

POST OFLAG 64 ITEM

FALL & WINTER 2001

NOTE: This issue of the Item is for both the fall and winter of 2001. My stay in the hospital and the trip to Spokane set everything back a few weeks. All of our mail was lost due to the New York tragedy and waiting to see if it would turn up also set things back a week or so. So, maybe we can get back on a regular schedule after the first of the year.

COLUMBUS REUNION 2002

Bill Warthen has signed a contract with the Sheraton for 40 rooms for October 2nd to October 6th, 2002

He is in the process, now, of finding something for us to do while we are there. The Ft. Benning OCS should be of interest to a lot of our men. We will keep you posted as to how things are progressing as Bill Warthen passes them on to us.

REUNION 2003

At the reunion in Spokane, Abe Baum mentioned that he had attended a symposium at Minneapolis, that was interested in hosting our reunion in 2003. This is a group of people in Minneapolis that is interested in World War II and the people that were involved in it. They call themselves the World War II Historical Roundtable and meet once a month to hear speakers, etc from WWII. We have contacted their representative and will keep you posted as we learn more about it. Bret Job lives in Minneapolis and is going to attend their Oct meeting.

PUBLICATIONS

The Waters Story \$19.50
My Tour of Russia \$ 5.00
The Men of Oflag 64 \$ 20.00
The Oflag 64 Directory \$ 3.00
Oflag 64 Audio Tape \$ 5.00
Original Roster-Oflag 64 \$10.00
Tribute to TF Baum (Paperback) \$15.00
Hammelburg Roster \$ 7.50
 Make check out to Oflag 64 PF and
 mail to the Editor.

In the Presence of Mine Enemies \$10.00
 Make check payable to and send to:
 Mrs. Rose Daniels
 5100 Sharon Road. Apt 603
 Charlotte, NC 28210-4720

Escape to Russia \$35.00
 Make check payable and send to:
 H.Randolph Holder
 383 Westview Drive
 Athens GA 30606-4035
 Pho. (706) 549-3337

Americans Behind the Barbed Wire
 By Frank Diggs \$24.95
 Plus shipping 3.75
 Total \$28.70
 Contact: Vandemere Press
 P.O.Box 5243
 Clearwater, FL 22205

POSTAGE FUND DONORS

Wir - 2000 to Winter 2001 issue

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MAIL CALL

Mail Call this issue will be very brief. The normal procedure is to forward to **Irv Yarock** all the letters that come in for a response by Irv. About one week before the reunion I sent a big bundle of letters to Irv that he never received. If you will remember the events at The World Trade Center occurred on Tuesday, two days after most of us left Spokane for home. The bundle of letters I sent Irv probably reached somewhere around Boston the weekend we were at Spokane. If the letters were lost due to the events in New York I do not know, but it sure is a coincidence! I go through each of the letters I receive and remove any money and forward it on to **Joe Seringer** for banking purposes, so no money was lost. I normally make copies of all the letters that I send to Irv, but due to my being in the hospital this summer I didn't make copies. I just didn't have the strength and I also didn't drive a car, so Mail Call will consist of the mail I received after returning home.

Jim Sherman, Oakland, CA called stating that he and **Jeff** and **Ron** arrived home safely. They had nothing but praises for the way Herm handled the reunion. The Shermans from Oakland are some of our most steadfast members. They can always be counted on to attend the reunions and contribute their time and talents to any cause that is asked of them. Jim made a donation to the postage fund at Spokane and we thank him for that!

Herb and Louise Garris, Pinehurst, NC, wrote from Spokane that they were stranded and were staying at the Airport Ramada Inn. They intended to stay in Spokane a few days after the reunion and they were caught in the airline snafu after the NY disaster.

Charlie Turnbo, Evergreen CO, LTC Yardley's nephew wrote that he enjoyed being at Spokane and was honored to meet all the men that had been at Oflag 64. His aunt and **LTC Yardleys**, younger sister, **Nita Gauntt** also was there and enjoyed her visit with the men that knew her big brother. For the late arrivals at Oflag 64, LTC Yardley was at one time the SAO at Oflag 64, but was moved to 64Z as cadre when the camp at Oflag 64 began to increase beyond the camp's capacity. Charlie has all his uncle's letter's diaries etc, and is in the process of publishing a book which will contain all LTC Yardley's papers. He will keep us posted and we will keep you posted! If you would like to contact Charlie you can do so at:

Charlie Turnbo
7934 S Swaps Trail
Evergreen, CO 80439

Alan and Lilo Dunbar, Las Vegas stayed over a day or so at Spokane, but didn't have any problem because they were driving. They made it home in great shape and called Herb to see if he made it OK which he did.

Bob O'Neill, Santa Maria, CA wrote and sent some photos which we appreciated. Bob's first reunion was at Laughlin and I think he is turning into one of our most faithful members. Bob drove to Spokane so he had no problem getting home. See you in Columbus, Bob! Bob also made a donation to the postage and we thank him for that.

Roy and Helen Chappell, Kaufman, Tx had an eventful time in returning home from Spokane. After their return to Cloudcroft, NM, Helen had a serious heart problem and was sent to the hospital in Alamogordo, NM, where she stayed for two days. She was diagnosed as having congestive heart failure which will be controlled with medications and other precautions. We are always concerned when one of our friends has a problem, but we are especially concerned when a special person like Helen is involved. They are now at home in Kaufman and looking for a cardiologist. Hang in there, good friends.

MAIL CALL

Al Fratske, Sun City, AZ, writes that he appreciates hearing about all his friends from Oflag 64 days, and sends in a donation to the postage fund. Thanks Al for the donation.

