a small European box-car. Each of us staked out a small bit of wall space as our own, but sleeping stretched out was an impossibility and had to be done in shifts. Our possessions, by now reduced to one knapsack or cloth bundle apiece, came in handy as back rests or pillows. It was undeclared but understood that no one violated the

territorial rights of his neighbors. We were locked in from the outside and the sliding door sealed shut. The only light within the car filtered in through slit-like vents near the roof at each end of the two side walls. With a boost, a tall man could get an eye up to one of these, and report on the outside world. But the view was so limited that it was hardly worth the effort. Once a day, usually in mid-morning, the train stopped on some isolated stretch of track, the doors were opened, and two or three carloads at a time were allowed out to stretch their legs and perform necessary evacuations within a watchful ring of armed guards. At these stops we were issued a bread ration for the day, and given a sixteen-cup full of hot ersatz coffee.

Our food ration, issued initially for the entire trip was one can of compressed meat per man. It was euphemistically labelled beef, but was unmistakably horse. We were cautioned by our companions to ration it to ourselves carefully. Most had experienced box-car travel before on their way from the toe of Italy to Chieti. They knew that prison trains had the lowest rail priority, and that what might be one day's travel in distance, could well be a five or six day trip in time. They had learned also that hunger is the most powerful of man's instincts. No matter how great one's altruism, trying to appease a chronically empty stomach brings out all of one's selfish cunning, and it is fair game to take any advantage available.

As a result, we evolved a unique way of dividing our daily ration of three loaves of bread. We split into three groups of ten, each with a chosen representative. The three agents then drew straws to determine first, second, and third pick of loaves. After the first day, second would move to first, third to second, first to last, and so on in daily rotation. Each group of ten divided itself into two groups

of five, again each with a chosen leader. The two leaders then alternated duty of cutting the group's loaf in half; on the day when one cut, the other had first choice of the halves. Each group of five drew straws to determine the order in the cutting rotation on their half-loaf; when number one cut, number two had first choice and number one automatically got the last segment. Even with our ingenious system, the cutting ritual was intently watched—each man calculating which piece seemed the biggest and his chances of getting it. It was amazing with what micrometer precision the last choice man could divide a loaf.

We adjusted quickly to our cramped existence. No experience is entirely bad if it can be shared in common with others. We talked and dozed and slept without much regard to time of day. We discovered a few dried tobacco leaves mixed in with the straw; cut up and rolled in newspaper, they were enough to make five-community cigarettes which we shared ceremoniously. We learned to interpret the sounds of the wheels, and the creaks, groans and clanks of the ancient wooden car. We were stopped more often than we were moving. Occasionally we waited for hours on some siding for other trains to pass. Our route took us through Florence and Milan. One night we were halted in the rail yards beyond Bolzano long enough to be bombed by our own planes. (Jerry Periman and Bob Schlisler, the two teen-age American flyers, insisted indignantly that the raiders could only have been British.) On the morning of the fourth day we did get to see the Alps as a stretch-stop above the Brenner Pass. It was frustrating to know that neutral Switzerland was only a few miles away. But snow still covered the ground, and the wind and cold were so severe that we were happy to load back into our car where straw and body heat could warm us again.

Our journey ended undramatically at Stalag VIII B; a large, long-established camp filled with prisoners from all nations. There, a few miles north of Munich, in the town of Moosburg, endless rows of bleak, wire-enclosed barracks awaited us. Yet to all of us, the prospect was appealing. The prisoner of war lives one day from day to day. Food, a bath, warmth and a straw-palletted bunk of our own lay ahead. Tomorrow would take care of itself.

Shakopee, Minnesota  
December 29, 1993

Dear Herb:

This is my first attempt at corresponding with you after the many hours of enjoyment I've had from reading the Post Oflag 64 Item. Thank you for keeping me on the mailing list. Please continue to do so.

