

POST OFLAG 64 ITEM

WINTER 2002

Minneapolis 2003

Bret and Lisa Job formally invited all of us to Minneapolis for the reunion in 2003. We are to meet the members of the WWII Historical Roundtable in Minneapolis and attend their meetings while we are there. Further details will follow as they become available.

PITTSBURGH 2004

Jerry Alexis and his brother, Roger, invited us to come to Pittsburgh for our reunion in 2004. The vote to take them up on the arrangement was favorable. Further details will follow.

PUBLICATIONS

<i>The Waters Story</i>	\$19.50
<i>My Tour of Russia</i>	\$ 5.00
<i>The Men of Oflag 64</i>	\$ 20.00
<i>The Oflag 64 Directory</i>	\$ 3.00
<i>Oflag 64 Audio Tape</i>	\$ 5.00
<i>Original Roster-Oflag 64</i>	\$10.00
<i>Tribute to TF Baum (Paperback)</i>	\$15.00
<i>Hammelburg Roster</i>	\$ 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

Vic Kanners Diary----FREE
 Contact- Dave Kanners
 1141 Pine Ridge Court
 Rochester, MN 48306

Americans Behind the Barbed Wire
 By Frank Diggs
 New price.....\$22.00 (includes shipping)

Contact: Vandemere Press
 P.O.Box 5243
 Clearwater, FL 22205

**POSTAGE FUND DONORS
 SPRING 2002 TO WINTER 2002**

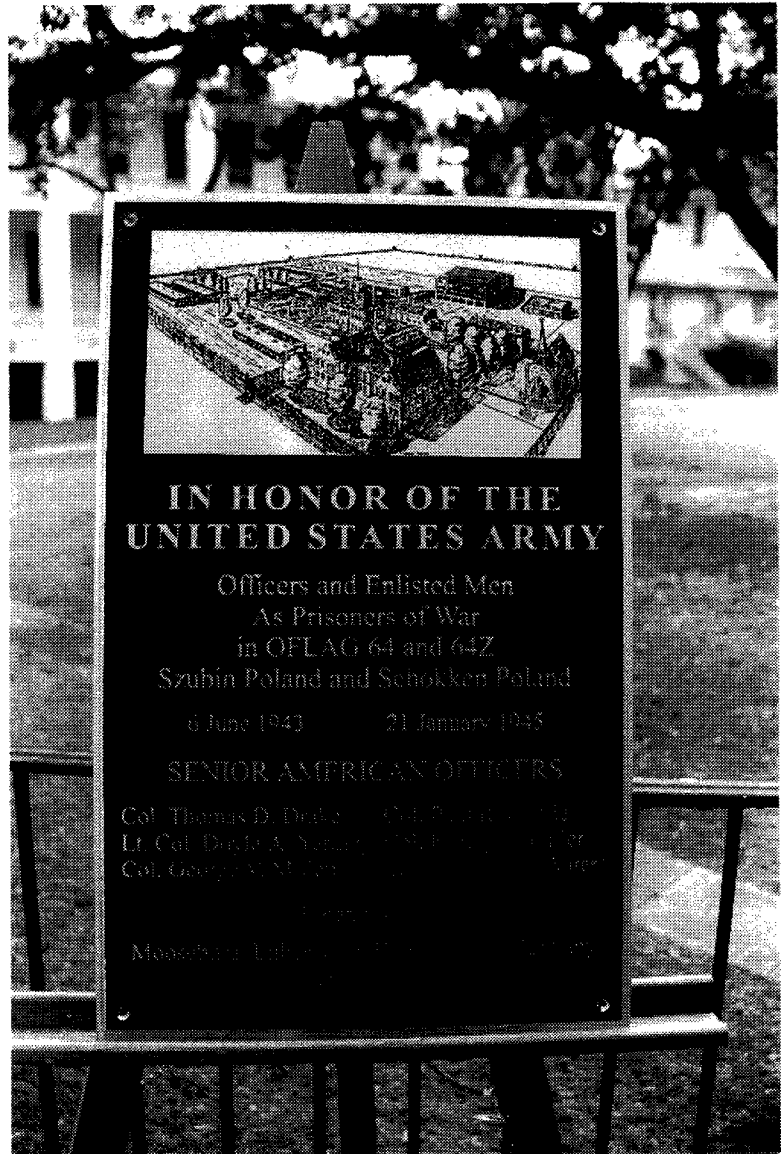
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This is the plaque that was presented to the Infantry Museum at Ft. Benning, GA, during the Oflag 64 reunion of Oct 2002

List of donors to the plaque fund.

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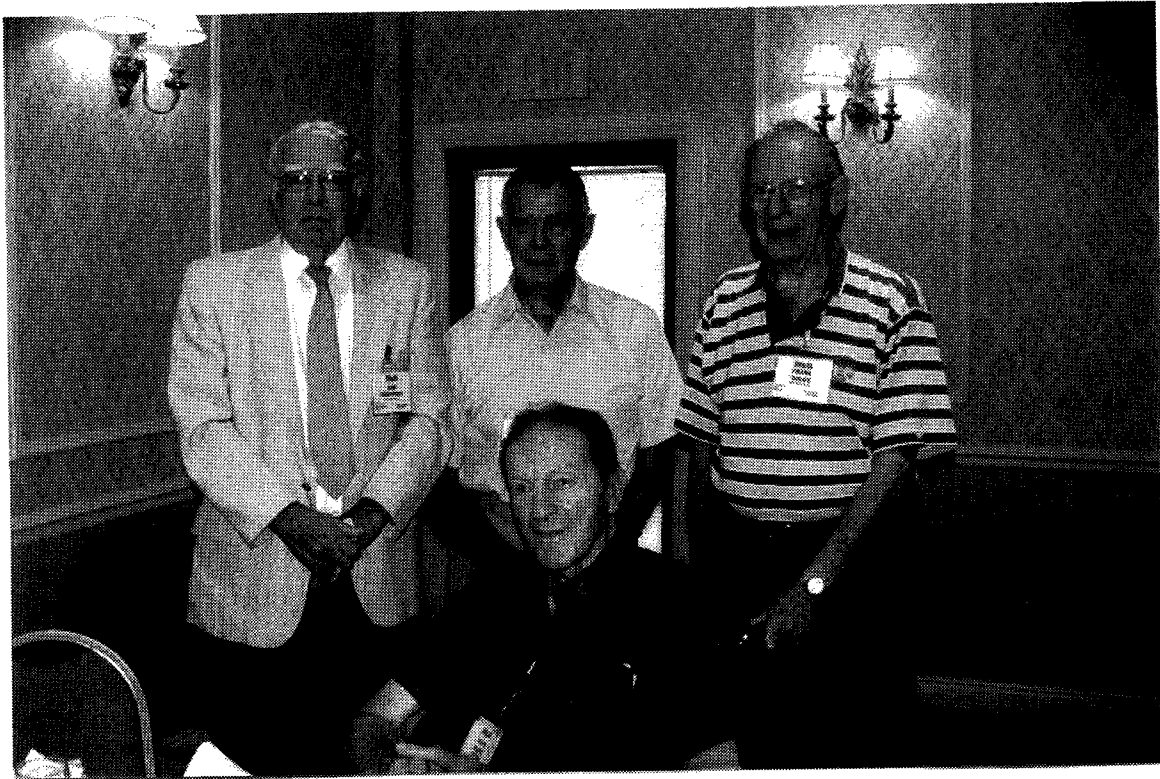


The cost of the plaque was fully funded by donations to the fund by members and families of members of the men from Ollag 64.

