

Artist's drawing of Oflag 64 without barbed wire, towers and guards.
drawn by Jim Bickers

POST OFLAG 64 ITEM

SUMMER 2004

PITTSBURGH 2004

Jerry Alexis is still working out the details for the Pittsburgh Reunion. Registration forms and programs are included in this Issue of the Item

You should start getting serious about your plans to attend.

There is a lot of publicity about the cicadas that will be sprouting in September. They are harmless so don't worry about them, We used to play with them when we were kids and had a lot of fun!!

Jerry Alexis
719 Fourth St
Beaver Falls, PA 15010
Pho: 724/891-2338
Email: ejalexis@juno.com

Ft Lauderdale, FL 2005

Irv Solotoff and Rosa Lee are busy making arrangements for the 2005 reunion
News will be passed along as it becomes available.

Irv can be contacted at:

Irv Solotoff
13355 SW 9th Court # 213
Pembroke Pines, FL 33027
Pho: 954/435-7600

Rosa can be contacted at:

Rosa Lee
3117 N Indian River Drive
At. Lucie Village
Ft Pierce, FL 34946
E mail: RoyTree50@aol.com

PUBLICATIONS

POSTAGE FUND DONORS (2004)

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 \$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

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

Press Releases -----\$10.95
 Ted Roggen
 101 Westcott
 Houston, TX 77007

Bob Christensen(via Herb Garris)
 Ron Green
 Di Francesco Family
 Jerry Alexis
 Robert Galloway
 Ormond Roberts
 Bob O'Neill
 Herm Littman(Cash)
 Ed Rooney
 John Albree
 Alan Dunbar
 Rose Daniel
 Herb Garris
 Carrol Higginbotham
 Bret Job (Frank Diggs Books)
 Bret Job (RAID Books)
 Jack Monaghan
 Pat Waters
 Rob Cheatham
 George Myron

Editor- Bob Thompson
 7448 E 68th Place
 Tulsa, OK 74133
 Pho: 918/250-0897

We lost our good friend Irv Yarock
 RIP Good Friend

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 Pho: 330/345-5878

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 Pho: 912/537-

2004 Reunion Chairman- Jerry Alexis
 1021 Highland Ave
 Beaver Falls, PA 15010
 Pho: 724/891-2338

MAIL CALL

George Juskalian, Centreville, Va said he is beginning to feel like an undertaker. The obits for Charles Kouns and Nat Hoskot were in the Washington Post and sent in by George. We would rather not have news like this George, but obits are beginning to be the usual rather than the unusual now.

Mrs Thomas Kreutzer, Woodbridge, VA also sends in an obit for Nat Hoskot. We thank you for it.

Jack Monaghan, 143 Water Brook Park, Birmingham, AL writes and inquires about a certain name he saw in a retired officers magazine that had died. The name of Yamamoto does not appear in our roster for Oflag 64 but the name Sakamoto does and we have no information on him or his whereabouts. He is not on our mailing list.

Ormond Roberts, Worcester, MA was a friend of friend of Jack Rathbone and he missed the obit about Jack in a recent Item. Ormond we put the obit in a recent Item, I guess you just overlooked it. Ormond was Jack's roommate in the White House at Oflag 64.

Pat Waters, Mt Pleasant, SC writes that he is making plans to be in Pittsburgh and hopes to bring some family members. The name of Waters in the Oflag 64 group is a very special name and we hope that he can bring some members with him. Pat sent a donation to the postage fund for which we thank him.

Herman Littman, Spokane, WA writes about the death of Victor Renz. He was captured in Luxemburg in '44. Herman sends in a donation to the postage fund. Thanks, Herm.

Bob Cheatham, Ashboro, NC writes that he has been in and out of the hospital 4 times this year but seems to making progress now. Bob sends a donation to the Postage Fund, Thanks.

Ed Mooney, Spokane, WA, sends in a donation to the Postage Fund but no letter. We appreciate the donation Ed but we would also like to know how you are doing these days.

Bob Zawada, New Orleans, sends in some information about the D- Day Museum activities in New Orleans. They are in the midst of a huge expansion and are looking for information on WWII soldiers. They would especially like unit history's and it seems that our bunch represents a lot of different units. Dig around in your closets and old shoe boxes and see what you can come up with. The address to send anything is on the D-Day pages in this issue.

