

VOL. XXXIX

POST OFLAG 64 ITEM

JANUARY 1996

**PINEHURST, NC:**

With a note of sadness and deep concern, we must let the membership know that on Friday, 5 January, John Slack underwent a quadruple aorta heart bypass at Hannemann's University Hospital in downtown Philadelphia. It went well and we are hearing good reports from his daughter, Margie, who is on hand with him. In due respect to John in this time of trauma and recovery, please limit your contact with him to get well cards and letters, and no phone calls for awhile. If you will send him a card now and then, he will appreciate it lots. His address is:

1314 Youngsford Road  
Gladwyne, PA 19035

**HERB GARRIS**

**PINEHURST, NC:** This is in the form of a note of deep appreciation to Lucy and Don Lussenden who, over the past year, have been shown on Page 2 of THE ITEM as our Guest Editors Pro Tem. They have asked for some assistance and relief from that sometimes onerous

task, even though it has brought right much joy for the most part. Their skills will be missed and having worked closely with them for these past months it was truly a great honor and pleasure, indeed. Many thanks from the entire membership for the loyal and dedicated work in turning out a real professional newsletter, which has brought so many accolades. Our very best wishes to the both of you, and please let's stay in close touch with your wide span of ideas and imaginations as Editors par excellence.

At the reunion in Fort Worth, a short session took place among the members present to seek assistance for Herb Garris as the full-time Editor of THE ITEM. That was due to somewhat the same circumstances which forced John Slack to step down in Colorado Springs, CO, in 1992. At the meeting, two people stood out and were able to give a year right away to the position: Don and Lucy Lussenden. They, like most of us, had some heavy family and community commitments and even so agreed to accept the challenge, and it is for sure that. Another volunteer couple, Tom and Sue Lawson, from Grand Junction, CO will keep us informed now in 1996. While they do not have readily available the computer systems of Ford Motor Company where Lucy holds a very responsible assignment, they are willing to undertake the task, as I did earlier, with their typewriter. I hope the slight change in format is no trouble to any of our readers.

Their names have been assigned to Page 2, and they have begun already with the flood of news items which have reached me since Atlanta and been forwarded to them. I hope that all of you will join me in the very best to these two fine couples.

Just another short, but very sincere, note to the members who have so generously responded to our appeal in the November issue of THE ITEM. The basic \$25 annual contribution has met with considerable favor, and many have been kind enough to advance it upward. John Slack, Bob Levin and I join in your very favorable responses and the balance on hand is nearly six times greater than the discouraging days of October. Apparently, THE ITEM means a great deal, indeed, to most of our members, and it has been shown in kind words and financial support. A Happy and Successful New Year!  
HERB GARRIS

VÄLLINGBY, SWEDEN: Claire and Henry, thank you for the pretty and informative Christmas card which came just about the same time that Santa was scheduled. Your loyalty to both us and Stalag Luft III seems to me to be unparalleled, always so available and happy to be on hand with both groups. The fact is that we enjoy both of you so much and sincerely hope that we can continue for a long time. One curious and leading question, do you among your souvenirs have a spare copy of a YMCA Wartime Log? I would love a copy if you can locate one this many years late.

I never had one given to me and Art Beltrone, who has recently done one on A Pilot's Wartime Log, now is inspired to launch one from the infantry soldier's view as he may have noted it. He called me this past week and told me of his plan.

One last request, I have not had any success with the American Repts who published "Model Occupation." If in your next contact with the author could you please let her know my concern and interest in a copy, which I would pay for.

Warm regards and it was so good seeing and visiting with you in Atlanta.  
HENRY SÖDERBERG

CALIFON, NJ: Win, we thank you very much for your thoughtful letter and the enclosed articles relative to Jim. They are shown in this issue of THE ITEM. Both seem clearly to show the same Jim whom we have enjoyed so much in the recent reunions. For me he was one whose life was devoted to service initially to his country as a brave soldier, and upon his retirement to his family and the community. His fine disposition made him a pleasure to be near, and his sense of humor was full of optimism and a joy to watch.

Our organization, Win, like you, have lost a truly dedicated member and good friend. We all join in extending our deep condolence and prayers at this time. Win's letter follows:

"Thank you for your kind note of October 16 and forgive me for being so tardy with this reply.

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For your information and use: P.F. checks should be sent to one of the Secretary-Treasurers and letters with news or general information to the Secretary-Treasurer or Guest Editors.

1. OFLAG 64 ITEM PRINTER & MAILER  
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Herb Garris (910/295-6290)  
P.O. Box 1693  
Pinehurst, NC 28374
- Bob Levin (910/673-1590)  
558 Seven Lakes North  
West End, NC 27376

I had hoped that Jim would rally when we brought him home from the Care Center, he wanted so badly to come home. So we got Hospice with all their helpers and many volunteers from the community, and we all thought that in his home surroundings and with all his friends nearby that he would feel better, he was only home a week, and everything happened so fast. I've been kind of 'non compis' for awhile. My cousin stayed with me for a week and was a big help, but she had to return to her job in Connecticut, and I've been overwhelmed with paper work.

We always enjoyed the annual Oflag 64 reunions. We looked forward to seeing so many good friends and had such a great time.

I'd appreciate your writing Paul Hall in NY as you suggested.

I am enclosing some of the write-ups from the local papers.

I appreciate your thoughtfulness and am grateful for your kind words about Jim. Sometimes I still can't believe what happened. I guess it will take awhile, they say time heals.

I, too, have a hard time writing good friends. Please keep in touch, it's a great morale booster to hear from you.

My very best regards to Ethelene and to all our dear friends in Oflag 64. With love to all. Most Sincerely,  
WIN BALL

If our readers care to write a note to Win, her address is:  
Mrs. James A. Ball  
Box 184  
Califon, NJ 07830

Memorial contributions can be made to Califon First Aid Squad, Box 253, Califon, 07830; to Hunterdon Hospice, 2100 Wescott Drive, Flemington, NJ, 08822; or the American Cancer Society Hunterdon Division, 84 Park Avenue, Flemington, NJ 08822.