At the time of the dedication, the plaque was not installed, but was mounted on an easel in an auditorium at the Infantry Museum. The lighting was not satisfactory so the plaque was taken outside on a small porch and this picture was taken while it was on the small porch.

60 YEARS OF PUBLISHING!

This is a photo of the 4 publishers of the Item beginning at Oflag 64 in 1943 and continuing now in 2002



The 4 men are: John Slack seated, Herb Garris directly behind John Slack, Frank Diggs to Herb's left and Bob Thompson at Herb's right.

Frank Diggs was the publisher while at Oflag 64. He started publishing the Item by hand and later a man in the town of Schubin printed it for him.

John Slack started publishing the Item after we all returned home and continued for 40 some odd years until health problems in his family prevented him from continuing.

Herb Garris started publishing the Item when John Slack was forced to quit the job. He continued until sometime in the early 1990's.

Bob Thompson took up the job from Herb and has been publishing the Item ever since.

MAIL CALL

These are Irv Yarocks responses to your letters.

Lost and found- we have two at this writing-

1. **Harvey H. Robinson**, 1258 Pleasant Point Rd, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. Actually, Hervey didn't move. Just changed his address from a Post Office Box to his home address. What happened? It's hard to tell, but at any rate, his mail was not forwarded and without notification delivery just stopped. Reminds me of an incident at the POW camp where one of our "kriegies" kept complaining to his family that they never wrote to him. Finally, in desperation, his folks went to the Post Office to complain. Result? The Postmaster said "We're at war with the Germans, you can't send him any mail", and he handed them their stack of unmailed letters.

Kudas to the Postal Service. Just before my release from active duty I spent a month in command of an IRTC Company at Camp Croft, SC. One day I spotted the name of Hervey's home town on a road sign. What do you do? Last time I saw him was when we sealed him in the tunnel. I went in to a restaurant and found a waitress who knew him and she told me he had made it back and his mother lived a few blocks away. Just a few years ago at an Offlag 64 reunion we happened to get into the same taxi. With the passage of time we didn't recognize each other, but when he heard my name the first thing he said was "you're the guy who visited my mother". Hervey sent along a check for the Postage Fund along with his letter. Many thanks.

2. **Herb Johnson**, Bethany Village, 505 Albright Drive Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. Herb moved there from Camp Hill. A pitcher with a strong arm could probably throw a Ball that distance, but again, his mail just stopped. No notice. Herb's assignment at Of lag was to develop a sports program as a major factor in lifting morale. I(IY) spoke to him on the phone and he sounds like his old self but he doesn't travel much. By coincidence, Herb comes from Putnam, CT where he was a classmate of my (IY) cousin in High School.

John Slack, Reading, PA. - we had a note from his daughter. They both came to the reunion. John has his problems and is in a wheel chair, but he seemed to enjoy himself and enjoyed shaking hands with everyone. They included a check for the Postage Fund. I'm sure you all remember that it was John who held us together way back.

Edward Rooney, Spokane, WA- he didn't make it to Columbus but he did send a check for the Postage Fund. Many thanks.

Vernon Siebert, Nipoma, CA- Vernon was an enlisted man working in the kitchen and he had a secondary job of accompanying **Amon Carter** to the railroad station to pick up the Red Cross parcels. He, like many of us, froze his hands and feet and still has problems. He sent along a copy of his German ID card. I(IY) never saw one before. Maybe he needed it for his trips out of the camp. He also sent a contribution to the Postage Manv thanks. Maybe MN is close enough to CA for him to make it.

Jim Bickers, Wilmette, IL- Jim was another cog in the machine designed to keep up the morale through his drawings and cartoons. Thanks for the contribution the P.F.

Eugene Ball, Springdale, AR- Gene has had some major family catastrophies but despite them he went to Medical School and practiced until 1991. He doesn't say what he does now, but he says he enjoys the ITEM and sent along a contribution to the P.F. Thanks

Marvin Chevalier, Coralville, IA- He sneaked out before the drawing and was the winner of the first prize. If being present was a requirement, he's out of luck. If he received it later, what was it? Thanks for the donation to the Postage Fund.

Herb Garris, Pinehurst, NC- Herb wrote to explain why he and **Louise** had to leave Columbus early, but he did spend a few days with us. Herb's writing hasn't improved much which brings to mind that some of our schools up this way have given up on writing and are teaching printing instead. Some of these kids can print faster than I can write. Thanks for the contribution to the Postage Fund.

MAIL CALL

William Cory, Louisville, KY – Bill couldn't make it to Columbus, but sent a substantial check for our Postage Fund. Question? Are you still taking cold showers?

Bill got so used to taking ice-cold showers every time he came up from digging in the tunnel that he claims he brought up his sons to appreciate the exhilaration derived from cold showers. If they still take cold showers, what's the address of their mental institution?

Nancy Miflett Zelenack, Escondido, CA - Nancy and her mother (**Colonel Millett's** widow) would have liked to make Columbus but health problems interfered. She did make a major contribution to the Oflag 64 Plaque we put into the Fort Benning Museum. She and her mother visited with **Abe Baum** last Christmas. Abe lives about 20 minutes down the road from her. She doesn't indicate whether that's "normal" driving time or "California" driving time.

George Juskalian, Centreville, VA - George is having too much trouble getting around to travel very far but his interest is still high. I (IY) also spoke to his wife, Lucine, and accused her of being responsible for the economic downturn. She denies it, but before she retired from the World Bank things were pretty good.

A SUPER-DUPER REUNION - I(IY) knew it will be mentioned elsewhere, but the reunion at Columbus turned into a family affair, thanks to the Warthen family. It has also turned into a family affair for the attendees with "kriegies" bringing their wives and children along. Of course you realize that, considering our age, that the word "children" is used loosely.

OFLAG 64 FILM - I (IY) was surprised at Columbus to run into several people who had not seen the Oflag 64 film. What can you do about it? The answer is simple. Just send a check for \$33 to **Galloway Productions, 236 Oak Point Drive, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464**. In fact, order a few, because anyone you show it to will want one. Incidentally, **the Galloways and the Waters** were due in Columbus, but had to make a last-minute cancellation.

The next responses to your letters are by Bob T. Time prevented sending them to Irv and having them returned.

Pat Bender, Bryn Mawr, Pa sent in this news item.....

Dr. and Mrs Vincent Di Francesco and Mr and Mrs Wilbur Sharpe attended a ceremony on Thursday, November 7, 2002 at Ft. Meade Maryland, where a POW memorial made of marble and granite was dedicated and place out side the Ft Meade museum.

Pat and Martha Waters, Mt Pleasant, SC- They were disappointed that they could not make the reunion at Columbus, but are planning on next year at Minneapolis. We sent them a photo of the plaque at Ft Benning and there were very pleased..