Horace Spaulding Charles City, IA, writes that he was unable to make it to Spokane because of his wife's ill health, but he wishes everybody the best and hope they have a great time. Horace sent in a donation to the postage fund for which we thank him.

Joe Seringer, Wooster, OH writes that he had a great time and thinks **Herm Littman** did a great job. He left Spokane at 6:30 AM and arrived home at 11:30 PM. That makes for a long day!

Mary Lou Stewart, San Antonio, TX (Mrs Donald) ordered several of **Gen Waters** Oral History books and also sends in a donation to the postage fund. Thanks Mary Lou.

Reid Ellsworth, Chandler, AZ sends in the obit for **Delmer Clark**, Boise, Idaho. Del was in the 36th Division and was captured during the Rapido River fiasco in Italy. Reid went to Canada for a few days and was caught in the terrorist disaster

Isabelle Smith, San Rafael, CA sends in the obit for her husband Matt Smith. Matt was one of the soldiers that were caught in North Africa. Our best to you Isabelle.

Several of our friends pitched in to the postage fund at Spokane. They are: **Jim Sherman, Evelyn Korber, Bob O'Neill, John Slack, George Rosenthal, Charlie Turnbo, Marcia Kanners**. Our thanks to all of you!

Ellen Warthen, Vidalia, GA writes about the trip to the Apple Farm in Spokane. While there they ran out of brochures and Ellen told them to give her one and she would spread the word about their products. The farm's address is: Walters Fruit Ranch, 9807 East Day Road, Mead, WA 99021 509-238-4709, 800/881-6712, web site is: <http://www.apple> They ship gift apples, jams gifts packs. They are open June - Dec

OFLAG 64 POSTAGE FUND
Joseph Seringer Treasurer

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements
From September 29 2000 to August 31 2001

Receipts for the Period:

Contributions to the Fund	\$3708.00
Books sold	207.00
Additional 2000 reunion receipts	350.00
2000 reunion profit	5000.00
Interest	230.73
Total Cash received	\$9495.73

Disbursements for the Period:

Copies	\$1543.62
Advance 2001 reunion	2000.00
Additional refunds etc. 2000 reunion	525.00
Supplies	208.58
Postage	1312.39
Telephone	25.13
Books	250.00
Total Cash Disbursed	\$5864.72
Excess Receipts over Disbursements	\$3631.01
Cash balance September 29 2000	\$8975.78

Balance in Bank August 31 2001	\$12606.79
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CITY OF
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS: *OFLAG 64 was the only prisoner of war camp composed entirely of American officers captured during World War II, from North America through the Battle of the Bugle; and*

WHEREAS: *the senior American officer at OFLAG 64, Colonel Drake, who also served in World War I and received the DSC award was instrumental in maintaining order within the camp and helped to keep the morale of the Americans high; and*

WHEREAS: *on March 27, 1945 at the request of General Patton, a task force consisting of a battalion of tanks, half tracks, and infantry under the command of Captain Baum arrived and overran the camp having lost both equipment and personnel along the way in order to help free the over 1,400 prisoners; and*

WHEREAS: *the Germans thinking there was a major offensive starting, moved an armored division in to surround Hammelburg and at daylight German tanks and artillery opened up and destroyed Task Force Baum in five minutes; and*

WHEREAS: *those Americans remaining alive were captured and transported to Moosburg and on April 29, 1945 were liberated by the 14th Armored Division; and*

WHEREAS: *many American Prisoners of War have endured inhumane treatment in violation of International Codes and Customs for the treatment of prisoners of war, and many of them died from such treatment; and*


NOW, THEREFORE, I, John T. Powers, Jr., Mayor of the City of Spokane, in the State of Washington, do hereby proclaim September 6, 2001, as:

OFLAG 64 POW RECOGNITION DAY

in Spokane and urge all citizens to join me in this observance in honor of the bravery and perseverance of these American service members.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Spokane to be affixed this 3rd day of September, 2001.




JOHN T. POWERS, JR.
MAYOR OF SPOKANE

Pat Bender has very graciously agreed to write-up the story of the reunion as she saw it. She has done a super job and we are all indebted to her for it. People like Pat that will contribute documents such as follows make the item easy and pleasant to prepare.

Spokane, WA. September 5-9, 2001.

The men of OFLAG 64 began to arrive in this beautiful city in Washington State on September 5, many with spouses and other family members. They were greeted at the registration desk by hosts, **Herm and Lucy Littman**, daughter, **Carole Littman Lester** and her husband, **Phil**, and two very helpful and wonderfully organized women, **Mary Milla** and **Mrs. Donelo**. These women volunteered to help give out schedules, rosters and other information. They worked cheerfully and tirelessly and made everyone feel welcome immediately.

Our first trip was within walking distance of the DoubleTree Hotel. Several large groups descended upon the Olive Garden and other local restaurants. Afterward, many returned to the hospitality room to catch up and swap stories.

Thursday, we visited the Green Bluff Orchards and the Arbor Crest Winery. Our capable city guide pointed out Mount Spokane and other spots, recounting the history of each site as well as interesting tidbits about the city. Spokane means "Children of the Sun" in the Spokane Indian language. A four-season city, its population is about 200,000 and its housing is reasonable compared to many other cities. At the apple orchard, we were greeted by the owner, "Farmer Mark" and his dog, Rocky. We were taken on a ride through the orchard where we picked apples and learned about the different types of fruit being grown there. Afterward, we were treated to homemade apple pie with an optional scoop of ice cream.

Our next stop was the Arbor Crest Winery, a very picturesque vineyard where we sampled several choices of wines. The spot was high above Spokane, and while we were there, a wedding party was being photographed. Many purchased wine to bring back to the hotel or to carry home.