George Myron, Little Egg Harbor, NJ sends in a donation to the Postage Fund and says he will be in Pittsburgh. Thanks George and we will be looking for you in Pittsburgh.

Bret and Lisa Job, MNPLS MN, received a lot of complimentary notes about the way they handled the reunion in MNPLS last fall. There were quite a few of them and rather than repeating them here I thought about just bringing them to Pittsburgh this fall.

Julie (Rathbone) Gionfriddo, Livermore, CO and her aunt are planning on coming to the reunion this fall. Julie has been to a lot of our reunions (with Jack) and we miss her when she doesn't show up.

Ed and Elizabeth Batte, Southern Pines, NC write that they have moved into an assisted living center. Their new address is: Penick Village Bob 2001, Southern Pines, NC 28388. They even have their own tomatoe plants for sandwiches.

REGISTRATION FORM



2004 Oflag 64 Reunion
Pittsburgh PA
29 September - 2 October
Holiday Day Inn Greentree

Name as you want it on name tag

Spouse or other attending

Other attending

Other attending

Your address

Telephone

e-mail

Your unit

Place and date of capture

Point of liberation (circle) - Oflag 64, en route, Luckenwald, Hammelburg,
Nurnburg, Moosburg, Odessa, Other _____

+++++

Registration fee - \$125 per person; number _____ \$ _____

Canterbury Dinner Theater - \$49 pp; number _____ \$ _____

American Heroes Tour - \$60 pp; number _____ \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Make check payable to Rev. Edward J. Alexis and mail to 719 4th St.,
Beaver Falls PA 15010-3001 no later than 8 Sept.

**Reminder - you must make your own hotel reservations, also due by 8
September. See reunion information sheet.**

2004 Oflag 64 Reunion Pittsburgh PA
29 September - 3 October
Holiday Inn Greentree



WELCOME

to Pittsburg and western Pennsylvania, America's first gateway to the West - the focus of the French and Indian War - the launching point of the Lewis and Clark expedition - the pioneer producer of iron, steel, coal, glass, petroleum, aluminum, and nuclear power - center of education, medical and pure research, and the arts - the arsenal of democracy and supplier of military manpower throughout our nation's history - and some of the most friendly people in the world!

Schedule

Wed., 29 Sept. - 1:00 P.M. Registration, Hospitality Room open

Thurs., 30 Sept. - 9:00 A.M. Registration, Hospitality Room open

6:15 P.M. Depart for Canterbury Dinner Theater

Seating 6:30/ Buffet Dinner 7:00/ Show 8:00

A RIDICULOUSLY CONCISE HISTORY OF PITTSBURGH
by steel citizens

This fast-paced, laugh-a-second show will take you on a wildride through the 'dahn tahn' of the present-day 'Burgh and perhaps even into the future. Events, sports, and politics are all on the agenda of this original show. (Optional - \$49 pp; maybe cancelled if minimum number is not met.)

Fri., 1 Oct. - 9:00 A.M. - Breakfast buffet, business meeting

1:00 - 5:00 P.M. - City tour of some of Pittsburgh's most fascinating sites, including the Heinz History Center, Soldiers and Sailors Museum, and the Nationality Classrooms at the University of Pittsburgh. (Both included in registration fee.)

Evening - on your own.

Sat., 2 Oct. -

8:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. - American Heroes/Laurel Highlands tour. A visit to the site of the 9/11 Flight 93 temporary memorial and Flight 93 Memorial Chapel. You may want to leave a memento (flower, flag, e.g.) at the

memorial. Tour members receive a commemorative pin at the site and a

donation is made to the Flight 93 Memorial Fund. Smorgasbord luncheon at the Oakhurst Tea Room. A visit to the Quecreek Mine Rescue Site with

narration by the owners of the farm. All this in the setting of the beautiful fall foliage of the Laurel Highlands. (Optional - \$60 pp.; may be cancelled if minimum number is not met.)

5:30 - 9:30 P.M. - Gateway Clipper Dinner Cruise on Pittsburgh's three rivers - Monongahela, Allegheny, and Ohio. included in registration fee.

Sun., 3 Oct. - 9:00 A.M. Breakfast and memorial service. Included in registration fee.

Hotel Reservations

You must make your own reservations at the Holiday Inn Greentree. Be sure to mention they are for the Oflag 64 reunion. Also be prepared to give the airline, flight number, date, and arrival time if you need the free airport shuttle. The Inn's address is 401 Holiday Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15220. The reservation phone number is 412-922-8100. Press option 2. If you indicate you are traveling by car, directions will be mailed to you.