Irv Yarock, Worcester, MA—Irv returned the letters sent to him for response and also included a nice donation to the postage fund- Thanks, Irv.

Frank Diggs, Arlington, VA..Frank mans the Washington Bureau of the Post Oflag 64 Item, and sends in the news about **Marcellus Hughes**, who died last month. Marcellus was one of the first men caught in Tunisia and escaped on the second night out on the march from Oflag 64. Franks also sends in news that the price of his book has been reduced to \$22.00, which includes postage. If you would like to order one, the address is: Vandemere Press, PO Box 5243, Clearwater, FL 22205. Franks also sends in a review of **Don Wafuls** stageplay. We are running out of room in this issue, but maybe next time, Thanks. Frank! Frank also sends in a donation to the postage fund for which we thank him.

Bob O'Neill, Scottsdale, Az.....Bob sent a photo of the Thompson family for which we thank him. Our family enjoyed the reunion as did everybody else at the reunion. He also sends in a donation to the postage fund and a donation to the fund for the Ft. Benning plaque. Thanks, good friend.

Alan Dunbar, Las Vegas, NV.....**Alan** and **Lilo** are having health problems and were unable to attend the reunion at Columbus. **Alan** and **Lilo** have been two of our most faithful members and they are missed when they cannot come to our gathering! Hopefully they can be at Minneapolis. They also send in a donation to the postage fund and we thank them for it!

Joe Seringer, Wooster, Ohio...our members send Joe some money for the postage fund and he deposits it and passes along the information to me. This is fine. He notifies me, so I can give credit where credit is due. Joe passes along the donations by..... **Betty Holmquist** and **Reid Ellsworth**. Thanks to both of you.

Larry McBrayer, Slidell, LA...Larry is a volunteer at the D-Day museum at New Orleans and came to our reunion at Columbus and attended the Sat. night banquet and the Sun morning memorial services. Larry is a good friend of our group and is especially interested in the Raid by **Abe Baum**. He takes tour groups to Europe and is planning to go by Hammelburg sometime next year! Welcome, Larry!

Herb Garris, Pinehurst, NC... Herb and Louise left Columbus early to go on a cruise and missed the last two days of the reunion. Herb also promised to write a review of **Charlie Turnbo's** book about his uncle, **Col Yardley**. Hopefully we can get it in the next issue of the Item. Good to see both of you in Columbus and hope to see the both of you in Minneapolis, next fall.

Carl Bedient, Alamo, Tx...Carl says life has been good to him! What more can you ask? Thanks for the donation to the postage fund, Carl.

Margie Slack, Burke, VA... Margie says she and John really enjoyed their stay in Columbus and are grateful to the Warthen family for their efforts to make everybody welcome! There are a lot of people agree with you on that, Margie. See you next year in Minneapolis!

Bill Warthen, Vidalia, GA.... Bill handed me a couple of checks for the postage fund. I think he received them at the reunion. They are from **Jane Graffagnino** and **Jimmy Kanaya**. Thanks to both of you. That is what keeps us in business.

OOPS

During the business meeting at Columbus I (Bob Thompson) passed on a phone number for the Paralyzed Veterans of America that would help any former POW get 100% disability compensation from the Veterans Administration. The number I passed out was wrong.

When I arrived home, I called them to tell to expects some phone calls from around the country and was unable to contact them with the number I passed out. I then found out that they had changed their phone number and I got the correct one. To correct my mistake, I wish to pass along the following.

The number I gave you in Columbus that was wrong is.....918/687-2183
The correct number now is.....918/781-7768
The correct 800 series number is.....800/795-3624

The persons to talk to are: Jimmie Blackburn and Connie Schindler

Memorial Services at Ft Benning, Sunday Oct 6, 2002

Oflag 64 Memorial Service Homily CH(COL) Jerry Alexis, ex-Oflag 64 Kriegie

Several requests were made to put this in the Item.

It seemed very appropriate to do so!

In the 90th Psalm we hear these familiar words, sometimes attributed to the Hebrew prophet and patriarch Moses: *The days of our years are threescore and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away.*

This passage has always intrigued me because it's only in our generation's lifetime that life expectancy has extended to the 70's, at least in America. Then a few weeks ago it was reported that now it has risen to 83 for women and 81 for men. Although composed thousands of years ago, the Psalm nevertheless seems to be very apropos for us. During the past decade, in which we've experienced the greatest loss of our comrades, most of us reached our seventies and beyond.

For those of us who are survivors it's also true that these latter years have indeed been a struggle and filled with sorrow. We've seen our bodies and minds deteriorating and have suffered the sorrow of losing not only our comrades in arms but loved ones and life-long friends. It isn't getting any easier.

But this isn't a time to despair or feel sorry for ourselves. Rather it is a time to rejoice in the way our Lord God has watched over us and blessed us in so many ways, especially in giving us the friends surrounding us today and the memory of the ones whom we honor in these annual services. Tom Brokaw called us "The Greatest Generation" and I'm proud to be a part of it, as I'm sure you are too. When our world was threatened in the 1940's by inhumane totalitarian rulers and their followers, we answered the call to arms and triumphed against terrible odds. Our first internees at Oflag 64 in June 1943 paid the price of inexperience in combat and of weapons inferior to those of the Afrika Corps. Sicily and the brutal fighting in Italy added more to our population. Then came the two invasions in France, the costly breaching of the Siegfried Line and the devastating Battle of the Bulge. Some of our members continued in service in Korea, the Cold War era, and Vietnam, often at a great sacrifice for our families. We came home, were trained or educated to build the greatest nation on earth through our brains and brawn, and have left a legacy which, unfortunately, is being tarnished by many who've never known what it means to fight and sacrifice for others.

Whatever the future may hold for us, whatever the toil and trouble of which Psalm 90 speaks may befall us, we know that we can trust in God to see us through. We can look to the Psalm of David, the 23rd, and find our strength: *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.* As those words comforted us, sustained us, and bolstered us in our days of combat and captivity, let them be our watchword now. Amen



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 2, 2002

I send greetings to those gathered at Fort Benning, Georgia for the reunion of the Veterans of the Prisoner of War Camp, Oflag 64.

As we face the challenges and opportunities of a new era, we look to our veterans for their example of courage and sacrifice. In wartime and in peace, America's veterans have protected our Nation and helped to shape its character. We owe them a great debt of gratitude for their bravery in defending freedom and the ideals that make our country strong.

At Oflag 64, some of those who answered the call to serve were captured in conflict and imprisoned by our enemies. These men demonstrated courage and determination in the face of unspeakable hardships. As you dedicate a plaque to commemorate these important events, I join Americans across the country in expressing appreciation for your commitment and patriotism.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George W. Bush".

19 Aug 2002

Bob Thompson
Editor
Oflag 64 Item

Dear Mr. Thompson:

My family would like to hear from anyone who knew my father, Edmund F. Koli, while he was a POW at OFLAG 64. He passed away July 9th. My father never really spoke about the time he spent as a POW, despite all the questions we asked him. We read the J. Frank Diggs' book and the 50th Anniversary book and watched the OFLAG 64 videotape - but they raise more questions about my father than they answer.