That night (Thursday), we boarded the bus again for the short trip to Lake Coeur d'alene in Idaho. This is considered one of the most beautiful resorts in the United States. A flat-bottomed boat took us on a dinner cruise along the lake. As we watched the sunset, we ate a delicious dinner of chicken, vegetables, mashed potatoes, biscuits and gravy. The evening was pleasant and everyone had a great time in this exquisite setting. One unique feature of this lake was its golf resort with a floating tee.

Friday morning we visited the Fairchild Air Force Base, home of the Survival School & 92nd Air Refueling Wing Flight Line. Students and instructors at the Survival School asked our men to recount their experiences so they could learn from them. The Survival School had its own POW camp, a grim place with razor wire, cells and cages. A lunch was provided at the base by the Global Credit Union of Spokane. After visiting the base museum, we returned to our hotel.

Friday night, we again boarded the bus for the Grand Coulee Dam, about 85 miles from Spokane. After dining at a nearby restaurant, we arrived in time for the magnificent laser show projected onto the huge cement dam. The show illustrated the history of the area and the building and function of the dam.

On Saturday morning, we again boarded the bus for a tour of historic Spokane. We stopped at two gardens and an Episcopalian Church. Many of us walked along the river after lunch, some visiting the conveniently located stores in the downtown area.

Saturday's Farewell dinner, auction and Sunday's breakfast and Memorial Service completed the formal events. A particularly moving presence was the changing of the Air Force Guard at the empty table signifying dead or missing military.

Thanks to the **Littmans**, their friends and family who orchestrated this most successful and fun-filled reunion.

Some of the people new to this group were:

Mrs. **Louise Garris**, who thinks that the Oflag64 group is "a most handsome group of men." Louise really enjoyed her first reunion with this fine group.

Dr. Wayne Fieldsmith whose father was an Oflag 64 dentist. After searching on the Internet, **Dr. Fieldsmith** found out about the reunions after viewing the Richland College website, <http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/enrich/cordstud/there64.htm> compiled by **Carole Littman Lester**. Recognizing **Roy Chappell's** name, he contacted **Roy** who informed him about the Spokane reunion.

Karen Edsall Hipsher, a first time attendee, wishes she could come every year but doubts that her boss will let her. Karen is very impressed with the Oflag 64 men and with this organization.

Eleven-year-old **Jessie Rusneck**, granddaughter of **Don Lussenden**, was often seen in the company of eleven-year-old **Taylor, Bob Thompson's** grandchild. **Jessie** thought the reunion was "pretty cool." Both she and Taylor missed school to attend, but considered it a valuable educational experience.

Richard Covert, a new attendee from Washington State, learned about the reunion after his wife heard about it on the radio a week before. I think this was **Herm Littman's** interview. Mr. Covert said that this crowd was "very congenial" and he hopes to come to future reunions.

Charlie Turnbo and **Mita Yardley Gauntt**, nephew and sister of **Doyle Yardley**, joined us at the Fairchild Air Base. Having missed the testimony of our men in the auditorium, both were eager to hear about individual POW experiences. **Charlie** brought **Doyle Yardley's** diary and many original *Items* with him. He is in the process of writing a book. Charlie said, "It's been a revisit of history - I've relived 6 decades in one weekend...they're all heroes, every one of them."

Bob O'Neill joined the group in Laughlin, Nevada. He only heard about the reunions after attending an MIA/POW affair three years ago.

Sgt. Conger, who was in charge of our tour at Fairchild, could be seen drilling the color guard at the Double Tree during the Fairwell Dinner. He also attended Sunday's Memorial service with his family. Having never had a shot fired at him, he considers these men heroes and admires them for their courage.

Pat Di Francesco Bender

ATTENDEES-OFLAG 64 REUNION
Spokane, Sept 5-9, 2001

Baum, Abe, Eileen
Bender, Pat DiFrancesco, Tom
Bonoml, Bob, Carolyn
Bradford, O.L. "Brad"
Brown, Ken
Cecil, Albert, Dorothy
Chappell, Barbara, Dicky, Helen, Roy
Cheatam, Robert "Cheerful Charlie"
Chevalier, Brett, Marv
Covert, Mrs, Richard
DiFrancesco, Dr. Vincent
Diggs, J. Frank
Dunbar, Alan, Hans, Kathy, Lilo, Lisa, Vic
Edsall, Edith, Lester
Ellsworth, Reid F.
Ezell, Kathy Warthen
Fieldsmith, Dr. Wayne
Galloway, Robert
Garris, Herb, Louise
Gauntt, Nlta Yardley
Glonfnddo, Juliet
Graul, Don
Harrell, Bill, Duna
Heisler, Gloria. Walter Chris
Hill, Jonel. Lois
Hipsher, Karen
Hoyt, Juliet
Jones, Curtis
Jones, Norma A.
Kanners, Dave, Marcia (Victor), Sue
Kennedy, Duane S., Helen S.
Klinkenborg, Ray J.
Korber, Evelyn
Kowallis, Eileen
Lee, Harriet, Royal
Lester, Carole, Phil
Liggett, F. Eugene, Rosalie
Littman, Herm, Lucy
Livingston, Debbie
Lowe, Charlie, Janet, Lew, Linda
Lussenden, Don, Lucy
Marlatt, Peggy(Thompson)
Mason, Jim
Mason, Mary
McAllister, Don, Marlene, Taylor(Thompson)
Meltesen, Clarence R.