My stay at Oflag 64 was very short, although I did stay around to participate in the infamous march to Hammelburg. Just to give you a little background, I was captured at Hagenau, Alsace-Lorraine on 29 Nov. 1944. Arrived at Stalag XIIA, Limberg, Germany around the first week of December. We were moved out to be loaded into boxcars on the 23rd of December and while waiting for the train to leave the rail yard was bombed. Although the train was relatively undamaged, we later learned the camp had been hit and there were casualties-how many we did not know. Finally we were under way and we arrived at Schubin on New Years Eve. It was there I received my first Red Cross parcel. My first contact with someone from home was when Eddie Sager and a couple of other guys came calling. I thought they were just being friendly but found out later they were 'checking me out' to make sure I wasn't a spy! Of the 1557 of us who left Oflag 64 on 21 January, 1945 I was one of the "lucky" 423 who arrived at Hammelburg. On March 27th, a task force of light and medium tanks and some half-tracks came smashing into the camp. They were under the command of a Captain <sup>Abraham</sup> Abrams, and had been ordered to come 65 miles behind enemy lines to attempt a rescue of Lt. Col. John Waters as well as anyone else who could escape with them. Well, you know the rest of the story, except perhaps this part; some of us decided it would make more sense to breakup into small groups of three or four and try to make it back to our lines by traveling at night and hiding out in the daytime in the thick pine forests that abounded in the area. Well, it worked for about a week until we got careless one night in selecting our hideout. Next day, come daylight, we found to our dismay we had chosen a small patch of thin woods that were not only sparsely wooded, but were on hillside where farmers were busily

2

getting their fields ready for planting. Although we felt sure we had been seen by a small group of boys that came into the woods looking for dead limbs for firewood, there was no attempt by anyone to come in to get us. However, at dusk as we started to leave the woods, we hadn't gotten fifty yards out in the open when we were surrounded by a large group of farmers carrying pitchforks and clubs. Without saying a word they 'convinced' us we should go into town with them! Naturally we complied! The bergermeister, arranged to have some soldiers march <sup>us</sup> to another village, which was so close to American lines we could hear artillery fire and see the flashes in the distance. Next day were taken back to Hammelberg only to find the camp evacuated. In the other half of the camp were approximately two thousand Serbian soldiers from Yugoslavia that had been there since their country had gone to war with Germany. They were of no value to Hitler, so they were free to come and go as they pleased. They were quite literally men without a country. So it was inevitable that we moved into their part of the camp and stayed there until we were finally liberated by the U.S. 14th Armored Division. I finally got home in late April.

I ordered the Oflag 64 Anniversary book, which I am thoroughly enjoying. Although I didn't spend much time there -twenty one days, to be exact - and even though my name isn't in it, I still feel as much a part of Oflag 64 as those of you who were there for a much longer time. I guess to have survived the march counts for something. Thanks again, Herb, for doing such an excellent job with the Item and keep it coming.

Sincerely,



Kenneth W. "Ken" Hyatt  
1077 Swift Street,  
Shakopee, MN 55379-2952

# Candor In Telling Of Italian Battles

BY HERBERT L. GARRIS  
**CIRCLES OF HELL: The War in Italy 1943-1945**, Eric Morris, Crown Publishing Group, New York, 483 pp., 1993, \$25.

The author is eminently qualified as a political and defense analyst. His background is steeped in academia, having held positions at Wales and Leicester Universities, and with an appointment at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst.

His field over the years has become predominantly Strategic Studies and International Relations. His precise, profound and accurate research into the Italian Campaign is clearly evident and remarkable.

His style is unique in its flair with realistic writing and factual reporting on many complex military actions, showing carefully the very thin options usually available to the leaders.