Important - Reservations must be received by 8 September! The rates per person for room, tax, and baggage handling are as follows:

Three nights - Single, \$279; Double, \$169; Triple, \$129; Quad, \$99.

Four nights - Single, \$349; Double, \$209; Triple, \$149; Quad, \$119.

Further information needed?

Contact your reunion host, Jerry Alexis, 719 4th Street, Beaver Falls PA 15010-3001; telephone 724-891-2338; e-mail ejalexis@juno.com.

Subj:Re: Item Things

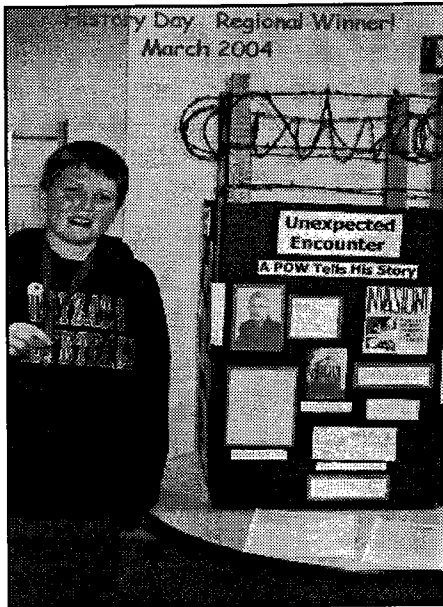
Date:5/26/04 7:41:18 AM Central Daylight Time

From:bretjob@heartlandamerica.com

To:THO7448@aol.com

File:ryan1.zip (430534 bytes) DL Time (TCP/IP): < 1 minute

Sent from the Internet (Details)



Ryan's focus was to show the personal side of what happened to U.S. soldiers during WWII. He used taped interviews of Ray Holmquist along with Ray's diary and letters. At the state competition, he wore Ray's uniform and his POW medal. He also used the many books and



story Day is a nationwide program where students create projects based on a certain theme. This year, the theme was "Exploration, Encounter, Exchange in U.S. History." Across the country, students choose a topic, research it, and develop a major project which are then presented at individual school's History Day fairs. Some students are then selected to advance to a regional History Day Fair, and the competition continues to the state and then national levels.

Ryan Horn, a 7th grade student at Wayzata West Middle School in Wayzata, Minnesota, did an exhibit on the WWII POW named Ray Holmquist for his History Day project. After extensive research and interviews, Ryan's project was selected to compete at the regional and state levels. Ryan was also interviewed for a local CBS morning television news show that was covering Minnesota's State Competition on May 2, 2004.

The state competition was held at the University of Minnesota. Ryan was an individual exhibitor and one of over 1100 students participating at various levels.

films which have come various other Oflag 64 POW's and families

His project was titled "An Unexpected Encounter: A POW Tells His Story". The project described Ray's capture, his time as a prisoner at Oflag 64, and his eventual escape. He also addressed Ray's eventual willingness to explore his past and reuniting with other Oflag 64 prisoners. Ray was reunited with a friend he met at Oflag 64, Mr. Boo Nunnally after nearly 50 years. In 1998, they went back to Poland and visited Oflag 64 and the farm where Mr Holmquist escaped.

Although Ryan did not make it to Nationals, he did win the state creativity award for his project. He came away from the experience very proud to have the chance to share Ray's experience and have the opportunity to his keep his and fellow Oflag 64 POW's story alive and not forgotten.

Subj: Re: Outstanding!!!
Date: 5/30/04 12:53:18 PM Central Daylight Time
From: bretjob@heartlandamerica.com
To: THO7448@aol.com
Sent from the Internet (Details)

Mr. Thompson,

Ryan is a son of some very close friends of ours. His interest in Ray's story started years ago. In 1995, Lisa and I along with Ryan's parents spent 3 weeks in Europe and part of our mission was to find the place where Ray was captured and we succeeded. Ryan's parents, Kevin and Ann Horn were our neighbors and Lisa and Ann worked together for years as flight nurses aboard a helicopter. Ann and Kevin knew Ray and Bette well and this is how it all started.

I have spent the better part of the last 20 years investigating Ray, Roy (Ray's twin brother), and Boo Nunnally WWII experiences and as I succeeded in finding more and more information, I always shared my findings with Ann and Kevin along with their children. They were always very interested in hearing about Ray, Roy and Boo.