O'Neill, Bob
Raisor, Connie, Leslie
Rathbone, Jack
Rinehart, Barbara, Ted
Rooney, Ed
Rosenthal, George
Rusneck, Jessica-Lussenden, Debra
Sennger, Joe
Sherman, Jeff, Jim, Ron
Slack, John, Margie
Thomas, Mertell
Thompson, Bob, Gladys, Robert
Thomson, Vinton
Tumbo, Charlie
Warriner, Donna
Warthen, Bill, Dot, Ellen
Wyatt, Nancy (Thompson)
Yarock, Irv

Summary of Attendance

Total Present	123
Total Registration	103
POWs	42
Spouses	26
Guests	35
States Represented	24

Tours

Green Bluff (Wine & Pie)	50
Coulee Dam	69
Historic Spokane	65

These numbers were furnished by Herm Littman
and are presented here for your information.

EVERYBODY'S FAVORITES-ALWAYS



JOHN AND MARGIE SLACK- SPOKANE 2001

Clark: Incredibly, brothers meet as prisoners

Heroes find a quiet way to celebrate

The Spokesman-Review

Herman Littman calls it "just a bunch of old geezers getting together year after year."

The Spokane man is kidding, of course. Humility prevents Littman and all his pals from saying what their annual OFLAG 64 reunions really are:

An exclusive club for some of America's true heroes.

Littman and his comrades were captured during World War II. They all spent varying amounts of time stuck in a prison camp called OFLAG 64.

Northeast of Warsaw, Poland, OFLAG 64 was the only camp composed entirely of American officers. At its peak, the camp held 1,500 men, including Gen. George Patton's son-in-law, Lt. Col. John Waters.

Now mostly in their late 70s and 80s, the ranks of OFLAG 64 survivors have dwindled to about 125.

This year, they are gathering in Spokane for the first time. The group meets today through Sunday at the downtown DoubleTree Hotel.

Anyone interested should go visit some of these old warriors. Or you can browse their hospitality room, which features photographs of the prison camp and books on the subject.

"I guess it was my turn," chuckles Littman, 82, of his role as reunion host.

Though not well known, the story of OFLAG 64 is one of the war's more compelling tales. A PBS documentary, "OFLAG 64, a P.O.W. Odyssey," was made recently and aired nationally on public stations last June.

For Littman, a paratrooper, the story began one July day in 1943. He was hit by shrapnel in the knees while attacking an enemy stronghold prior to the invasion of Italy.

Littman was one of the lucky ones. Of his platoon of "25 or 30 men," he says he was one of only three who survived. "Next thing I knew I was on a stretcher," adds Littman.

Herb Garris' adventure of a lifetime began on June 6, 1944. A paratrooper with the 101st Airborne, Garris was dropped as part of the Normandy invasion.

In an attempt to evade enemy fire, however, the pilot veered off course. Garris and his buddies ended up landing 30 miles behind enemy lines.

Garris held out for two weeks before surrendering after being wounded. Like all the others, Littman and Garris wound up in OFLAG 64.

It was horrible, to be sure. But survivors say their prison camp experience would have been much worse were it not for the irascible Col. Thomas D. Drake.



Doug Clark

A hardened World War I vet, Drake, as ranking officer, imposed a military discipline on the camp.

Men were expected to police the grounds and shave every day. They slept with their pants pressed between their straw mattresses and wood bed slats in order to look sharp.

Even the German commandant was intimidated by Drake. Once when junior officers refused to follow orders, Drake told the commandant to throw the men in isolation cells until they got with the program. He did.

Drake "was a real martinet," says Littman. "He made us exercise every day. He got that camp commandant scared of him."

The Americans got their news from a crystal radio acquired by bribing a guard. Although they dug secret tunnels, Hitler's order to shoot any captured escapees kept the Yanks from using them.

After Warsaw fell to the Russians, the officers were moved in a forced 350-mile march to Germany. The march began on Jan. 22, 1945, with the temperature 35 degrees below zero.

Some hid in the tunnels and were liberated by the Russians. Others, like Garris, were able to escape during the trek.

After one day, the North Carolina native had had enough. "It was colder than anything you've ever seen," says Garris, 84. "I wasn't marching another damn mile."

Sleeping in a barn, he convinced about 25 of his buddies to bury themselves in a hay pile. It worked. Panicked by the Russian advance, the Germans left them behind.

Littman made the entire march, which was filled with too many wild events to list here. Check out OFLAG 64 on the Internet and see for yourself.

Along the way, he encountered another group of prisoners being herded in a different direction. Someone called his name.

"It was my kid brother, Ralph," says Littman. "He was shot down in a B-24 on his 17th mission. He said, 'You aren't the only one who can get captured.'"

Finally, on April 29, 1945, the prisoners were liberated by the Americans' 14th Armored Division in Moosburg, Germany. The long ordeal was over.

Just a bunch of old geezers getting together? Better come up with a better one than that, Littman.

■ Doug Clark can be reached at (509) 459-5432 or by e-mail at doug@spokesman.com.

Thursday, September 6, 2001

The Spokesman-Review
Spokane, Wash./Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Subj: Would you believe...
Date: 9/24/01 8:43:42 PM Central Daylight Time
From: ejalexis@juno.com (Edward J Alexis)
To: LansEALexis@juno.com, Sbbenton45@aol.com, WOH5@aol.com, JLangston@webtv.net,
Edward.Miller2@hqda.army.mil, gvannatta@aol.com, Bwarthen@cybersouth.com, p47jrw@aol.com,
bernep1@hotmail.com, Hildemel@aol.com, THO7448@aol.com

This afternoon I went to the memorial service for Wesley Pozvar, the late chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, at Heinz Chapel on the campus. Pozvar served Pitt for 25+ years and brought it from near-bankruptcy in 1967 to its present level of top-class university especially in medical research and international studies. He had the credentials - #1 in the Class of 1946 of the USMA, seven earned degrees, youngest head (32 years old) of a department in the history of the military academies (political science at the USAFA), test pilot with certification in 24 types of aircraft, etc., etc. etc., etc.