Ed Koli was captured May 23, 1944 at while leading a patrol on the Anzio Beachhead. He was a First Lieutenant, Platoon Leader, Company C, 179th Regiment, 45th Division. He later wrote this account of his time in captivity:

May 23-June 10, 1944: Transient Camps in Italy
June 10-July 23: Stalag 7A
July 23-Jan 21, 1945: Oflag 64
Feb 3-May 6: Stalag 3A
May 6-June 27: Project R (RAMP?)
July 1: Back in US

Ed Koli was held at OFLAG 64 from July 1944 to Jan. 1945. His I.D. card was issued Aug. 20, 1944, ID # 3246/64. According to the U.S. military forms he filled out after his release, while at OFLAG 64 he worked as a: "Interpreter and translator - German. Gave classes in Math and German. On hospital trips to Posen, Poland collected information. Operated hosp. kitchen with Lt. Carrier when the Germans took off"

Ed Koli spoke German, so the German guards brought him along as an interpreter when they took sick POWs to the outside hospital.

Apparently, he stayed in touch with several former OFLAG 64 POWs for a while after the war, including:

- Jules (Jim) Bloch; NY, NY
- Lt. Richard W. Carrier
- Cpt. Ernest Greenberg (sp?); Ashville, NC (Escaped while on march, Jan. 21)

- Roger "RC" White Jr., Monroe, LA (White was also captured in Korea)

We would like to contact these men if they are still around. My father had not been in contact with any of them for at least 30 years. Do you have any idea of where they might be today?

My father left behind an address book with about 80 names and addresses, many appear to be OFLAG 64 Kriegies - could you use a copy?

Thank you,

Eric Koli

Eric Koli (son)
 Peg Koli (wife): PegKoli@aol.com
 131 Beach 91 Street
 Rockaway Beach, NY 11693-1503
 718-474-3335

P.S. Enclosed is a small (anonymous) contribution for your postage fund. My father loved your newsletter. Keep up the good work.

Kriegsgefangenen-Offz.-Lager 64 (Oflag 64)

Ungültig

Datum: 20.8.1944

Ungültig

als Legitimation für den öffentlichen Verkehr.
 Gültig NUR im Kriegsgefangenen-Lager.



ag 64



Fingerabdruck
 d. r. Z. F.

Der Kgf. hat diese Erkennungskarte und die Erkennungsmarke des Lagers stets bei sich zu führen. Bei Kontrolle sind beide vorzuzeigen. Verlust ist sofort zu melden.

The P. o. W. has always to carry with him this identification card and his tag. On control both have to be presented. The loss of the card or tag has to be reported immediately.

Name Koli, Edmund

Dienstgrad Oberleutnant

Erkennungs-Nr. 3246/64

This story was furnished by John Kline, editor of the 106th Infantry Division newsletter.

In the first article, no words were added or removed, but some words were accented and the columns were rearranged as two columns. The last article was shortened for the reason given at the end.

Lt. Col. Tom Riggs' Remarkable WWII Odyssey

From the Providence Journal, December 30, 1985:

By John Hanlon, special to the Journal-Bulletin
Jul-Aug-Sep 1988



Tom Riggs fights a different battle now. Last September (1985) the 69 year-old Riggs underwent surgery for the removal of a cancerous lung. (another operation in 1987) He is recuperating these days with the aid of his wife, Virginia, in Providence. The post operative process goes well, and Tom looks ahead optimistically. He is a former Textron executive, now a management consultant, and a director of several companies, work that is largely on hold.

The ailment and its treatment have taken a toll on Riggs' weight and vigor. Still the marks are there of a big, handsome man of commanding presence - such as the young Riggs out of West Virginia who, at 6'-3" and 225 pounds, was a captain and star tackle of the University of Illinois football team of 1940. The same year he played in the Blue Gray game, captaining the Blue team. Later the Washington Redskins could not understand his lack of response to written offers to play for them at \$250 a game. He didn't answer because by then he was in the Army as a reserve second lieutenant. And before long, by competitive exam he won one of six appointments available as a Regular Army officer in the Corps of Engineers.

Then, Tom Riggs was thrust into the other big battle of his life.

It began in the "bitter woods" of the Ardennes in Belgium, where, at age 28, Lt. Col. Thomas J. Riggs Jr., was

commander of the 81st Combat Engineer Battalion of the 106th Infantry Division. His 650 men and officers had been well trained and kept together as a unit back in the States, whereas the division's first crop of infantrymen had been drained off as fillers for outfits already fighting in Europe. In their place came the first of the 18-year-old draftees, plus others taken from specialists schools and made foot soldiers - not exactly willingly. Sparsely trained, they comprised essentially, the greenest of the green divisions when the 106th went on line in northeastern Belgium on 12 Dec., 1944.

This was the time of General Eisenhower's "calculated risk" in defending the area. Normally, a division is assigned to a five mile front to defend.

The 106th Division's front extended for some 27 miles. But no German action was anticipated.

"When we took over from the veteran 2nd Division," Riggs recalled recently, "they said it was a country club, a great place for a new outfit to break in."

Four days later, at 5 a.m. on Dec 16th, heavy artillery shells slammed into the 106th Division around the town of St. Vith. Hitler had unleashed his last-ditch offensive. Tanks and infantry in huge numbers began breaking through all along the division's area, with the main thrust headed directly at St. Vith. To the east of St. Vith, closest to the attackers, was Tom Riggs.

On the second day, with battle confusion almost chaotic, Riggs was ordered to block the prime road into St. Vith with a hastily formed "Cox's Army," as he later called it. He had about 350 men, parts of his own outfit not already fighting, remnants of routed outfits, some of the division's cooks and band members and a tank destroyer platoon so new its three guns were not yet equipped with aiming sights. (The entire platoon, sent off by Riggs for its first action, simply disappeared.)

With this "army" Riggs directed operations that held back a superior force for five days. He personally led several counterattacks that steadied his positions; he stalked the line boldly so his troops could see that he was still there, encouraging scared soldiers to hold on.

As a division, the 106th fought doggedly before being overwhelmed. For five days they stalled the Germans around St. Vith, which was 25 miles closer to the enemy than Bastogne, the defense of which epitomized the American effort in the Bulge. But if it had not been for the 106th which lost 70 percent of its 12,000 some people killed, wounded and captured, there might not have been time to put together a Bastogne.

For all their greenness and ultimate fate, the 106th Division won even the admiration of British General Bernard Montgomery, not given to generally praising American troops. In his best English manner, Monty said of the 106th after the battle, "By Jove, they stuck it out those chaps."

Riggs' battalion, for its part, was awarded the Unit Citation, a medal not easily gained. The commendation told of the 81st's "extraordinary heroism, gallantry and determination... setting the battalion apart and above other units participating in the same engagement."

Riggs himself received the Silver Star and, additionally, an unusual compliment in a Saturday Evening Post article

published about two years later detailing the story of the 106th Infantry Division.

"All combat troops are pretty skeptical of decorations," the Post story said in part, "knowing too well that too many acts of high valor go unrewarded because an officer did not happen to be around to file a report. But the 106th's soldiers to a man, are unanimous in agreeing that Lt. Col. Thomas Riggs... was the outstanding hero of the division."