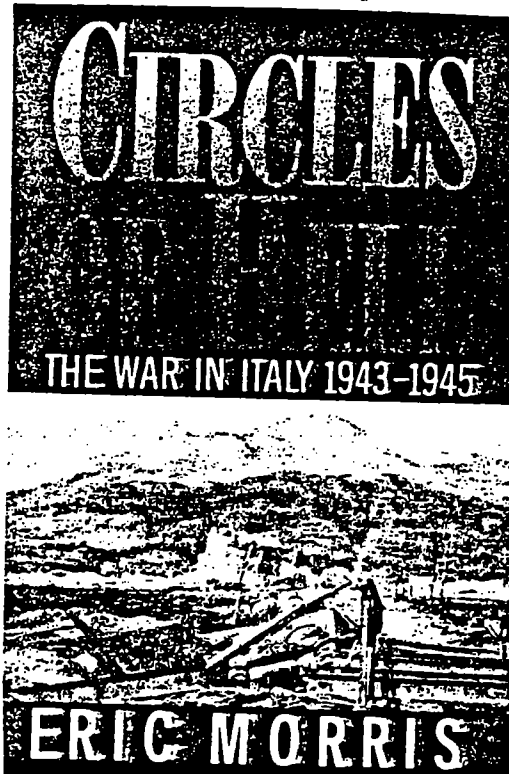
This is a book filled with bitterness, rancor and many open disagreements at the highest British and American level down to the foxholes of a very unfriendly terrain called Italy. It centers on the plans to invade Sicily, a precursor to the tortuous road to Rome and ultimately up north to the Po Valley. It portrays graphically with the accompanying maps and narratives the Allied commanders and staffs with their great talent and comprehension, yet with such unbelievable egos which paved the way to many costly errors in sound judgment along the achievement of the missions.

The initial developments were poorly coordinated and communicated among the assortment of multi-national participants as well as multi-services, and was further flawed by poor leadership in those same areas. The environment and terrain, so harsh and severed to one of the greatest tragedies of loss of lives and wounded. To say nothing of the tenacious and advantage held by the skilled Germany Army along the way.

The fragile toe-hold of Salerno and Anzio were near marginal and in even greater jeopardy with the lack of precise timing and coordination expected in the anticipated drive northward.

THE PILOT-Southern Pines, North Carolina

Monday, December 27, 1993 Page 4-B



The final and most definitive thrust was into Rome and offers the most interesting chapter as General Clark, the fifth Army Commander so deliberately disallowed any chance of the British sharing credit or glory in the successful capture. The victory announcement was a great morale booster for many who were staging in England for the Overlord Assault into Normandy on June 6.

As the campaign moved northward with a stunning rate of losses; with 120,000 casualties (of whom 12,000 were killed) in a period of 275 days of continual combat.

By the time the most difficult individual to deal with, Marshall Montgomery, of El Alamein fame, was moved and promoted to an Army Group Commander and sent to England where he would play a vital role in the D-Day beachhead mission. His disagreeable and fault finding characteristics continued

unabated.

The rapid disintegration of Field Marshall Kesselring's Germany Armies became noticeably apparent in his begrudgingly and costly retreat into the Po area.

The book is aptly titled "The Circles Of Hell" in that it was nothing less than that with losses that stunned the families of many American and British back home, stemming from the performance of many political and military leaders who had a responsibility for the debacle. Yet in defense of such inordinate odds it was a success, while of doubtful quality, in its total execution.

At the end as a short postscript the author shows clearly the heavy interest in Trieste and Central Europe and his distrust of Stalin with his interest in Warsaw, Vienna and other surrounding areas as a power base which was ultimately the case for the establishment of the Iron Curtain.

In the selective and very appropriate appendices the author includes some communications of the senior Allied commanders on the way the campaign was conducted. To a non-military reader these appendices are remarkably descriptive with simple terms of the friends and enemy force structures and includes the role of the amphibious landing crafts employed.

All in all, this book is a very critical and yet enlightening story of the Italian Campaign which produced no truly outstanding general officers, U.S. or British, with as many in support of even less quality and relief even necessary. It is a frank and factual review by a splendid and gifted writer.

(Dr. Herbert L. Garris is a resident of Pinehurst and a frequent reviewer for The Pilot on military history).

Saturday 17 October 1993

Dear Bill ( and Herb),

There is an old Arabic proverb "Pitch a lucky man into the Nile River, and he'll come up with a fish in his mouth", I'm that lucky man, for 5 years ago I had a stroke, laid in the hospital for 21 days, couldn't say one word, or count to "two", and had to learn to talk all over again.