My wife and I had gotten to know him and his wife Mildred, a former diva of the Metropolitan Opera, thru our activities in the Nationality Classrooms program at Pitt.

Among those who paid tribute to him was Johnny Majors, whom Pozvar brought aboard early in his administration to restore Pitt football to its old glory - and, of course, he did.

After the service we were invited to a reception by his family. In the course of the affair I saw Johnny standing alone so I asked him to refresh my memory - had he played for Tennessee? Yes. Did you know "Big Bill" Luttrell? Sure did, as a football star and longtime Clerk of Courts in Knoxville. I told him I had met Bill while I was a POW and even had his autograph in my log book.

Then Johnny began to question me - where were you as a POW? how long? How did the Germans treat you? etc. etc. Where were you captured? The Hurtgen Forest. He shocked me when he asked which division was I in, "the 4th, the 28th, the 8th?" The 28th, I replied, but how did you know about them? Oh, I'm a military history buff, I've been to the Hurtgen several times, as well as the Battle of the Bulge area. He also knew all the divisions involved in D-Day and their beaches. I told him if he was interested further to read Ed Miller's "Dark and Bloody Ground", Gerry Astor's "Bloody Woods," and Bob Phillip's "To Save Bastogne." What a pleasant surprise!

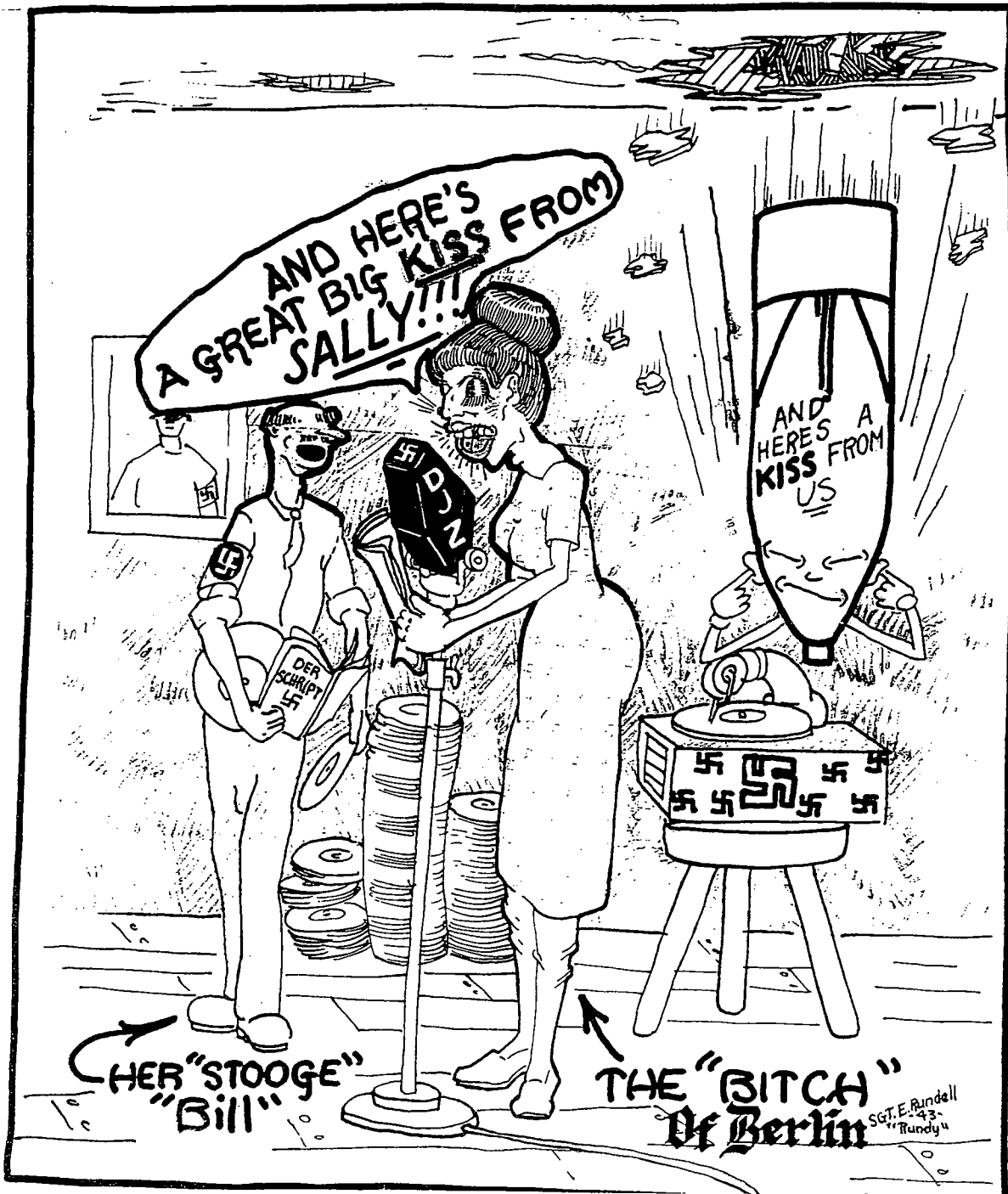
Best wishes,

Jerry Alexis

A LITTLE COMPANY BUSINESS

- **Robert Galloway** sent word that if you wanted to order additional copies of "Oflag 64 A POW Odyssey" to call Pho. No: 800/343-4727. He also wanted everybody to know that he considered it an honor to spend the time with the men at Spokane and that the experience enriched his life.
- If you attended the reunion at Spokane and were charged \$3.00 energy charge and a \$0.30 energy charge tax and were not given credit check with the Doubletree Accounting at 1-509-455-9600.