COVINGTON, IN: Thank you so much for your recent letter and the fascinating enclosures. Your story of the 7th Armored Division was such a reminder of tough days in your travels and the Combat Infantry Badge award, so well deserved. While I am not familiar with ACRES U.S.A. interview with Colonel Bo Gritz, it was interesting and his two books "A Nation Betrayed" and "Called to Serve" would be informative reading. Charley Reese's article and THE SPOT LIGHT clips were interesting as well.

We do recall your auctions at Ft. Worth and San Antonio. What a thoughtful money-maker that is. Our thanks to you and Jo Ann for the book order and the P.F. check. Have a Happy New Year.  
LEE CLINGAN

GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FL: Hervey, thank you for the pretty Christmas card, the book order, and most welcome check to the P.F. What a nice reunion in Atlanta, one of the best, I think. I share your regret of missing out on unknown reunions, and have formed so many good memories since. To you and Dot a Happy New Year.  
HERVEY H. ROBINSON

ELKHORN, NE: Mary and Kermit hope you're enjoying your copy of the Waters story as interviewed by a War College student in 1980. The quote from your note reveals your feelings for John Waters, "We were bunk mates for the last 3 months before the long hike back to Germany. Also because of that association, I had 2 days and nights at Genl. Patton's quarters with Mrs. Patton and Bea Patton Waters - John's wife - giving them first-hand reports on how he was after being wounded in our break-out. Good memories of a fine officer and man."

The check for the P.F. was also received with great thanks. Please plan on Des Moines in '96. A Happy New Year.  
KERMIT R. HANSEN

MEMPHIS, TN: Your letter and kind remarks reached us through John Slack. The check came too and many thanks. Moose Moore may be Wild Cat Moore. Jim Sherman reported seeing him there. I'll get Bill Warthen

on it for you. Glad to hear you are home from your recent illness, and hope you are on the road to recovery. Season's greetings.  
RAYMOND HUGHES

MESA, AZ: Newton, many thanks for your help with the P.F. Next time, send us some news from sunny Mesa. Season's Greetings.  
NEWTON W. LANTRON

CHARLES CITY, IA: Horace, many thanks for your usual thoughtful check to the P.F. Best of the season's wishes to you and Mary.  
HORACE M. SPAULDING

REDLANDS, CA: Richard, many thanks for your encouraging words and check to the P.F. My best for you and a Happy New Year.  
RICHARD C. MILES

LEESBURG, FL: Bob, thanks for your welcome check to the P.F. Season's Greetings.  
ROBERT G. COX

PHOENIX, AZ: Charles and Frances, thanks for your beautiful Christmas greetings and check to the P.F. Hope you can try for Des Moines in '96. Best wishes.  
CHARLES MOORE

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK: Lucyl, always so good to hear from you. Your Christmas greetings and most welcome check for the P.F. were well received. Many best wishes in '96.  
LUCYL SHIRK

FREDERICKSBURG, TX: George, I always enjoy your mail, albeit short. Thanks for the check to the P.F. Catch me up next time on Killeen.  
GEORGE I. GREENE

BLACK EAGLE, MT: Virginia, so good to get your welcome letter and the check for the P.F. Thanks so much. Am surprised you have not escaped to the south yet. Please keep me posted. Happy New Year.  
VIRGINIA BARTON

BIRMINGHAM, AL: James, many thanks for your prompt check to the P.F. Enjoyed our Atlanta stay and a chance to meet

you and many of Warthen's 84th Infantry Division friends. Happy New Year.  
JAMES MONAGHAN

JACKSONVILLE, AL: Paul, your thoughtful check to the P.F. and note was received. Many thanks. Atlanta was a real joy. Season's Best Wishes.  
PAUL D. LAMPRU, D.V.M.

SWARTHMORE, PA: Tom, your pretty Christmas card came and thanks. So good seeing you and Eleanor at the Atlanta "do." Best Wishes.  
THOMAS E. MILLER, JR.

JACKSON, MS: Vinton and Donna you got sorta spread thin this fall with two reunions on the same weekend. Understand, but we look forward once more to seeing you in Des Moines. Our best to Tom and Florentine. Happy New Year.  
VINTON THOMSON

LAWTON, OK: Martin, many thanks for your nice Christmas card. Appreciate any word from you and the activities of Fort Sill and nearby Lawton. Best wishes,  
MARTIN KEISER

GROVE CITY, OH: O.L., thank you so much for your book order and by now I hope you are well into the fascinating story of General Waters. Your enclosure was vivid and totally clear. Thanks a bunch!  
O.L. GRADFORD

CENTREVILLE, VA: Lucine and George, thank you for your prompt reply and the citation for Bill Paty, and the pretty and newsy Christmas card. Those two youngsters I am sure you are very proud of, for they are surely on the way up, like DAD!

As soon as I hear from Paty and have his permission to run the nice and very complimentary article on him, you will by then read it in the next ITEM.

Enjoyed the short phone call while in the D.C. area, and promise to get with you and a couple of others for lunch on the next trip up there. My best wishes to you and the family in 1996.  
GEORGE JUSKALIAN

WAIALUA, HI: Bill, our congratulations on the well deserved and splendid honor given you this year by the AUSA. The main and truly respected credit to you is that it has not turned your head a bit. The past year and a half have been so eventful for you, indeed. Especially, the invitation to the White House by President Clinton and President Yeltsin to honor you there, and later on in Russia for your fighting and leadership with the Soviet Army in the spring offensive against Germany in the spring of 1945.

Our very best to you and Peg. (The citation is shown later in this issue.)  
WILLIAM W. PATY, JR.