We've just returned in September from a Nova Scotia and Newfoundland visit. I think you are aware that the "Acadians" came from Nova Scotia I got interested in the Acadians (Cajuns), when I use to go down to my older son's house, who was a professor in a university at Lafayette, Louisiana, He died last November of a heart attack.

The beautiful moss covered trees in the area around Lafayette, still give it a touch of the "forest primeval", as described in Longfellow's poem "Evangeline".

In 1765 The Church of England demanded unconditional obedience and some 6000 French who refused began an exodus called the "Le Grand Derangement". Their homes, towns were burned, livestock and crops destroyed and as a final punishment for disloyalty, families were separated. This goes to show you that religions have spilt more blood and suffering than all the political wars put together.

The "Cajuns" today, as you well know, are a thrifty, hard working, fun-loving, but devoutly religious folks. They work, play and make love with equal enthusiasm, marry young, and cheerfully demonstrate extreme fecundity.

I have been very fortunate, in that I've been to China, India, the Far East, Poland, Russia, The Middle East, every country in Europe, Japan and South East Asia. I would choose Switzerland, but Nova Scotia would be my second choice.

The Scenery there is spectacular. The island is 600 miles long, and we drove all around the island, and crisscross the island twice. The area North of Halifax. out in the country, is very peaceful, with little or no crime. They have HEALTH CARE for everyone, and there are no homeless. If a person is homeless, (they) rent a house, and provide them with sufficient money to survive.

However, Nova Scotia has an unemployment rate of 40-45 %. The codfisheries are "kaput" and so are the coal mines. Nova Scotia has fallen on financial difficulties. They do have 52 ft. tidal waves, the highest in the world, which gives cheap island electricity. Salmon fishing is better in N.S. than Alaska. We were in Alaska last year. Bob and Evelyn Oshlo went with us.

TIME, IS THE GREATEST OF ALL TYRANTS. As we go on toward old age, he takes our health, limbs, faculties, strength and features.

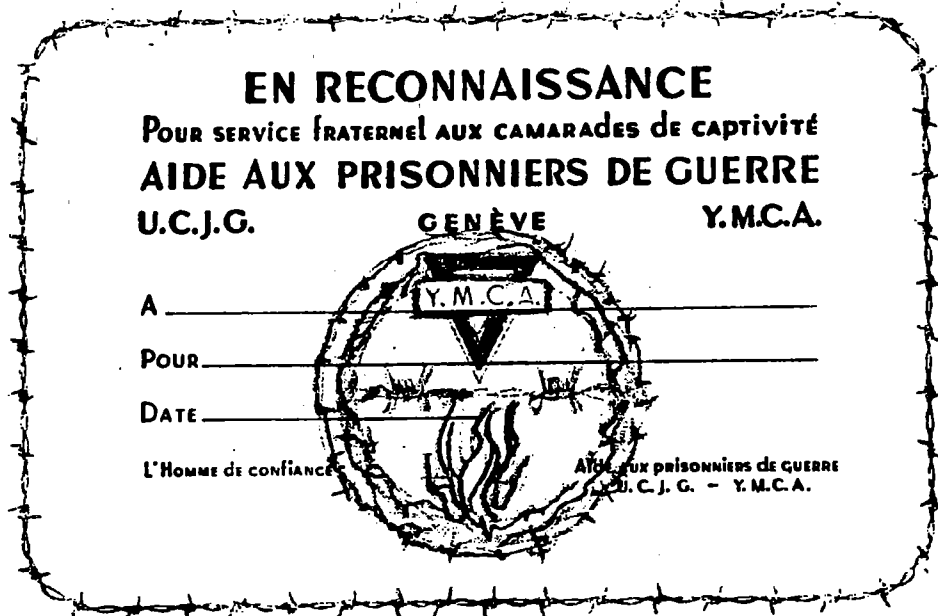
There is no cure for birth or death, save to enjoy the interval.