Charlie Turnbo, Evergreen, CO (LTC Yardley's nephew) contributed this cartoon about Axiz Sally. All of you remember her broadcasts from Berlin before you were taken prisoner.



NEWS

Ex-Prisoners of War visit Fairchild Air Force Base to see how airmen are trained

By 2nd Lt. David Faggard
92nd Public Affairs

After two previous attempts, one involving digging a 287-foot-tunnel, Roy 'Tex' Chappel escaped from German guards in World War II by simply wandering away after sleeping the night in a haystack.

Approximately 75 former Prisoners of War from prisoner camp O'Flag 64, the only all-American officer POW camp, reunited in Spokane, Sept. 7, and toured Fairchild, to better understand how the Air Force trains and fights today.

"They are trying to get a look at how we do things in the Air Force today, like our survival basics," said Senior Master Sgt. Scott Conger, career assistance advisor, 92nd Air Refueling Wing.

The former POWs discussed survival techniques used in World War II with Fairchild survival instructors, which will be conveyed to students.

"This is the kind of thing we want to teach our students. They (O'Flag 64 survivors) aren't a book, they're the real thing, our heroes," said Chief Master Sgt. Richard Hatcher, superintendent, 336th Training Group.

"We'll be able to pass this information along to the 3,000 members we train each year," he added.

"Many of the same survival techniques taught in 1940 are still taught today," said Chappel.

The former POWs also went to the Survival School's resistance laboratory, where they had a chance to walk through the gates and see what some of today's airmen go through during training.

"We had no evasion training at all; we weren't supposed to get captured. This was amazing," said Chappel.

It appeared there were many different reasons for having the group out to the base. Some of the reasons were: education, camaraderie and to say thanks.

"We wanted to have them out and thank them for their contributions to us and our country," said Col. Craig Jensen, commander, 336th TRG. "I can't even say thanks enough for what these people did."

The members shared many of their World War II memories of capture, solitary confinement, and attempts at escape with the survival school staff.

After moves through Bavaria, Poland and Germany, several members from the camp escaped, while others were marched 350 miles to Hammelburg, Germany, March 1945.

The other prisoners were freed April 29, 1945, by the Army's 14th Armored Division.

OBITUARIES

Delmer Clyde Keck

Delmer Clyde Keck, 84, passed away Wednesday, May 23, 2001, at a Boise hospital.

A funeral service to celebrate Delmer's life will be conducted at 2 p.m. Tuesday, May 29, at Alsip & Persons Funeral Chapel, 404 10th Ave. S., Nampa. Graveside with military honors will follow at Kohlerlawn Cemetery. The Rev. Bruce Wheeler of the SW Christian Church will officiate. There will be a time of visitation Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Alsip & Persons Funeral Chapel.



Delmer was born Jan. 19, 1917, at Nyssa, Ore., to Abdul and Flora Keck. Delmer was raised in the Nyssa area and graduated from Nyssa High School. He married the love of his life Mildred on Dec. 13, 1941. He attended college in Oregon, but his college career was interrupted by World War II. He served in the European campaign, was wounded, captured and spent 18 months in a Poland prisoner of war camp. After returning from the service he farmed in the Central Cove area for 12 years. Delmer then finished his degree and graduated from C of I, now Albertson College. He taught math and science at Notus High School for 18 years.

Delmer loved fishing and camping and times spent with his family. There was no better husband, father, grandfather, and brother. His life was a testament to his courage, faith, and unfailing love of God, family, and his country.

Delmer was preceded in death by three brothers, Sherman, Dennis and Dallas Keck; and one sister, Elsie Robertson.

He is survived by his wife of nearly 60 years; two daughters, Norma Baldrige and Judy Baimbridge; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; five brothers, Willard, Wilson, Houston, Ray and Ted Keck; and one sister, Rosie Goff.

The family suggests, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions be made to the Boise DAV, 500 W. Fort St., Boise 83702; Boise Christian Retirement Home, 3223 N. 36th St., Boise 83709; Christian Children's Ranch, 2423 W. Duck Alley, Eagle 83616; or to Hospice, 100 E. Idaho, Boise 83702.

**Jeremiah William Moher
Army Lieutenant Colonel**

Jeremiah William Moher, 81, an Army lieutenant colonel who retired in 1964 and then served 17 years as a civilian budget analyst with the Army Department, died Sept. 16 at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital after a stroke. He had heart disease.

Col. Moher, an Alexandria resident, was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. He joined the Army in 1942 and served in Europe during World War II and in Korea during the war there.

His final active-duty assignment was chief financial officer at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.

He was a recipient of the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

He settled in the Washington area in 1964 and retired from the Computer Systems Command at Fort Belvoir. He played a key role in negotiating one of the first contracts providing military personnel worldwide with personal computers.

He was a founding member and former grand knight of the Mount Vernon Knights of Columbus in Alexandria. He was a charter member of the parish council at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Alexandria.

Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Genevieve Zuzga Moher of Alexandria; two sons, Dr. Lawrence Moher, the dean of family practice medicine at the University of Arizona at Tucson, and James Moher of Manassas; two daughters, Kathleen Walker, a registered nurse in Laramie, Wyo., and Sue-Ellen Musselman of Fredericksburg; eight grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

TAPS

George Daniel Thomas

He was born Nov. 1, 1917.



On June 17, 1945, in New York City, N.Y., he married Catharin Pronchak, who survives.

Also surviving are five daughters: Marianne G. Teague of Huntingtown, Md.; Kathleene E. Gallegos of Mitchellville, Md.; Donna L. Johnson of Huntingdon, Ind.; Kristie L. Clark of West River, Md.; and Judith S. DiCarlo of Dunkirk, Md.; five granddaughters and five grandsons.