PIQUA, OH: Les, thank you for your kind words of encouragement as well as the contribution for the P.F. So fortunate that you and Edie were able to visit Andersonville following the Atlanta reunion and see the progress being made there. Glad to learn with the Atlanta power outage repaired, you did get to see and appreciate the Cyclorama as well.  
LESTER K. EDSALL

LOUISVILLE, KY: Bill, thank you so much for your thoughtful check for the P.F. and a copy of the Waters' book. Hope you enjoyed it. With best wishes to you in 1996.  
WILLIAM R. CORY

SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Clarence, thanks for your brief Christmas note. Glad to learn your work on "The Ranger Evasion and Escape" is nearing completion. We look forward with interest to the stories involved, it sounds so promising. Best Wishes.  
CLARENCE R. MELTESEN

ORLAND PARK, IL: Ira, many thanks for your check to the P.F. As I recalled you were with the 28th Infantry Division from Pennsylvania. Hope to see you in Des Moines. All the Best Wishes.  
IRA R. SLAGTER

ATHENS, GA: Clementi and Boomer, thank you for the recent and welcome check to the P.F.

I am so pleased with the VCR and the way it turned out. (On the tour of CNN, Clementi and I were selected to appear as guest anchors with an appropriate broadcast, including the anchor jackets with an intro by Larry King. WOW! No wonder these guys have such egos.)

Many best wishes in 1996.  
H. RANDOLPH HOLDER

OAK VIEW, CA: Jacqueline, thanks for your letter of August 15, 1995. It is a sad note concerning the loss in February 1994 of Richard E. Davis. You mentioned finding a book, "Oflag 64 1943-45" among his things, but having no knowledge of Oflag 64. You would like Richard's grandchildren to know more about their grandfather. If any of our members knew Richard and would like to write to Mrs. Ramseyer to give her some long overdue information about him, her address:  
Jacqueline Ramseyer  
10629 Encino Drive  
Oak View, CA 93022 (805/649-3428)  
JACQUELINE RAMSEYER

ROSWELL, NM: Iola and Walter, what a nice letter and the check for the Waters' book and the rest for the P.F. Hope you are enjoying the book by now. With about mid-twenties on the site, not much energy is astir re buying or sowing seeds right now; that can only improve shortly. Just got the ton or so of leaves raked into large piles and a couple will be here soon to take them to the landfill. Then the whole yard will look better. Will be in touch for a seed order again this year. To both of you a very successful New Year and Good Health.  
WALTER I. GILL

ALEXANDRIA, VA: Bob, I surely enjoyed my short phone call to you in early December while in D.C. Your condition sounded serious enough, but stable with medication, and please stay with it. (Bob has had for some time a touch of Parkinson's Disease, and we all join in our best wishes and prayers for you.) So glad you assisted me with some of our mutual friends out at College Park and the University of Maryland. It was a wonderful and interesting assignment in those early years after our respective retirements. To you and Jane all the very best in 1996.  
BOB REPPA

ARLINGTON, TX: Vincent, thank you so much for your note and the check for the P.F. I would be remiss if I didn't tell you that your reaction to the amount of \$25 has been very well accepted. Again, my best wishes to both of you and please try for Des Moines in 1996.  
VINCENT C. WHITE

FT. PIERCE, FL: Rosa, thank you so much for the nice Christmas letter and card, which was here after I had been in Bethesda with your mother and dad. I always enjoy them so much, so full of life and such interesting folks. Glad to see your talents so well applied in the teaching field, and with your imagination, I expect your students are very well rewarded with you at the helm. Keep up the good work and I am very proud of you with the new group of high schoolers. Warm regards and the very best in 1996.  
ROSA D. LEE

LONDON, ENGLAND: Ken, I thank you so much for the kind letter and Christmas card. Indeed, you are right this year in Atlanta was a truly fine reunion. It is a pity that you are so far removed, but it was my good fortune to track you down in June 1994. We had such a great and enjoyable time, thanks to you as our tour guide. David Goiser, my son-in-law, is still talking about that wonderful day along the many corners around your capital city. Your contribution was received in September, and I regret being so tardy in acknowledging it. Many thanks for that again. Best wishes to you and your sister.  
KEN FINLAYSON

KANNAPOLIS, NC: Tom, thanks very much for your check to the P.F. Best wishes for 1996!  
THOMAS H. WINGATE

SPOKANE, WA: Herm, your kind letter re a Spokane reunion site was received and well stated. Seattle would be a better choice. Thanks also for your look in on Leo Bustad. Airborne in '96! Hope to see you in Des Moines.  
HERMAN LITTMAN

ORCUTT, CA: Bob, many thanks for your check to the P.F. Happy to learn you enjoy receiving and sharing THE ITEM. Warm regards and best wishes in the New Year.  
ROBERT RIVERS

JACKSON, MS: Joe and Ruth, many thanks for your contribution to the P.F. With all our best wishes and hope to see you in Des Moines.  
JOSEPH C. AINSWORTH

COLUMBIA, SC: Don, your kind words and the pretty Christmas card were appreciated. Your handiwork with the 1995 Atlanta committee was a pleasure to watch. All the way, Airborne! Hope to see you in Des Moines.  
DONALD O. GRAUL

HARRISON, AR: Martha, it is with deep regret that we have just learned of the loss of your husband, Garvin Fitton. He is well known by many of our members and held in high esteem by all who may have known and served with him. The enclosed obituary speaks of his achievements much more elegantly than I am able to say it. All of us join in deepest sympathy for you and the three children and we send our prayers and deep condolences. If some of our readers who knew Garvin well, as well as others, would like to send a letter to the family at this time of grief you may address it to: Mrs. Garvin Fitton, Box 249, Harrison, AR 72602-0249. With highest respect, we remain.  
MARTHA FITTON

LOVELAND, CO: Jean, many thanks for your check which just arrived for the P.F. When you get a chance, write us and keep us posted from out in Loveland. Meanwhile, we hope it will be a good New Year for you and your family.  
JEAN CHRISTENSEN

NORTH TONAWANDA, NY: Richard and Lillian, thank you very much for your nice letter and the check for the P.F. I, too, believe we are on the right track judging from the many contributions received since the appeal began in the November issue of THE ITEM. We are all so grateful with the splendid reaction like yours.  
RICHARD M. MANTON

ENTERPRISE, AL: Clayton, what a nice letter from you back in September. Had surely thought that you might make the muster in Atlanta, but now it is clear why you did not. Your check for the P.F. was very welcome, many thanks.