On the sixth day of the battle, Germans with tanks were so close to Riggs' position, he said, that he could hear them talking at times. The weather was freezing cold and it was snowing.

"The only hope we had left," Riggs said, "was to break up into small groups, travel by night and try to infiltrate out of there."

At dawn on Dec. 21, with seven men, no maps, no food and little ammunition, Riggs' group headed out. He wore the standard wool uniform and only the liner of his trench coat. He removed his insignia of rank and discarded his helmet, the latter because of the noise made by rubbing against branches.

"The first day we stayed out of trouble," Riggs said, "But the second night, moving along a creek line someplace west of St. Vith, we ran into a platoon or so of Germans. They surrounded us and then mortared us."

A fragment grazed Riggs on the back of the head, enough to break the skin but not cause any lasting damage," he said. But the impact knocked him out. When he came to, several Germans were standing close to him. He was a prisoner of war.

Prisoner of War

The Germans marched him to an assembly point where about 40 other Americans - none from his outfit - were under guard. Soon they were put on the road, marching toward a railhead, they were given to understand. So began Tom Riggs' odyssey.

The march continued for 12 days, covering 110 miles eastward to Stalag to a railhead in the direction of Berlin. (probably Stalag 12-A at Limburg - CUB ed's note.)

Their treatment as prisoners, Riggs said, was "fairly brutal."

"We'd stop near a village, and the guards would go in and forage for food for themselves," he said. "for us there was mainly hardtack and snow. But the guards would come back with sandwiches for themselves. They'd eat them and throw the crusts to us. After a while, I'm sorry to say, there'd be some groveling for the remains. Part of it, I think, was done to get even with us. With all the bombings we, the Allies, were doing, it didn't leave the Germans with much to eat themselves. So I think they took delight in watching us grovel like a pack of dogs for the crusts."

"At that point, anything" that was happening to Riggs was made worse by the letdown at being taken prisoner.

"I guess that was the lowest I ever felt in my life" was the way he expressed it. "I had hardly eaten or slept during the fighting at St. Vith. Then, with the march, cold and being have starved, I guess I was down to about 170 pounds. I just felt beaten into the ground."

Lost his outfit

Something else was eating away at him. He was a commanding officer who had been taken away from his outfit.

"I was absolutely embarrassed," Riggs said. "I felt I had lost a lot of guys. I felt I had not done the job I was given to do, and that hurt. I couldn't understand why we had no advance information of that attack coming, and little or none of the help we had asked for. At that point in time I had no knowledge of any purpose served in the loss of those guys with me. I think I was on the way to becoming a basket case, mentally. That lasted for a few years after the war, when I learned that what we had done at St. Vith helped."

At the railhead the prisoners were put in freight cars. A couple of days later they arrived at a prison camp - Stalag 4-B - outside of Berlin.

Riggs was there for about 10 days, during which, he said, he "kind of just observed things." One conclusion he reached was that the Americans were not as "good" as the British at being prisoners of war. A lot of Americans, he said, seemed satisfied just to sit on the sidelines, as if at a football game, waiting for it to end.

"But the British were always doing something to bedevil the Germans," he said. "One time, for example, they got hold of a length of wire. They ran it down one post of a two-tiered bunk and covered it loosely with tape - on purpose, so the Germans would be sure to find it.

"Then they snaked the wire through the floor and, underneath, dug a hole about eight feet deep and put the wire in it. At the bottom they placed an envelope with a message inside it, filled the hole up and settled back to see what the Germans would do.

"Well, they spotted it a day or two later. They were really delighted with themselves, figuring they had found something to do with a radio.

"So, they cleared out the barracks, and they followed the wire to the ground underneath. They then dug out the hole and came to the envelope. Now they were really elated. They opened the envelope, thinking they were on something big, and read the message. Written in German was the one word. "S -."

Riggs said he was interrogated "pretty hard" at Stalag 4-B.

"They'd try to compromise me," he said. "by saying the others had given some kind of information and asked me to verify it. I said only what I was required to say: name and serial number. That infuriated them a few times, and I was hit across the back with a riding crop for my stubbornness. After 10 days, possibly as my punishment, I was sent off alone by truck to a camp in Poland. It was somewhere near Poznan which is roughly halfway between Berlin and Warsaw.

Prisoner in Poland

There Riggs lived in a two-story barracks with outside facilities, with older Germans as guards. Food was sparse, mostly ersatz bread and soup. He said the treatment there was generally "not that bad."

Twice, in keeping with prisoner protocol, he proposed plans for his escape. Both were turned down by the senior officer among the captives. In one case, he was told, he must wait

his turn; the other was such that it might cause trouble for those left behind.

"I still had enough drive left in me, though, that I absolutely wanted to get back and see what happened to my outfit," he said. "Also a rumor started that the Russians had taken Warsaw and that the Germans were going to march us out of Poland and back to Germany. I decided I wasn't going to have any of that."

Just before dawn on his 28th day in the camp, Riggs left his barracks for the latrine. He noticed immediately that the usual guard was not in sight. Spontaneously, without prior planning, he decided that his chance to escape might be there.

"I walked straight to a deserted mess hall, a few buildings away, near the wire fence," he said. "I went inside. In a corner was a walk-in ice chest, seven or eight feet tall. I climbed on top of it and rolled back until I was snuggled up against a wall, and I lay there.

"In a while, I could hear the Germans taking a roll call. My name was the second one called. When there was no answer, I could hear all hell breaking loose. Then the search was on. Four or five times patrols came through the mess hall. One of them even had dogs with them, barking like hell. Each time, the guards opened the ice chest doors and looked in. But nobody checked on top." After a long, cold day, Riggs left his hideout when darkness fell. He clocked the routine of the German patrols passing outside the double barricade of barbed wire.

"I soon figured out how often they came by the place I would have to go," he said. "Then something said to me, 'This is the time to move,' and I went for it. I don't remember exactly how I did it, except that I didn't go over the wire, I just went through it' somehow. Only after I was out did I notice that I was terribly chewed up by it."

He was still wearing only his regular uniform, the coat liner and a scarf to cover his head. His only plan was to travel at night, checking road signs at major intersections that would point his way to Warsaw. His physical condition was scarcely up to the task.

"The first night I walked in the scrub beside the road," Riggs said. "By the second night I was so weak and tired and cold and frustrated that I said to hell with it and walked right out in the middle of the road. I was challenged twice by guttural voices. But I just put my head down and kept moving.. and got away with it.

"The third night I came to the outskirts of Poznan, and I knew it was too big for me to get through unnoticed. As I was sitting on a culvert in the shadows, I saw a small group coming toward me down the road. I faded through a fence and lay there. Suddenly I felt a tap on my shoulder, and there was a guy challenging me. "I'm an American colonel," I said. With that this guy threw his arms around me and kissed me on both cheeks.

"It turned out that he was a teenager, a member of the Polish underground, and so were the people coming down the road. One of them spoke good English. They took me to a house in Poznan and filled me with potatoes and that great Polish sausage and warm milk, things I hadn't seen in two months. I ate and ate - and then upchucked."