All the best,

Billy Bingham

PS- They have 132 different varieties of apples in Nova Scotia. The apple was known to people of the Iron Age, and was cultivated 4000 years ago in Egypt. Roman records of the first century A.D., listed 36 varieties of apples. The U. S.A. has only 36 varieties

THIS BEAUTIFUL CERTIFICATE IS AN APPRECIATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL Y. M. C. A. OF SERVICES THAT WAS BESTOWED UPON CERTAIN MEMBERS OF OFLAG 64 DURING THEIR STAY THERE IN 1943-1945. THE MDEAL IS SHOWN IN SUBDUED COLORS IN THE CENTER OF THE CERTIFICATE.



As noted in the ITEM Henry Söderberg has located some additional medals and certificate and wants to replace those whom some of members have lost. It will require your getting in touch with Henry or YOur Editor so that he may make the proper preparations for a presentation in Fort Worth in October at our Reunion.

20 January 1994

To Friends of Ed Moschel,

Ed has been enjoying receiving cards and letters from his friends. He can read and understand the messages but has become limited in his ability to respond. His Parkinson's disease has stopped his ability to write and his ability to form understandable spoken words is greatly diminished. Ed asked that I complete an update letter.

Most of you know that Ed moved from Des Moines to Cedar Falls in July 1990. He had made the decision in 1989 that he could no longer live in his own apartment and entered the Scottish Rite Park care facility. Unfortunately, the only rooms available were 2 man rooms. This became very frustrating for a life-long bachelor who was accustomed to his privacy. We began looking for a facility with an available single room. A single room in the home care section of the Western Home in Cedar Falls, IA was located and Ed decided to move. A bonus of the move from the perspective of the family is that he is much closer for us to visit and supervise his care. He has been able to visit our home in Cedar Falls and was here for Christmas Dinner.

In the past years, Ed's condition has continued to deteriorate and he is now unable to walk unassisted. He has been moved from the home care section of the home to a single room in skilled nursing care. He seems to be content since his room contains his own furniture except for a hospital bed. Three years ago Ed received a POW medal that has been placed in a wall display frame with all of his other medals. We have also assembled a collage of photos from Ed's life that is displayed on another wall. On good days Ed continues to enjoy visitors and is able to understand conversation but has great difficulty participating due to his speech problem. Ed forgets that he can not walk unassisted and falls when he attempts to walk alone. After several falls leading to trips to the emergency room for stitches we have consented to the use a restraint to keep him from standing on his own. We have sold it to him as a reminder to him to keep him from falling. He has adapted quite well but continues to forget about the restraint and will work against it to stand.

Ed's older brother and my father, Albert, is on the same floor of the Western Home. We recently moved Ed to a single room next door to Albert so that they will be able to see each other more frequently. Albert had a stroke about 14 years ago that left him in need of nursing care. Albert is usually very alert and able to converse very well.



Please keep Ed on your mailing list and in your prayers. He is in the Martin Center of the Western Home, 420 East 11th St., Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613. If you need someone to talk with I can be reached at 319-266-3366. My address is 2223 Clay St., Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613.

This letter is being sent to the following:

Bill Bingham - Route 3, Box 54, England, Arkansas 72046  
J.C. Brown - 3926 36th St, Des Moines, IA 50310  
Roy Chappell-400 S. Houston St., Kaufman, TX 75142-2324  
Eugene Daniel - 5100 Sharon Road, Charlotte, NC 28210  
Ms Francis Garrity-701 S Locust St. Jefferson, IA 50129  
Charles Jones - 300 12th St. So., Northwood, IA 50459  
John Slack - 1314 Youngsford Rd. Gladwyne PA 19035-1231

Please send me the names and addresses of others that you are aware of who may be interested in receiving this update.

Thank you for your attention to Ed.

*Thank you for your card to Ed.*

*Ed Maschel*

ACHTUNG OFLAG 64, 1943-1945. THE 50th ANNIVERSARY BOOK, Evanston Publishers Inc., Evanston, IL., 240 pp., 1993, \$50.00.

The long awaited 50th Anniversary Book of Oflag 64 has reached its subscribers and is being received with many most satisfied readers as a high class product and one we all are proud of indeed.

To describe the main highlights , which should maintain a strong reader interest is easily understood since it touches the deep appreciation of most of who know anything about the challenging assignment it was.