Sure enough your old buddy, Alvin Robin, from Oflag 64 did show up with his wife, Martha. Like you said it was his first along with several others that Bill Warthen flushed out somehow. They were made most welcome and it paid off generously. Please in your next call or letter to N. J. Meadows, down in Opp, give our very best wishes.

Thank you for the suggestion which we have so far met half way. We are investigating the Bulk Mail Rate. Again, the issue of Not For Profit has been mentioned, but little interest has been shown by the members present. The simplicity of the organization as it is today and has prevailed for many years before with John Slack has been the one preferred, answering to only the membership and no one else.

Thank you for the nice remarks about THE ITEM, it is only as good as the news the members mail in to us. Best wishes in 1996.

CLAYTON METCALF

BALTIMORE, MD: Gottfried, your letter of 6 December was so full of many nice notes and things that, I hope you will forgive me for publishing it in this issue. The occasion was an invitation by Gottfried to me and my daughter, Anna Goiser, from Fairfax, VA, to a luncheon recently at the National Museum of Art on Constitution Avenue in downtown Washington. It was pleasure in itself, but he had found two admission tickets for the famed Vermeer Exhibit now on display here in America. After the lunch, we met again and had coffee in the elegant restaurant one floor below the main entrance. We were then shown by him to his dozen or so overall favorites and what a treat it was!

We then left and have had a few calls and two notes since. The main thrust of it all is to share with you members what I call a really great insight into someone I didn't know before, even though John Slack, almost a year ago, had me do a

short appreciation of him. He, you recall, was the interpreter for Colonel Schneider, and our Commandant of Oflag 64. His most intensive duties were the censor work in the mail room. There he became acquainted with Tony Lumpkin and Amon Carter, Jr., who subsequently set the wheels in motion to lead him to America. But before that, he had three years at the University of Heidelberg who awarded him his Degree in Law. He came to the United States in 1949 and by 1954 had completed his Doctorate in Political Science.

All along since last year, I wondered if he had made the march out with us. No, he did not as the letter shows. Instead he ended up in Lückenwalde and shortly thereafter to an assignment which allowed him to hide out and reach the hands of the friendly American front-line troops. After V-E Day he, at about twenty years of age, resumed his civilian life again.

In conclusion his migration to America has served both parts well, and we should be very happy for his coming and the success as a Full Professor with Johns Hopkins University now in his fortieth year. Amazing! And with all our best wishes.  
GOTTFRIED DIETZE.

(Gottfried's letter:)

Dec. 6, 1995

"Dear Herb:

When I returned to my apartment (1255 New Hampshire), I was delighted to find your letter of November 29th, together with all the beautiful photos, which I had already admired in Washington. I shall treasure all of it, as I shall our meetings at the National Gallery. Was there again last Sunday and when I walked by our corner table, I thought of you and your daughter and the pleasant afternoon we spent together. She might be interested in knowing that the visiting hours for the Vermeer Exhibit have been extended until 7 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and it is easy to pick up tickets at the desk for the hours shortly before 7. I went in again at 6 and found to my delight that the huge crowds had left so that one could easily enjoy the paintings, with no views obstructed by the other visitors.

My thoughts went back to January 1945 when on Jan. 21 I was able to get out of Posen (Poznan) in order to join Oflag 64, but took a train to Berlin instead because the line to Exin had already been interrupted by the advancing Russians and it was to be assumed that the Oflag would be moved west. My

marching orders to the Oflag virtually saved my life, with Posen being declared a fortress and the German soldiers were perishing there. To think that all this happened more than fifty years ago and that we would meet here!

Our ranks are getting thinner, and we can all be glad to be still around. You certainly have a wonderful life of a country squire in your place in North Carolina, and living in happiness with your family. I hope your family may continue to enjoy that for a long time to come! Sehr herzlich,  
Gottfried (s)"

HOUSTON, TX: John, your nice account of the cachet, which you so kindly gave me in Atlanta, is shown with the combined efforts of Gulf Coast FDC Group and ours. Since the November issue of THE ITEM was pretty slim due to the fiscal stress we were facing, this will be a bit larger issue. Enjoyed our stay at the reunion and I am so glad you and Bettie brought along your handsome son as well. Our congratulations to you for the article, so well deserved and well written about one of our own. Many other fine narratives are out there and need to be surfaced and revealed in whatever format you may select. They will be most welcome!

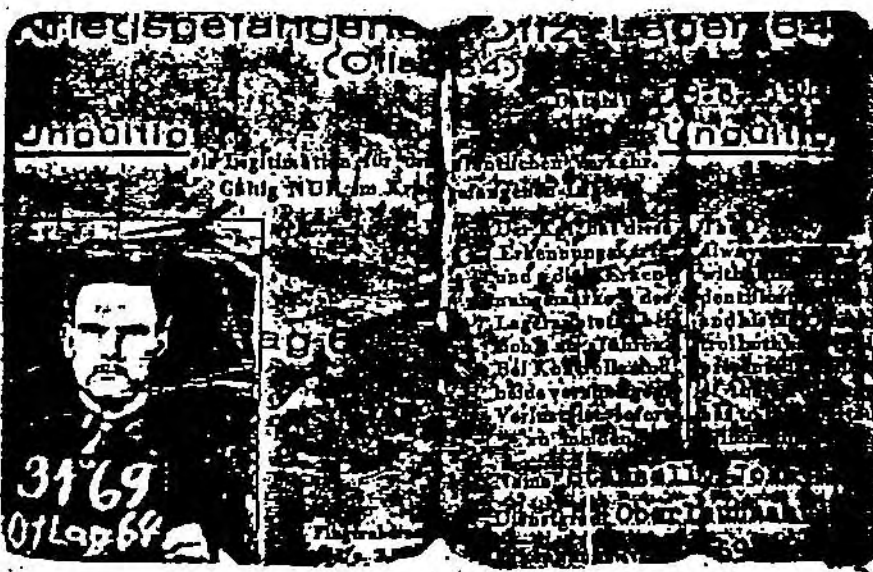
Hoping for a Happy New Year for the three of you and the children.  
JOHN A. STANSELL