The Russians arrive

The underground moved Riggs from house to house for about a week. Then the Russians arrived, and Riggs' Polish friends put him in the hands of a Russian colonel commanding an armored unit fitted with mostly American made equipment.

"He was a burly man who couldn't read or write his own language," Riggs said. "but he could fight. First thing he said to me was, "Come on, Americanski, I'll have you in Berlin in a couple of weeks and you can meet your own people."

Riggs fought and lived with the Russians for 10 days, an experience that left him with a warm feeling for Russian hospitality and a certain awe for their fighting style.

"At night the colonel would take over the biggest house in the village," Riggs said, "and there would be plenty of scrounged food to eat and a lot of vodka to drink. When he noticed I didn't have an insignia of rank, he had a mechanic make one out of a bottom of a mess kit." It is a perfect replica of an American lieutenant colonel's silver leaf, which Riggs still has as a cherished souvenir.

As for fighting, Riggs recalled the time the Russians encountered a single German tank.

"Instead of firing at it," he said, " they put 20 soldiers on a stake-bodied truck and they went after it. They just swarmed all over it and literally beat it to death, It was scary, the lack of fear they showed but that's how they did it."

The Russian episode ended when the word came to have Allies such as Riggs returned to Warsaw. The Russian colonel took him part way and he completed the trip by train. At Warsaw he spent about 10 days putting his engineering training to work in helping rehabilitate a displaced persons camp. The odyssey resumed.

From Warsaw, Riggs travelled some 750 miles on a Russian-manned, wood fueled train to Odessa on the Black Sea. There he talked his way onto a British tanker for the 500-mile lift to Istanbul, Turkey. The tanker captain passed him onto a British freighter bound to Port Said in Egypt, some 1,000 miles away and considerably off Riggs' course. It turned out well enough, though, because at Port Said, with the help of the Red Cross, he caught a ride on the troopship Mauritania, heading some 1,800 miles to Naples, Italy.

There for the first time in nearly three months, Riggs checked in with the American military. When he spoke of his desire to rejoin his 81st Engineers, the reply he received was crushing.

"They told me flatly that Army policy forbid me going back there," he said. "Anyone in my situation, they said, was automatically sent home on a 60-day medical furlough. Something about the danger to escaped prisoners of war being captured again, or the possibility that they may have been compromised by the enemy.

"I didn't know exactly what that all meant," he said. "But I told them, "if you don't let me go back to my people, you are going to have a basket case on your hands."

"They relented, finally, because of the way I put it, I guess. Also by then - this was early in March - there were signs the war was beginning to wind down. They said I could go back."

Back to the unit

He was flown to Marseilles, France, then to Paris for a few days of rest and a debriefing he found almost laughingly inept and shallow.

"My first night in Paris, though, something unbelievable happened to me. "I went to a bar frequented by Americans. I had just taken a seat when a man from my outfit - the last person I'd seen around St. Vith - came over and stuck his big nose in my face. "You big devil," he said, "we've been looking for you or your remains ever since."

A day or two later, Riggs was driven to a place in Brittany" - no more than 350 miles west of his point of capture. There the 106th division, including his 81st Engineers, was refitting before taking over the containment of a German garrison holding out in the vicinity of St. Nazaire.

The reunion, when it came after so long a trail for Riggs, was simple in its way. Tom Riggs' words could only touch on its full impact, and his description of it was spoken in a quiet and almost distant voice.

"When I walked into the 81st's headquarters," he said, "everyone was astonished to see me. My place had been kept open, and a major, my second in command, came roaring out from behind the desk and we hugged. I was a little broken up, all right, and so were the others. Then we had a big party, with a lot of story telling. The party lasted all night long."

Epilogue

Tom Riggs was assigned to the American Embassy in Mexico as a Military Attache, after the war. In 1947, he resigned his commission to enter private business.

His 81st Engineers never did get back to the fighting, because the 106th was given a different assignment. Instead of taking up positions around St. Nazaire, the division was sent in late spring to the Ruhr Valley to round up and process German prisoners... nearly one million of them by the time the task was done.

Ironically, Riggs' task was to supervise his Battalion in the construction of barbed-wire compounds to hold the German prisoners.

Colonel Riggs - CO 81st Eng. - Illini "MAN of the YEAR"

Providence, Rhode Island<R> Journal Bulletin of November 29th, 1989.

by Bill O'Connell

Special to the Journal-Bulletin

Jan-Feb-Mar 1990

Providence's Tom Riggs knows what it is like to fight for his life. He has had to fight many times in his 73 years. Yet he sees himself as being "terribly lucky."

That view says a lot about what type of man Tom Riggs is. For it is not "terribly lucky" to have fought on the front line during one of World War II's fiercest battles. And it is not "terribly lucky" to have been a prisoner of war or to have faced cancer surgery twice in two years.

Tom Riggs has gone through all these things and survived. That could be deemed lucky. Still, if one word is needed to describe Tom Riggs, it would not be "lucky." It would be courageous."

For his heroic efforts during World War II's Battle of the Bulge, Riggs was recently recognized as Illinois University's "I" Man of the Year. The award goes annually to a former Illini athlete who has achieved honor or distinction in a chosen field or occupation. The award was presented at a banquet on November 10 and again before the Illinois football game against Michigan the following day, Veteran's Day.

On that Saturday, before a crowd of 73,000, Riggs marched out on the field he had played on over 49 years earlier. The flag was raised. The national anthem was played. Three fighter pilots made a fly-by in Riggs' honor. The latter was a surprise that brought a tear to the veteran's eye.

After the aerial tribute, a declaration describing Riggs' achievements was read. During the statement's delivery, the crowd was very quiet.

"Then suddenly, they let go with a tremendous shout that lasted a long time," Riggs said a few days later while sitting in the den of his East Side home. "I had forgotten what that (the crowd) had meant in my playing days."

Riggs was first cheered on an Illinois football field in 1938. That year he earned the first of his three varsity letters. In 1940, his final season, he was elected the team's captain. He also captained the Blue team that year in the annual Blue-Gray college All-Star game.

At 6'3" and 225 pounds, Riggs was considered a large tackle in his day. The 1940 edition of Football Illustrated, rated him as a Star of the West and called him "One of those rock-ribbed, natural tackles who knows what to do, and does it."

As was the norm then, he played both offense and defense. "I averaged 58 minutes a game for three years in the Big Ten," Riggs said.

And he made the most of those minutes, playing well enough to draw an offer from the Washington Redskins in the fall of 1941. Riggs, however, could not accept their \$250-a-game bid because he was then in the Army. He had graduated from Illinois' College of Engineering in February of '41 as a second lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers Reserve and had been called to active duty that May.

Note: This article continues on, but it is a repeat of Col. Riggs experience in the Battle of the Bulge and is not repeated here in the interest of space in the Item.