Mr. Thomas attended Clear Ridge Independent Fellowship Church.

He served as a Major in the U.S. Army during World War II in the European Theater in Patton's 3rd Army. He was captured in Nancy, France, and was held as a prisoner of war by Nazi Germany until his release from the camps during the armistice.

A 1940 graduate of Wheaton College, Illinois, where he was captain of the rifle team, Mr. Thomas won the National Collegiate Athletic Association gold medal in national rifle competition at the University of Chicago with a perfect score in 1939.

He went on to earn his masters degree in public administration from American University in 1955, while working for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in Washington, D.C. He retired after 30 years as special assistant to the undersecretary of the DHEW.

Since that time, he has conducted the Sunday morning broadcast of "Family Bible Time" on WSKE for more than 20 years, and has served as interim pastor for many local churches in Bedford County. He was a member of the Gideon Society.

Funeral services: 11 a.m. Monday, June 11, 2001, at Mt. Union UCC Cemetery, Mench; with the Rev. John Hodge and the Rev. Walter Hoard officiating. Military graveside honors will be conducted by the Everett Honor Guard.

Burial in Mt. Union UCC Cemetery, Mench.

Ralph J. Ball

Ralph J. Ball, 84, formerly of Toledo passed away on Thursday, May 17, 2001, in his home in Clearwater, Florida. Mr. Ball was a US Army veteran of both World War II and the Korean War. He entered the Army as a Private in 1941 and as a lieutenant would lead troops in the Battle of the Hurtgen Forest as well as the Battle of the Bulge. In December 1944, he would be captured by the Germans and spent the next year in various German prisoner of war camps. He was liberated from the Oflag 13B by General Patton's 3rd Army but was later re-captured. Lieutenant Ball was liberated a second time by Patton from Stalag 7A in Moosberg Germany. Mr. Ball would return to military service during the Korean War as a staff operations officer under the command of General John Waters. Ralph left the Army with the rank of Major. He was the recipient of the American Theatre Service Medal, European - African Service Medal, WW II Victory Medal, Korean Service Medal and the United Nations Service Medal. Later in his life, Major Ball would fondly recall the special bond that he shared with General Waters due to their Oflag 64 experience. Mr. Ball was the owner and operator of Ball Concrete. He was a member of Harbor Light Lodge #746 F&AM, Life member of VFW Post 10093 in Safety Harbor, Florida and the OFLAG 64 Survivors Organization.

Surviving are his son, Joseph (Sandi) Ball; daughters, Barbara (Richard) Baumgartner, Laura Barton, Margaret (Robert) Wagner, and Elizabeth (John) Baumgartner; sister, Mildred Eady; grandchildren, Jill Ganse, Gail Gucciardo, Richard Baumgartner III, Robert Wagner III, Jay Wagner, Joseph Ball Jr., Jeffrey Ball, Lora Baumgartner, Sara Baumgartner, Beth Baumgartner, Lynn Baumgartner, Wendy Barton, and Eric Parker; and great grandchildren, Megan, Nicholas, Hunter, Jake, Parker, Paige, Preston, Eric, and David. He was preceded in death by his wife, Margaret; parents, Joseph and Gretchen Ball; daughter, Martha Ball-Parker; son-in-law, David Barton; brother, Orville Ball; and sister, Ganie Bass.

Visitation will be held on Tuesday from 2 to 9 p.m. in the **Eggleston-Melnert Funeral Home, Coy Road Chapel**, 440 S. Coy Road at Starr Ave., where funeral services will be conducted on Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. Masonic Services will be held Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. Interment will be in Toledo Memorial Park. Expressions of sympathy in Ralph's memory may be made to the OFLAG 64 Memorial Program.

BANCKER—James W., 81. Of Atlanta died Friday, August 3, 2001. Born in Oak Park, IL and raised in Summit, NJ, Jim graduated from Andover University in 1938 and Yale University in 1942 with a BA in English Literature. He went on to Rutgers University where he received his MBA in Business Administration. He attended N.Y.U. Jim was a veteran of W.W. II and the Korean Conflict where he served his country proudly in the United States Army. He was a P.O.W. for two years being held in Germany and Poland before escaping. Jim retired as Director of Operations for Western Electric Company. He was preceded in death by his brother, Robert Bancker who lost his life in the Korean Conflict, and his sister, Louise Buckman. Jim is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Peggy Bancker; daughters, Carol Bancker of British Columbia, Canada, Adrienne Bancker of Marietta; and 1 granddaughter, Jennifer Bancker of British Columbia, Canada. A Funeral Service will be held Sunday, August 5th, at two o'clock at Patterson's Arlington Chapel, Interment Services to follow at Arlington Memorial Park. Those who prefer may make a Memorial Contribution in Jim's name to Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cancer Home, 760 Pollard Blvd. SW, Atlanta, GA 30315. H.M. Patterson & Son Arlington Chapel, 173 Allen Road, Sandy Springs, GA 30328, phone (404) 851-9900.

Marin Independent Journal

Friday, October 5, 2001

Matthew Comerford Smith

Colonel, US Army (retired), born March 26, 1915 in Del Rio, Texas; died September 17, 2001 in Kentfield, California. Age 86 years. He is survived by his loving wife of 46 years Isabelle Sinclair Rising Smith, of San Rafael, Calif. and his loving daughter, Lisa Sinclair Smith, of Novato, Calif.