SPOKANE, WA: Ed, many thanks for your check which just came for the P.F. It is folks like you and Herm Littman, right there in your home town, who help keep this organization alive. I am so appreciative of you both. Try for Des Moines next October. Warm regards and a Happy New Year!  
EDWARD E. ROONEY

KNOXVILLE, TN: Kathleen, many thanks for your check to the P.F. which is deeply appreciated. Saddened to have to remove your name from the mailing list, but please stay in touch with us from time-to-time. With our best wishes for a Happy New Year and a successful one.  
KATHLEEN JONES

HOLLAND, PA: Tom, many thanks for your check which came recently for the P.F. Appreciate it so very much. You know it's about time you came back here to the Sandhills where you worked for years in sales with Diamondhead after they bought the whole village. Warm regards and a Happy New Year.  
THOMAS MITCHELL

SALIDA, CO: Richard, many thanks for your check for the P.F. Also, your short but very informative letter brought a close memory to me. We were likely in the same march column from Normandy down to Rennes, the old French caserne where we stayed a few days until a train could take us on to Limberg, Germany. After interrogation



*John A. Stansell*

**IN REMEMBERANCE**



there, we moved on to Oflag 64 and arrived on 15 September 1944. Also, the 29th Infantry Division turned out a mutual friend of ours, a regimental commander named Pop Goode. Best wishes for a Happy New Year.

RICHARD P. SCOTT

GRAND JUNCTION, CO: For the next few issues, we will be your new guest editors, and will try to keep you all in touch with one another during this New Year, 1996. Names and addresses appear at the bottom of Page 2, to direct your mail. Letters containing postage fund contributions should be sent to Herb Garris or Bob Levin, as usual. If you want to send any other greetings of interest to our members, you can mail directly to Herb Garris or us.

Back in 1984, we became new life members of the American Ex-POW organization. Your former member, Alton Lentz (deceased), found my name in that bulletin which led us to the Oflag 64 group. Every reunion we have been able to attend since then has been an outstanding event in our lives; it is great to be able to give something in return. We look forward to another active and interesting year with a chance over in Des Moines to be together with "Hub" Hubbell and all the rest of our friends.

TOM AND SUE LAWSON

#### PERIODIC BOOK SALES PROMO

At this moment the most crying need lies with the huge inventory of "OFLAG 64 - THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY BOOK," not in our hands but with Bill Cory, 2843 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY 40206. What a pity it is for this fine book to sit on shelves and not be shared by many of us, but moreover with our younger relatives and especially many local libraries or VA Hospitals who would gladly welcome a copy as a gift.

If each of us would take a copy and present it as a gift to one of your schools, we could soon amortize the project in a short time. To set an

example for you here, my plan is to order two copies, one for each of the nearby high schools in our County School System. Our conduct, patriotism and sense of duty to our nation are worthy of our young people to read, study and follow later on perhaps.

A copy can be ordered for \$50.00, using the name and address shown above, and will be delivered promptly by UPS to your home.

Next, in among our holdings are the following

"THE WELCOME SWEDE" by Frank Diggs, \$15.00, hard bound. This is a delightful story about Henry Söderberg, our esteemed International YMCA Representative, who specifically served Oflag 64 so generously and well. Frank's rare writing skills and style are evident in presenting such a close and personal view of how grateful we were for Henry's presence in our camp, and all of the equipment he managed to bring us.

"OFLAG 64 AS I SAW IT" by Henry Söderberg, \$5.00, paperback. This is the story of a young 24-year old Swede and his wider-based duties with the YMCA, and includes the U.S. Army Air Force and the U.S. Army camps. It is a touching and gripping narrative showing the perilous path that he had to tread, trying to do his duty well and to somehow not jeopardize his very respected and enviable position of trust amongst the meddlesome and jealous Nazi and S.S. hierarchy he faced daily.

"A GRAND TOUR OF RUSSIA TO ODESSA WINTER 1945" by Herb Garris and Clarence Meltesen, \$5.00, paper back. This is a short narrative with maps included of about four months from the onset of the march out on 21 January 1945 until the author escaped from the column and ultimately rejoined his own unit, the 101st Airborne Division in late March on the Rhine River. (Clarence took my roughly typed notes and made it into an interesting story.)

All orders for the above three books are to be mailed to: Carl Christensen, Oflag 64 ITEM, 9 Pine Ridge Road, Whispering Pines, NC 28327.

Finally, and not one of our holdings, is "ESCAPE TO RUSSIA" by Boomer Holder, \$35.00, hard bound. This is much wider in scope than his previous work for it came from his

Please see Page 14

**Gulf Coast FDC Group  
Chapter 46 of American First Day Cover Society  
14359 Chadbourne  
Houston TX 77079-8811**

John A. Stansell was born and grew up in the small cotton-farming-railroad town of Mart TX (east of Waco) as the only child of a McLennan County banking family. The family had strong Christian influences and John was reared as a patriot, who in his childhood, was an Eagle Scout, star football player, and active in many extracurricular activities. Upon finishing high school John attended and graduated from Texas A & M University with a B.S. and a 2nd Lt. Reserve commission.