The History Project is a National and State wide project for the 7th graders. The students can choose any history event or topic they wish. Ryan first presented his project at his middle school along with all of the other 7th graders. There are several types of presentation levels or classes such as Audio (PowerPoint), Verbal (Oral) or to build a exhibit. He choose to build an exhibit and the theme was a POW story in WWII. He asked me if it was okay if he could tell Ray's story. I gave him Ray's diary, books and documents written by other Oflag 64 POW's, and all 10 hours of Ray's interview which I have typed out. He was not interested in doing D-Day or other well know topics or personalities as he wanted to tell a story about a regular soldier.

He was chosen along with I believe 3 others presenters to represent his school at a regional contest made up of other local middle schools. He presented his project again at regionals and again he was chosen with several others to show his project at the state history championships which were held at the University of Minnesota. His project drew a lot of attention as he was interviewed by local television stations and he won an award at state for best creative exhibit but did not make it to Nationals. It is too bad as his goal was to tell Ray's story. He will spread Ray's story to others and in this small way, Ray's and all of the rest of his fellow Oflag 64 POW's story will remain alive. It was open to the public to view the exhibits and he attracted a lot of attention and questions. His project drew praises and tears from many viewers.

We are going to save the project and hopefully have it displayed somewhere. We have invited the Horn family to the reunion this fall and for Ryan to meet all of you and bring his project. His exhibit has been in the helicopter hanger at the hospital where Ann still works as a flight nurse. Most if not all of the helicopter pilots are Vietnam Veterans and they were all very impressed as most know Lisa and have met Ray in the past.

I hope this answers your questions. Let me know if there is anything else you need.

— Original Message —

From: THO7448@aol.com
To: bretjob@heartlandamerica.com
Sent: Sunday, May 30, 2004 9:01 AM
Subject: Outstanding!!!

Bret,

The exhibits and photos of Ryan were just great. I will use them in the next Item. Tell Ryan we appreciate what he has done and we will put it in the next Item.

A couple of questions, Isn't Ryan related to you and what is his relation? Did the speakers at the U of Mn spark his imagination or did the speakers play a part in what he has done?

Bob T.

810 Gonzalez Dr, Apt 4-D
San Francisco, CA 94132

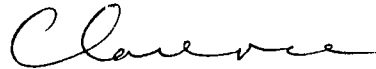
17 May 2004

Dear Bob (Thompson, Garris, Warthen, Alexis):

I now have a firm print and binding date for "Roads", ie binding completion on 2 June. I take a one week vacation from 5 June after that the books should be in the warehouse.

I shall mail you a copy as soon as I can and also begin my mailing to service schools and magazines. I have a back order file waiting to be filled. I plan a pre-reunion price of \$25 for kriegies and next of kin. I am hoping the POW Museum will carry the book and that it will be a success with the walk-in trade. After the Reunion it will have to go to \$30 in view of trade discounts. Pricing is intended to be a neutral, no profit, no loss, situation. The profit margin when established will go to the Postal Fund.

The form for ordering follows and I hope will be in the next issue of the Item. There is enough new material in this edition to merit adding to the 2d on our coffee table. My hope is to reach Oflagers, Bulgars, and the enlisted men of Stalags IIB and IVB and their next of kin we have not reached and sold.



Cut line for order form.

.....

ROADS TO LIBERATION FROM OFLAG 64

Inclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ copies for Roads to Liberation from Oflag 64, 3rd Edition, at \$25 a copy.

To: Clarence R Meltesen
810 Gonzalez Dr, Apt 4-D
San Francisco, CA 94132

Postwar meeting offers reason why many liked 'Ike'

Last week, I asked for input from readers concerning any noteworthy experiences they had in meeting celebrities and other famous persons.

In one reply, the sender's experience revealed a background almost as interesting as the prominent person he met.

Retired Lutheran minister the Rev. E. Jerome "Jerry" Alexis, formerly of Ross Township, now lives in Patterson Heights. He grew up in Punxsutawney and after graduation went to Drexel Tech in Philadelphia, where he joined the Army Reserve. He was called to active duty in April 1943 and went overseas in October 1944, assigned to Company B, 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Division.

He was captured Nov. 12, 1944, in the Hurtgen Forest in Germany's Siegfried Line. He was marched 500 miles, rode boxcars for 1,000 miles, and was bombed and strafed three times by our forces in the course of being in seven prisoner-of-war camps.