OFLAG 64 POSTAGE FUND
Joseph Seringer Treasurer

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements
From September 1 2001 to September 2002

Receipts for the Period:

Contributions to the Fund	\$ 2231.00
Additional 2001 reunion receipts	399.67
Interest	151.15
Books sold	241.45
Total Cash Received	\$3023.27

Disbursements for the period

Copies	\$1879.80
Camp Benning Placque	1619.00
Postage	1041.62
Supplies	690.52
Telephone	28.17
New Check Charge	7.00
Total Cash Disbursed	\$5266.11
Excess Disbursements over Receipts	\$(2242.84)
Cash Balance August 31 2001	12606.79
Balance in Bank September 10,2002	\$10363.95

This year's Oflag 64 Reunion was hosted by Bill Warthen and his family in Columbus, Georgia. Since many of the POWs, especially the paratroopers, had been stationed at Fort Benning for some part of their training, this was a trip back to their youthful army days.

A plaque commemorating the American commanding officers of Oflag 64 (Colonel Drake, Lt. Col. John K. Waters, Colonel Goode, Colonel Doyle Yardley) was dedicated and placed in the Infantry Museum while we visited. Roy Chappel spoke about Colonel Drake and others being honored. He recounted the story about Colonel Drake's refusal to endure the blustery German commandant, Oberst Schneider's, verbal abuse by walking out on Schneider's outburst, vowing to return only when the German officer decided to "conduct himself as an officer and a gentleman." Charlie Turnbo, editor of his uncle Doyle Yardley's diaries (Turnbo, Charles A., ed. Home Was Never Like This: the Yardley Diaries. Evergreen, CO: Yardley Enterprises, 2002) described the meticulous records Yardley kept of his days at Oflag 64. Included in Colonel Yardley's army footlocker which Charlie inherited, was a bar of soap made of human material containing the inscription, "RIP." The soap was displayed along with the Colonel's pencil-written diaries for attendees to peruse in the hotel hospitality room.

While at Fort Benning, we spotted young soldiers beginning their jump training from 220- foot towers. A wonderful lunch was provided at the Fort Benning Officers Club. Everywhere, soldiers came to pay their respects and to express their awe and gratitude to our brave POWs.

Other events included a visit to Andersonville and the POW museum, Americas, Plains and Jimmy Carter's home, the Callaway Gardens with its exquisite tropical flowers and butterfly room, Warm Springs, home of FDR's "Little White House," a downtown tour of historic Columbus, and a visit to Port Columbus, and the National Civil War Naval Museum where we enjoyed another tasty meal. The Saturday night banquet and Sunday Memorial Service completed the events.

Many old friendships were renewed and new ones initiated. Two newcomers this year were Lindsey Marshall, Charlie Cheatham's niece from Atlanta, and Sam Hodges, Jr. of Roswell, Georgia. The following information comes from my father, Vincent Di Francesco, who spent some time talking to Sam in Columbus.

In 1992, Sam retraced his march from Oflag 64 with his son, Sam Hodges III.. He also visited the Normandy Beachheads. He was with the 115th Infantry, 29th Division (Company K), and along with 30 of his men, was captured in Germany on October 4, 1944. He left Szubin, Poland for Parchim, then caught a train to Hammelburg on March 6, 1945. He arrived in Moosburg on March 28, 1945 one day after Task Force Baum conducted its raid on Hammelburg. He was liberated by the 14th Armored Division on April 29, 1945, traveled to Le Havre, France, and on June 6, 1945 crossed the Atlantic to New York. His uncle was Courtney Hodges, who led the First Army into Germany after General Bradley was promoted. We hope that Sam will attend many more reunions.

I'm sure that I speak for all the attendees when I say that the visit to Columbus was too short. Thanks to the Warthens for their hospitality and for a fun and efficiently-run reunion. We were treated royally and we had a great time. The children of the Oflag 64 men are planning a "Kid's Night Out" in Minneapolis 2003.

Pat Di Francesco Bender

WILLIAM R. CORY
12 WOODHILL ROAD
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40207-1146

September 1, 2002

Mr. Bob Thompson
7448 E. 68th Place
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Bob,

I haven't communicated much, but that is no measure of my many, many thoughts of "64" and my old friends. Unfortunately, the lists of TAPS grows rapidly these days and that is sad indeed.

Interesting thoughts of Irv Yarock's of Oflag 64 being used as a POW camp before "we" arrived June 1943, also the article on page 4 of the Post item by Bob Rivers. Wonders never cease!

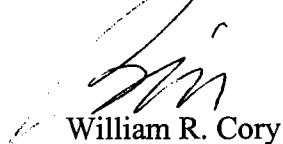
Cannot make Atlanta / Columbus for the reunion as we will be back in Leland, Michigan then. Caroline and I had a shortened vacation there this July when she got pneumonia and it's taken a long time to recover, so we'll go back there to "finish our summer".

Another interesting article in this latest Item is Richard B. Parker's letter and excerpts from Major Gen Deane's book, "The Strange Alliance". I suppose everyone has his own "escape" experiences, but his quotes state the 3 men, Colley, Gruenberg and Dimmling escaping detention from the NKVD enroute to Moscow brought back experiences quite similar to 3 of us. Cory, Murphy and Gaich. Cory, Fabian, Murphy and Robinson hid in our tunnel at Oflag 64 January 20 -21 until the camp was evacuated. We along with others who were left in the local hospital then made our way to Warsaw / Remberton. Robinson was lost to illness in local hospital, Fabian somewhere else, and Murphy and I picked up Gaich to continue "our escape" throughout South S. E. Poland always trying to find a way to Moscow! We walked, rode sleds, hay wagon, trucks, you name it - finally arriving in LVOV where the Russians promptly put us in the local jailhouse. An inquisitive newspaper reporter, Vladmir Belayev who had covered our Navy and others in Murmansk interviewed us and was easily convinced that we were valid Americans and not German spies as the Russians contended. He was assisted in this by a Jewish lady who had taught English at Krakow University and who had escaped detention when the Nazi's rounded up Jews in the area, putting them to death in the LVOV sewers. In any case, the 2 of them convinced the Commandant (a 1st Lt. NKVD) to release us to the care of the local Russian General. The general had been a Military attaché in Washington before the war. He saw that we had a good room in the main hotel, hot baths, food, etc. At one point his entertainment of us was interrupted by a phone call saying 4 - 5 Americans were in the hotel lobby. Thinking our stay would then be fortified by more escaped POW we made out way for a reunion. To our total surprise these were

Air Force personnel from Poltava in the Ukraine seeking to recover shot down B-17 crews and Norden Bomb sights in the area. After 2 – 3 days and much haggling with the Russians, they flew us to Poltava Air Base (1500 miles east of LVOV). Next day we were flown to Teheran, outfitted with new uniforms at the Persian Gulf Command and into Miami by air. Looking back, except for a small few days as guest of the NKVD in LVOV, we made of trip home a bit faster than those who came through Odessa, including Colley (who was captured same place and time as I was, and whom I of course knew) Dimmling and Gruenberg. We 3 arrived in Miami February 28, 1945! Murphy (Hill T. "Spud" Murphy) committed suicide after the war. Fabian (Bill) and Robinson (Henry H.) both came to our 50th reunion in Louisville, which I hosted. I think we had 185 (including some wives). No one seems to have heard of or from Peter Gaich who was captured in March 1944 near Cassino, Italy. Being of Serb/Croat heritage, he acted as interpreter for "Spud" Murphy and me on our trek through Poland. Bill Fabian still lives in South Texas, I think and Henry Robinson is South Carolina.