His business career began by following in his father and grand-father's footsteps into banking. Two years of banking in Houston was interrupted when John volunteered for active duty and then promptly reported for duty at Fort Sill, OK where he was assigned to the 157 Infantry Regiment 45th (Thunderbird) Inf. Division on Jan. 10, 1941. Stansell trained one year at Camp Barkley, Abilene, TX where he met his wife Bettie whom he married Easter Sunday of 1942. Soon his division was moved to Ft. Devens, MA then Pine Camp Drum, NY and then on to Ft. Pickett, VA. On May 29, 1943 he was shipped to Oran, Africa, then on to the D-Day landing (July 10, 1943) and to South Sicily. On this trip their vessel hit rocks and sank killing 16 men. John swam ashore after four hours in the water and about a month later landed below Naples in deep snow amid wintry mountains.

In Jan, 1944 Stansell and his buddies landed below Rome at Anzio on a cold, swampy beach head where they fought their way inland. After his battalion was surrounded (some eight days and three miles ahead of their division) John and some 55 others were forced to surrender on Feb. 23, 1944.

German soldiers marched the POWs 23 miles where they were then trucked to Florence, Italy, then shipped by railroad box car over Brenner Pass to Munich and then off to Oflag 64, Schubin, Poland arriving April, '44. At this camp they retained only American officers in a compound that measured a mere 900' X 1200' that was surrounded by three 15' barbed wire fences with 11 guard towers. All the captives were kept hungry, bored, suspicious of spies, sick and uneasy at all hours of every day. The German's could do anything they wanted as they were 1700 miles from Allied lines.

With only a 12 hour notice all 1200 POW officers were moved out the front gate and headed west when the weather was only 15° and snow was 6 to 8' deep. Single file, they were marched 15 to 20 miles each night in weather that got down to 20° below zero with no food except weak soup and two slices of bread per day. After six days they were then separated and some, including John, were put in box cars and shipped for seven days into the heart of Berlin to a POW camp at Luckenwalde, 40 miles below Berlin (Valentines Day, 1945). After the Russian/USA hook up at Elbe River the Russians freed the camp and on May 5, 1945 took John and his buddies and transported them some 80 miles past the Elbe River to a hospital area. By this time John had lost 50 pounds and was down to a mere 125 pounds.

After being medically checked, John and the others were put on a train to Paris and spent the next 10 days at Camp Lucky Strike before being shipped to Fort Dix, NJ and then back to TX where he arrived in San Antonio and back into the arms of his own Bettie, on June 5, 1945.

To this day, John still carries a copy of the ID card dated Aug 19, 1944 (reproduced on this cover as the cachet). Also on the face of this cover you will note the balloon type signature of John's first name, which was the way he and Bettie had agreed to know that any letters she got were really from him. John continued Reserve military for 28 years and ultimately retired as a Lieutenant Colonel.

Members of the Gulf Coast FDC Group are very pleased to have John and his wife Bettie, as active members of their group and wanted to honor John, along with all other POWs and MIAs from all U.S. military operations, during this year as we celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the end of World War II.

October 3, 1995

AM 95-3

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arlington, VA - The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) has selected Mr. William W. Paty, Jr., of Haleiwa, Hawaii, as the 1995 recipient of the General Creighton W. Abrams Medal for outstanding support of the Army. The medal is presented annually to the individual who, in the opinion of AUSA's Council of Trustees, has contributed most to the advancement of the U.S. Army.

Mr. Paty has provided vital leadership and support for the advancement of Army goals and objectives in Hawaii and the nation throughout his adult life. From his days as the first Hawaii resident to qualify as a paratrooper to his present appointment as the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army for Hawaii, he has inspired patriotism and community support for the United States Army.

His highly visible career has brought him into the forefront of Hawaii's most critical issues, including environmental preservation and the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. He has served as president, Hawaii Constitutional Convention; chairman, Hawaii State Water Commission; member, State Criminal Injuries Compensation Commission and chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources for the State of Hawaii.

Mr. Paty's business career began in 1946 as an agriculturist with the Waialua Sugar Company. He rose to the position of assistant manager before leaving the company in 1967 to become the president of PLAN, Division of Castle & Cooke. In 1969 he returned to Waialua Sugar Company as president, a position he held until 1984. From 1984 until 1986 Mr. Paty was chairman, Diversified Agriculture at Castle & Cooke. He has also held positions as national director, American Social Health Association; director, Hawaii Education Council; member, Board of Governors, Hawaii Employers Council; president, Oahu Planters' Association; president, Wahiawa Water Company; President, Hawaii Sugar Technologists; president, Personnel Association of Hawaii; director, Hawaii Chamber of Commerce; and member of Hawaii's Farm Bureau. Mr. Paty received a BS degree in Agriculture from Cornell University in 1942 and an Advanced Management degree from Harvard University in 1954.

Currently, Mr. Paty is Trustee of Mark A. Robinson Trusts; president, Kamananui Orchard and Ranch Company and director, Kualoa Ranch Company. He and his wife, Marguerite, reside in Haleiwa.

The Abrams Medal will be presented to Mr. Paty on Monday, October 16, 1995 during the opening ceremony of AUSA's 41st Annual Meeting at the Sheraton Washington Hotel in Washington, DC.