He was rescued three times and recaptured twice. He was finally liberated from Stalag VIIA, Moosburg, Germany, on April 29, 1945.

He served four years on active duty during and after the war and 30 years in the active Army Reserve, retiring as a colonel in the Chaplain Corps.

After World War II, he enrolled in January 1946 at Gettysburg College, where he became a reporter on the school newspaper. The commencement speaker that spring was the leader of the successful war in Europe, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, who became our 34th president.

Alexis was scheduled to interview "Ike," but the general's entourage arrived late, which negated any meeting before the speech. Later at the school president's home, Alexis was given five minutes to conduct his interview.

Alexis remembers the general standing in his normal at-ease position, with arms clasped behind him as he answered the usual standard questions. Alexis mentioned that he was among a number of former prisoners of war that Eisenhower visited at Camp Lucky Strike, in LeHavre, France, before they returned home.

That prompted the general to ask Alexis what outfit he was in, where and when he was captured, how the Germans had treated him, where he was

liberated and for more details on his service. Much to the chagrin of the college president, whom Ike kept telling just a few minutes more, the live-minute interview became nearly 20 minutes.

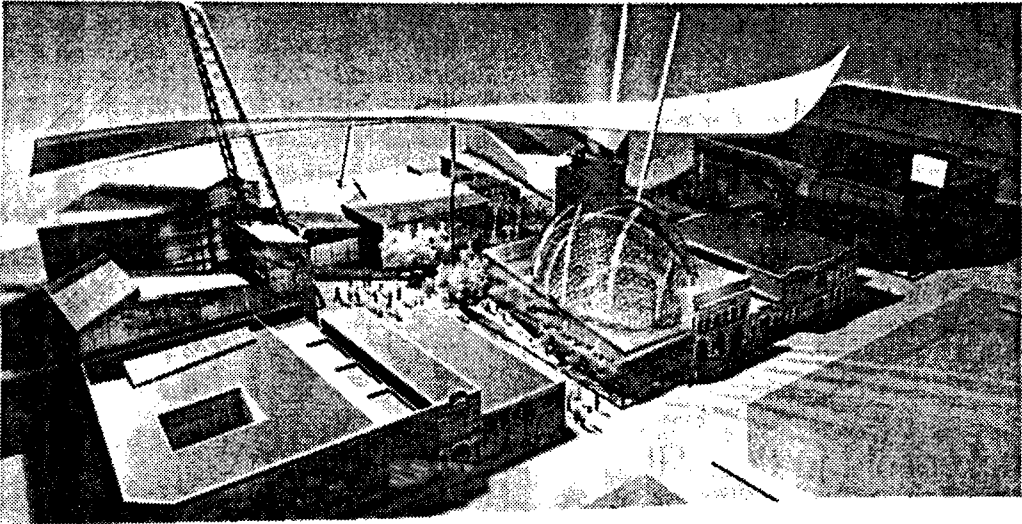
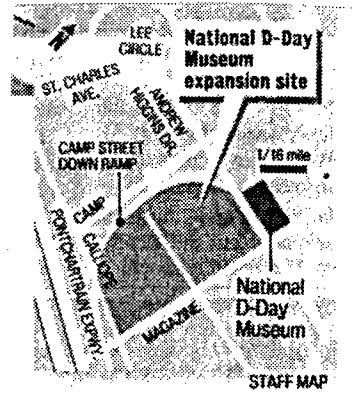
After it was completed, they exchanged warm handshakes, and Alexis left. It was what he described as a never-to-be-forgotten event.

After graduating from Gettysburg College, he went to the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary. After ordination, he served parishes in Frederick, Md., and Zelienople, and was on the staff of the Pittsburgh bishop before completing his ministry in Ross Township. He retired in 1986.