The forgoing is only sketchy as not many friends of that era are left who even remember such events or even care, but the excerpt from Major Gen Deanes book, "The Strange Alliance" triggers this short response.

Cordially,



William R. Cory

P.S. I really only meant to ask you to send me two (2) prints of Bickers drawing of our camp (which Jim tells me is a really good rendition) and to accept a long overdue Oflag 64 Postal Fund contribution.

I recently had a telephone call from Bob O'Neill who now resides in Scottsdale. As we were talking, I related to him an account of an experience of a friend of mine, who recently passed away. He was a Navy veteran and he had quite an experience, which I have labeled "Another Prisoner of War". I am enclosing, a copy of the account which Bob had suggested I send for inclusion in the next Post Oflag 64 Item. It may be that some of you will recognize him as having been with me at the last couple of reunions. He had a full grown white beard.

Another "Prisoner of War"

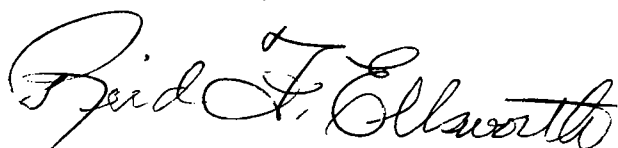
At the Laughlin and Spokane reunions I was privileged to bring as my guest Leslie Raisor and his wife. Some of you may remember him as having a full white beard. He has now passed away, some months ago. Now for those who haven't known, I'll tell you his story.

He served in the U. S. Navy during WWII. He was part of a crew of about 75 men on a troop carrier ship. Shortly before the following occurrence they had just carried 10,000 troops to their destinations and thankfully only had their own crew aboard when hit by a Japanese torpedo. The ship was sunk with all but sixteen of the crew going with it. These sixteen managed to release and get into a life raft. Of those sixteen, only six survived until they were recovered 90 days later. During that period they saw ships on the horizon and aircraft high overhead, but apparently they themselves were not seen.

The six survivors survived with food and drink both from the fish they could catch. Among those who didn't survive were one who was allergic to fish, one or more who decided to drink sea water, becoming victims of dysentery, some who just gave up and jumped overboard into the sea and drowned as an alternative to any expectation that they would never be found, and some, largely because of frustration and desperation, who just gave up and died.

Les and the other survivors have been living proof of the durability of the human who is determined to make the best of whatever happens. The philosophy lesson is sound. "It isn't nearly as important what happens to you as what you do about it."

I miss my friend greatly.



Reid F. Ellsworth



Leslie Cecil Raisor

November 5, 1918 - January 31, 2002

TAPS

^{80yr old}
Jay A. Drake of Stanwood, Michigan formally from Dearborn, Michigan passed away June 12, 2002 after a four-year bout with a crippling disease. He was born in Jackson, Michigan

Jay served in Europe during WWII as a Forward Observer with the 379 th FA Bn Battery B 102nd Infantry Division. He was taken prisoner November 28, 1944 on the Siegfried Line and arrived with other officers at Oflag 64 on Christmas Eve 1944. Jay was in the 39-day march from Oflag 64 to Hammelburg and escaped after the task force liberated the camp at Hammelburg.

Upon returning home, Jay had a successful career in the fire insurance business for commercial and industrial buildings. He was the Superintendent of the Sprinkler Risks Department for Insurance Services Offices.

His beloved wife of 59 years, three daughters, five grandchildren, five great grandchildren and ^{three} five brothers survives him. Jay was a recipient of the Silver Star and his ashes will be buried in Arlington Cemetery.

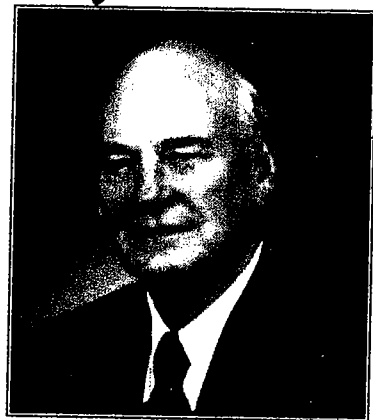
When I must leave you

*When I must leave you for a little while
please do not grieve and shed wild tears
and hug your sorrow to you through the years,
but start out bravely with a gallant smile;*

*And for my sake and in my name
live on and do all things the same,
feed not your loneliness on empty days,
but fill each waking hour in useful ways;*

*Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer
and I in turn will comfort you and hold you near;
and never, never be afraid to die,
for I am waiting for you in the sky!*

In Loving Memory of Jay A. Drake



May 21, 1922 ~ June 12, 2002

Memorial Services
Northland United Methodist Church
Stanwood, Michigan
11:00 a.m. June 28, 2002

Officiating
Reverend Edward Slate

Arrangements by Daggett-Gilbert Funeral Home
Big Rapids, Michigan

Obituaries

Edmund F. Koli World War II Veteran

Edmund F. Koli, a long time resident of Rockaway, passed away on July 9, 2002 at the age of 85.

Edmund, a veteran of World War II, served in North Africa and Italy. He was captured at Anzio on May 23, 1944, and was a POW at Oflag 64 for the remainder of the war. He was later awarded the Bronze Star.

He was a graduate of Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, and spent many years as an employee of the New York City Department of Personnel. As a Rockaway resident for over 60 years, he was active in several community groups, including the Hammel Holland Seaside Civic Association and American Legion Post 272. He was a Deacon at the First Congregational Church, and President of their Men's Club. He helped the community fight against the city's plans to tear down homes in the Holland area to build Beach Channel High School in 1966.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Hazel (Peggy); two sons, Eric and James; and a grandson, Jordan (Jake).

A memorial service will be held at the First Congregational Church on Saturday, August 10, at 2 p.m., followed by collation.

Marcellus C. Hughes Army Lieutenant Colonel

Marcellus Christian Hughes, 89, a retired Army lieutenant colonel who was an aviation accident investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board from 1961 to 1971, died Oct. 29 at a nursing home in Greenwood, Del. He had congestive heart failure.

Col. Hughes was in the Army from 1941 to 1961. He was captured while on a reconnaissance mission in North Africa during World War II and spent two years as a German prisoner of war in Poland. He escaped in February 1945 as the Soviet army pushed west.

Most of his Army career was spent as a small-craft pilot. His final active duty assignment was at Fort Rucker, Ala., as a safety analyst with the Army's aviation accident research board.

He was a native of Lynchburg and a graduate of the old Devitt Preparatory School in Washington. He attended the University of Virginia.

He had a home in the Washington area from the early 1950s to 1997, when he moved from Arlington to Bethany Beach, Del. In Delaware, he helped run a family guest house called "Journey's End."

His honors include the Transportation Department's Distinguished Service Award.

Survivors include his wife of 62 years, Carolyn Bell Hughes, a former Washington Post reporter, of Bethany Beach; a daughter, Marcella Hughes Sharp of Bethany Beach; and two grandsons.

A son, Christian B. Hughes, died in 1999.