GE - CALIFON - LEBANON TOWNSHIP

# ON REVIEW

A Recorder Publishing Company Newspaper

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1995

35 cents

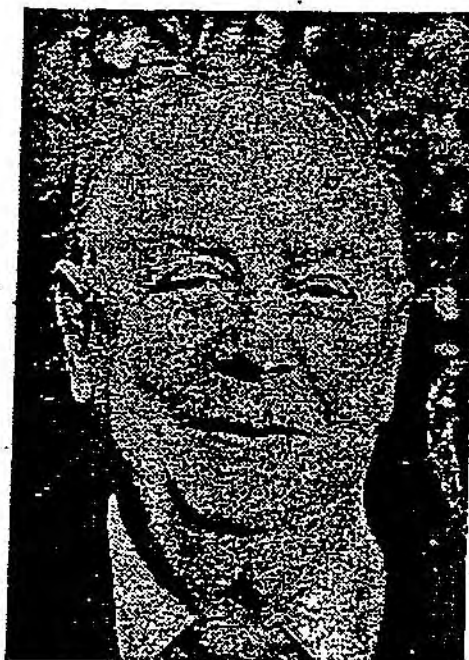
## Califon pays tribute to one-of-kind mayor

By NANCY DEGENHARDT  
Staff Writer

CALIFON — Lt. Col. James A. Ball, popular mayor of Califon for nine years, was remembered with affection and sadness tinged with smiles over his legendary antics upon his death on Thursday, Sept. 28, 1995, at home.

A native of Yonkers, N.Y., who went on to a career in the Army and who was wounded and captured by the enemy in World War II, Lt. Col. Ball came to Califon after he retired 14 years ago.

He quickly made the borough his special town and was elected mayor in a contested race in November 1982, shortly after moving



LT. COL. JAMES A. BALL

here. He served for two consecutive four-year terms, and returned to office again for a year in 1993.

Flags flew at half mast at the Califon Post Office and in the borough park in his honor starting on Friday, and nearly everyone had some special reminiscence or a favorite story to tell about "Jim" Ball.

Known for his irrepressible sense of humor, gift of gab and flair for publicity, the former mayor was also known for quietly helping others.

"He as a real hero in this town," said Clerk Laura Eidsvaag, who worked with him for several years when he was mayor. "He was such

(Please see Califon on page 4.)

# Califon

(Continued)

wonderfully funny person, and a real people person.

I never knew someone who touched so many people. He did so much for people that no one knew about and did whatever he could a quality way," Hisdvang said, adding she was constantly amazed that Mayor Ball ran into someone he knew almost everywhere he went.

Mayor Merwin Grimes, who succeeded him to the borough's top post in 1994, said he felt honored to have split two elections "with a man as dedicated as Jim Ball. "In 1992, I lost by one vote (for a one-year term), and in 1993, I won by a landslide — 35 votes," Grimes said.

"We'll miss his real interest and dedication to his adopted hometown. We'll miss his wit and humor, too," Grimes said.

## True Community Spirit

"He epitomized a true community-spirited person," said Beverly Phillips a former president of the Califon Board of Education. "He had such depth of responsibility from the highest levels at the state to the seniors to first graders in town. He was tenacious, and he was a character, too," she said fondly.

Phillips said she was moved by the cross section of people who assembled at his home during the last days of his life. "It was symbolic of what Jim was like," she said. "He exemplified the kind of community spirit we're losing. My children felt as though the lost someone they really loved."

Mayor Ball helped put Califon on the map in diverse ways.

One time during the League of Municipalities convention in Atlantic City, he swapped one-liners with entertainer Merv Griffin in front of a crowd at a casino and reminded the television personality about his past associations with Califon. Griffin once lived in nearby Lebanon Township and packaged some of his television game shows under the label Califon Enterprises.

Other officials pursued the connection later, and Griffin subsequently gave a major donation to the Califon Playground built by volunteers in Island Park.

## Role Model

Every child in the borough school district, Mayor Ball and his wife, Winifred, were like honorary grandparents to many youngsters in Califon. Ball seldom missed a school graduation. He rooted for the school teams and attended school concerts and other func-

It was typical that children could kid him the way he kidded them. Two years ago, student Matthew McDade wowed young and old alike by entering the borough's Halloween parade dressed as Lt. Col. Ball, wearing one of his plaid hats and a raincoat and chomping a cigar. He brandished a red and white "Jim Ball for Mayor" sign.

Ball's last public appearance was at the Califon commencement this past June, where he received an award for outstanding citizenship from the Califon Historical Society and presented the Jim Ball Citizenship Award to a graduating eighth grader. He began talking about the graduates whom he had known since kindergarten, and the audience gave him a standing ovation.

## A Natural At Networking

"Jim Ball was the elected mayor of the Borough of Califon; but he was actually the de facto mayor of "metropolitan Califon," the area surrounding Califon, said his longtime friend and political supporter, Catherine McVicker of Main Street who spoke at the funeral at St. John Neumann Catholic Church Monday morning.

"I think he invented networking," McVicker said, adding that a state legislator told her the small town of Califon is known around the state because of Jim Ball — and not just because of his humor.

"He was a walking, talking advertisement for participatory democracy and good citizenship," McVicker said. "He encouraged people to run for municipal office and for local and regional school boards, to serve the community in a variety of ways."

Ruth Keefe, who coincidentally closed her Keefe's Corner store on Main Street on Saturday, two days after his death, said her coffee shop was the former mayor's "office away from his office." "He'd come in every morning for coffee and talk to people," she said. "He had his very own stool near the cash register where he could be close to people.

"I saw him in action as mayor every day for years. I saw how much he did for people. Most people didn't see that," Keefe said. "If you needed help or somebody to talk to, he'd be there. If he said he'd call somebody to help you, he'd do it. He was a role model, and such a great individual, you just had to love him."

Borough attorney Peter Jost, who also spoke at the funeral, said the former mayor was a rare politician who fought hard to win elections but was never mean or vindictive. He also liked long meetings, Jost

Ball fought in World War II during the allied invasion, and having survived those odds, was willing to plunge into situations where others might hold back, he said.

Mayor Ball put Califon on the map in diverse ways.