A West Point (USMA) 1939 graduate, he followed his father in a US Army career, retiring as a full colonel after 30 years service in 1969. In WWII he served with the

26th Infantry Regt. of the 1st Infantry Division until he was captured in North Africa. He spent 27 months in a German POW camp, OFLAG 64 in Schubin, Poland. Subsequently, after WWII, he worked at the US Army Office of the Chief of Staff at the Pentagon from 1945-1948. He went on to obtain a Master's Degree from Harvard in History, and to teach History at West Point. Further assignments included various staff and command positions in Italy, Germany, Korea, Ft. Leavenworth, Kan., and as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel at the Presidio of San Francisco. He also attended the Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Penn. His awards included the: BSM W2 OLC, ARCOM, CIB, GSIdentBad, 1st Inf. Div. Citation, 1942.

After his Army retirement, he worked for 10 years for the Bank for America, San Rafael, Calif. in the Trust Department.

He loved to play golf and was a member of the Presidio Golf Club. He was also active in the Sons of Retirement (SIRS) Branch 47, The Harvard Club of San Francisco, and the Bank of America Retirees.

He loved to travel, and especially to river raft. He rafted down five of the major rivers in the western United States. He was an avid reader, especially of US History books and novels.

A Funeral Service and burial will be held on October 24, 2001 at Arlington National Cemetery.

Memorial Contributions may be made to the American Lung Association, 1740 Broadway, New York, NY 10019 or to the A.S. Association, 27001 Agoura Rd., Suite 150 Calabasas Hills, Calif. 91301-5104.

A.J. 'Tony' Cipriani Dies at Age 82

TAPS

Anthony J. 'Tony' Cipriani, Sr., 82, of Wellsburg, died Saturday, June 16, 2000, at home.

He was born in Follansbee, W.V., on Oct. 20, 1918, the son of the late Patsy and Liberata Cipriani, who were Italian immigrants. He also was preceded in death by three brothers, Cesidio 'Jake,' Robert, and Rudy Cipriani.

He graduated from Follansbee High School in 1936.

In 1940, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and began his service at Fort Benjamin in Harrison, IN. Within 13 months, Cipriani advanced through the ranks to staff sergeant.

While stationed at Fort Custer, MI, he applied for, and was selected to officers' candidate school. He was sent to Infantry School and commissioned as a second lieutenant, in the Infantry on June 27, 1942.

Assigned to Company A, 16th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, Cipriani left the U.S. aboard the Queen Mary and arrived in Scotland Aug. 7, 1942. He participated in the invasion of North Africa and was taken prisoner at En Gattir, Tunisia, on March 28, 1943.

He was held captive in Italy, Germany, and Poland until May 8, 1945. He was highly decorated for his actions and received several medals including the Silver Star, a Bronze Star, the Combat Infantry Badge, the Prisoner of War Medal, the European African Middle Eastern Service Medal, the American Defense Service Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal. Cipriani left active duty on May 8, 1945, with the rank of Captain.

Upon his return to the United States, he married Rose Cipoletti on July 5, 1945, and returned to work at Follansbee Steel.

From the fall of 1948 until the spring of 1949, Cipriani attended DeVry Tech in Chicago, graduating from DeVry's television and radio school. He then started his own business in Wellsburg, Community Hardware, which later became Community TV. He remained in business for 40 years.

His public service began when he won the City Clerk's position in Wellsburg in 1963. After eight years in the post, he was appointed by Mayor J. Hubert McCracken to the Wellsburg Planning Commission.

In 1981, he successfully ran for mayor and served two terms. While mayor, he worked with other city officials to lead Wellsburg out of indebtedness in little more than a year. He helped secure a spot for Wellsburg on the U.S. Department of the Interior's list of historic places and was instrumental in bringing the Bayer Wellness Program to Wellsburg.

In 1989 Cipriani met with officials from the Delta Queen Company to discuss docking riverboats in Wellsburg. This resulted in regularly scheduled stops in Wellsburg, boosting tourism.

Cipriani's community involvement included membership in the Kiwanis

Club, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Knights of Columbus, and Garibaldi Lodge in Follansbee. He served as chairman of the Friends of Brooke County and on the Brooke County Historical Museum Board of Directors.

He was a Brooke County RSVP volunteer and a member of St. John Catholic Church of Wellsburg as well as a member of the choir.

He had received several civic awards including the Wellsburg Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year in 1987, the Kiwanis Distinguished Service Award in 1989, the Kiwanis Legion of Honor award for 30 years of service in 1998, was inducted into the Lou Holtz Upper Ohio Valley Hall of Fame in 2000, was the Upper Ohio Valley Italian Festival Citizenship honoree in 2000, and received a Distinguished West Virginian award in 2000.

Surviving are his wife of 55 years, Rose Cipoletti Cipriani, at home; four sons, Anthony J. "Butch" Cipriani Jr. and his wife, Angela, William Cipriani, and Christopher Cipriani, all of Wellsburg, W.V.; George Cipriani and his wife, Annette, of Charleston, W.V.; two daughters, Susan Grimm and her husband, Les, of Paducah, KY, and Mary Ellen Paull and her husband, Chris, of Wellsburg; a brother, Mario "Windy" Cipriani of Follansbee; three sisters, Mary Harvey and Virginia Sopinski of Wellsburg and Diana Lacoue of Follansbee; 10 grandchildren, Anthony "Jay" and Michael Cipriani, Allan and Andrew Grimm, Brian and Lauren Paull, Kristin and Kara Cipriani, and Vincent and Eric Cipriani; many nieces and nephews.

Christian wake services were to be held Tuesday, June 19 in the funeral home.

Funeral liturgy with Mass was to be celebrated at 10 a.m., June 20, in St. John Catholic Church, Wellsburg, with Fr. Walter Jagela as celebrant. Interment was to follow in Franklin Cemetery, Wellsburg with full military honors to be conducted by the Ohio Valley Veterans Memorial Squad.

The family requested that memorial contributions be made to St John Catholic School or the charity of the donor's choice.



A.J. 'Tony' Cipriani