The opening stage is set with a thumbnail sketch of Oflag 64, the final destination of most American Ground Force Officers in WW II. With the discomfort of restriction and hunger, it describes the many available opportunities which may make life far more pleasant on this foreign 10 acre camp in southwest Poland. Without trying to weigh the most important or most popular facility, a general view is offered instead. Near the top would be a 7,000 volume library which is an easy way to forget some inconveniences and was used widely. The off-campus education program was a shining light to many who were able to gain some college transferable credits with certain courses offered. An adjunct to the well qualified instructors and their course offerings came the lectures by interesting and well versed speakers. On the cultural side musical and dramatic groups were formed and with a cadre of professionals from the 1400 members of the camp at the end, fine performances were thoroughly enjoyed and deeply appreciated by many of us. Those two efforts would not have been possible without the generous and thoughtful assistance of the International Y.M.C.A. under the aegis of a regularly assigned representative to ours and adjacent camps in the area, Henry Soderberg from near Stockholm, Sweden. Facing the gradually decreasing diet provided by the Germans was solved to a great extent by the International Red Cross and the packets which it provided initially on a packet each week, But, understandably by late 1944 and early 1945 the deliveries were curtailed severely with the costly American and British air raids on rolling stock and rail lines. This 7000 calorie a day diet left many officers with a weight loss of 30 to 50 pounds in the long run. Obviously the communications gap was one most easily identifiable in a propagandized Nazi Germany, so a camp newspaper was begun. A small but ingenious staff of two editors initially, a staff of eight reporters and a talented "artist in residence" soon led to a sought after and well received edition. That humble beginning under the most difficult conditions possible has continued to today with its regularity and consistency.

The more detailed and fascinating descriptions of those who soon arrived from Africa at Szubin soon welded into a well disciplined, proud and efficient military organization. Possibly Oflag 64 was the most exemplary camp in many ways of all Nazi Germany. Many that we saw enroute never came close to any comparison with what could be observed there.

Reunions have led to many lasting friendships which may have begun in Oflag 64, but each reunion many more friendships develop by moments together and listening and exchanging views from all parts of the United States.

This book may offer little interest to one without having seen or having a relative who might have been a Prisoner of war. But is a treasure at least this reviewer to have close by and to read at a leisurely pace from many different parts of the work. There may be the possibility that not having been within the camp but a few months instead of the long three and a half years a person might not feel the connection or bonding that most of us feel. That is not totally valid for in the end on January 21, 1945 nearly every able bodied officer there moved out as a determined and disciplined unit. That said, and to urge anyone who has not seen a copy of the book and preemptorily made a rash decision to neither want to read or buy it, is an opportunity not to be missed. While it is dear to me and my deep regards go to those who made it possible, it is hoped that many others might examine it and decide to, for their relatives sake, buy it and see in more detail than you ever imagined how the camp could have been so successfully operated.

Copies are still available and can be easily purchased with a check made out to "The Oflag 64 ExPOW Fund" for \$50.00 c/o Bill Cory, 2843 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY. 40206.

Respectfully submitted,

Editor, Post Oflag 64 ITEM

Herb Garris

# OFLAG 64

*The Fiftieth Anniversary Book*

COMMISSIONED BY  
THE ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE FOR  
THE KRIEGY REUNION  
HELD THIS YEAR IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY  
OCTOBER 1993

EVANSTON PUBLISHING, INC., EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

*Reunions have been  
the highlight of our group.  
Each one it seemed had its own  
special feature  
which made it distinctive  
and of course better than  
the previous one.*

BETWEEN REUNIONS,  
THE GROUP OF SURVIVING EX-OFLAGITES  
HAS BEEN HELD TOGETHER FOR  
THE PAST HALF-A-CENTURY  
BY MEANS OF A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER,  
THE POST-OFLAG ITEM,  
PUT OUT TIRELESSLY AND SINGLE-HANDEDLY BY  
JOHN SLACK, OF GLADWYNE, PA.  
THAT JOB HAS NOW BEEN TAKEN OVER BY  
HERB GARRIS, OF P.O. BOX 1693,  
PINEHURST, N.C. 28374