One time, the major newspapers, radio and TV converged on the borough for Adopt-A-Duck-Day, a means concocted by Mayor Ball to find homes for excess domestic ducks. The police chief of the time went down the South Branch river in a rowboat, sprinkling bread on the water. The ducks swam after the bread as planned but refused to enter a makeshift pen on the river bank at the end of the trail. Thirty would-be duck owners went home empty-handed. Ball joked later that an annoyed duck pecked him on Main Street.

The duck episode went down in the annals of Califon and was included in a novel for young people by Paula Danziger, an author whose brother and family live in Califon.

Charles Buzby of Lime Rock Road, who served on Califon Council during Ball's tenure, spoke of the former mayor's dedication to the town, his thoroughness and his sense of humor. "There aren't many like him. He was a unique personality," he said.

Ball was an active Democrat in a predominantly Republican area, but he traveled with ease in all circles, regardless of partisanship. He would sometimes be the only Democrat at a Republican gathering, and yet he would be asked to speak.

"He was very personable and somehow he knew everybody, including the Republicans," said Hunterdon County Freeholder George Melick, a Republican. "You could always count on him for a laugh or an aside. Even when the going got tough, he'd manage to come up with a wisecrack."

After the funeral service Monday, Califon's friend was buried in Yonkers, with a Marine ROTC unit firing three shots in parting salute and a bugler playing taps.

**HARRISON** — Garvin Fitton, age 77, of Harrison died on November 29, 1995, at his home in Harrison. Mr. Fitton was born on October 5, 1918, at Harrison, the son of David Edward and Lulu Vance Garvin Fitton Sr.

Mr. Fitton was a 1934 graduate of Harrison High School and attended one year at the Georgia Military Academy. He was then enrolled in the University of Arkansas, graduating with a LL.B. degree. He was social chairman of the University, President of Omicron Delta Kappa, Secretary of the Inter-Fraternity Council, member of the Student Union Governing Board, member of the Scabbard and Blade, the Kappa Kappa Psi, the Phi Alpha Delta. He was a member of the Arkansas Booster Club. He served as Secretary, Vice President, and President, Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. He was assistant editor of the Razorback Annual, 1939. He was involved in intramural athletics. Mr. Fitton attended the University in post-graduate work in political science and received a Juris Doctor degree from the University in 1969.

Mr. Fitton was in general law practice from 1946-51 in Little Rock. From 1951 to 1995 he practiced in Harrison. Past Vice President and President of the Boone County Bar Association. Member of the Arkansas and American Bar Associations. Mr. Fitton did committee work for the Arkansas and the Federal Bar Associations, Arkansas and 8th Circuit Court of Appeals. Practice Supreme Court of United States. Served on the Arkansas State Board of Law Examiners, 1971-1973. Served on the House of Delegates Arkansas Bar Association, 1981-84 and 1988-1990.

Mr. Fitton was a Director, Security Bank of Harrison; Director of the Commonwealth Theatre Corp., Harrison, Arkansas. Mr. Fitton was President of the North Little Rock Cemetery Association, North Little Rock, Arkansas. He served as a Director of the Harrison Chamber of Commerce, 1955-59 and 1960-63.

Mr. Fitton was Vice President and President of the Harrison Rotary Club from 1961-63. Secretary, Vice President and President of the Harrison School District from 1956-63 with a total of 15 years' service to the District. He served on the Harrison City Planning Commission, 1955-63. The City Planning Advisory Committee Board, 1961-63. He served on the Boone County Youth Association. He was past district chairman, Boy Scouts of America, Westark Area Council. Member, Board of Trustees and Board of Stewards, First United Methodist Church, and was a Church Lay Leader, 1955-60. He served on the City and County Civil Defense as Director, from 1954-57. Served on Board of Directors, Old State House Museum Associates. Appointed Civilian Aide to Secretary of Army (Arkansas), November 1961 to November 1969. He was appointed to Civilian Aide Emeritus to the Secretary of Army (Lifetime) 1990. Treasurer, Boone County Historical and Genealogical Society. Past Director Arkansas Alumni Association.

Mr. Fitton was a member of Rotary International, Arkansas School Boards, 32nd Degree Mason, Shriner, Reserve Officers Association, American Ordinance, the Association of the U.S. Army, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Boy Scouts of America, Harrison Chamber of Commerce, the Retired Officers Association, member Sons of the American Revolution, and the Sons of the Confederate Veterans.

Mr. Fitton was commissioned 2nd Lt., Infantry, from ROTC (UofA), May 30, 1940. He served in World War II from August 19, 1941, to February 1, 1945. European Theater, three years and five months, and was a prisoner of war, Germans in Poland, from March 11, 1943, to May 4, 1945. He remained in the Army Reserve for 30 years, retiring as a Colonel, May 1970. He was awarded the Bronze Star, Expert Rifleman and various campaign medals, and has Secret and Top Secret clearances.

Mr. Fitton, in addition to the Civilian Aide Emeritus, was also a tenured delegate to the board of delegates of the Arkansas Bar Association, in 1990. He was also commissioned Kentucky Colonel by the governor of Kentucky.

Mr. Fitton is survived by his wife, Martha Ann Hamilton Fitton of Harrison; two sons, Johnny D. Fitton of Little Rock and Thomas Garvin Fitton of Harrison; one daughter, Ann Kelley of Bentonville, Arkansas; one

brother, David Fitton of Harrison; and seven grandchildren.

Services for Mr. Fitton are 1 p.m., Saturday, December 2, 1995, at the First United Methodist Church in Harrison. Services are under the direction of Christeson Funeral Home of Harrison. Memorials may be made to the Claude Parrish Radiation Center of Harrison.

Continued from Page 9

diary he held for nearly fifty years until many of his friends urged him to write. The talent of his wife, Clementi, and her style in writing is well demonstrated. It makes for some interesting reading from North Africa to Oflag 64 and on to Russia. It is in its fourth edition and may be purchased from The Iberian Publishing Company, 383 Westview Drive, Athens, GA 30606-4635.

HERB GARRIS