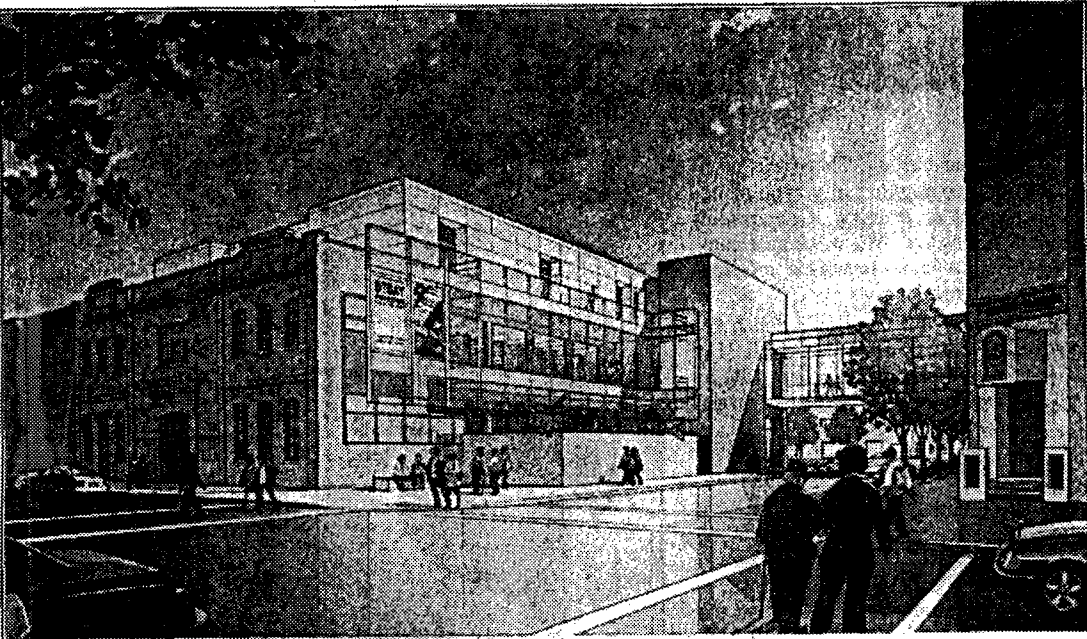
FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2004

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

D-Day Museum plans 6 new buildings and a parade ground



The additions to the National D-Day Museum's campus, across the street from the original building, far right, will occupy nearly the entire two blocks bordered by Magazine Street, the Pontchartrain Expressway downramp, Calliope Street and Andrew Higgins Drive. The 70-foot-high Teflon-coated canopy provides protection from the weather as well as substantial energy conservation — and drama.



One previously announced component of the expansion is the Center for the Study of the American Spirit, across Higg Drive from the current museum. It will house the museum's collection of oral histories as well as a substantial World War II library of letters, diaries, film and other documents, will serve as a research center for scholars and amateur historians and will house conferences and meetings.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN SPIRIT
Architecture: Skidmore, OWINGS & Merrill LLP

This page and the preceding page are devoted to the D-Day Museum in New Orleans. It appears that this museum will be **THE** museum for WWII in the future. They have some very ambitious plans for the future. There are several of the volunteers at the museum that have close ties to the Oflag group through the Task Force Baum incident. Bob Zawada was one of Abe Baum's men and was severely wounded at the time of the last battle on the side of the hill. Larry Mc Brayer has become one of our reunioneers. He has attended the last few reunions and will probably attend the rest of them. The museum wants all the unit history's that they can get their hands on, Our group represents a lot of individual units and is asking for each of you that have a unit history to send them a copy. If you desire more information you can contact: Jeremy Collins, 945 Magazine St. New Orleans, LA 70130, e: collectmgr@ddaymuseum.org

By Elizabeth Mullener
Staff writer

The National D-Day Museum will unveil plans today for a \$120 million expansion that will quadruple its size and triple its exhibition space in six new buildings clustered around a parade ground with a swooping canopy 70 feet high.

The additions to the museum's campus, across the street from the original building, will occupy about five acres, or nearly all of the two blocks bordered by Magazine Street, the Pontchartrain Expressway down ramp, Calliope Street and Andrew Higgins Drive. The museum has acquired the land and is scheduled to complete the construction by 2010.

The New York firm Voorsanger Architects won the contract for the project, awarded after a nine-month search, in conjunction with the local firm Mathes Brierre. Patrick Gallagher and Associates of Washington, D.C., has been selected to design the exhibits.

Voorsanger, one of the most prominent museum designers in the country, has worked with the Pierpont-Morgan Library and the new Asia Society and Museum, both in New York, as well as the University

of Virginia Art Museum in Charlottesville, Va., among others.

"The D-Day Museum is easily one of the four or five most important architectural projects in the country right now," said Bartholomew Voorsanger, head of the firm. "I love the ambition of this museum and the steady dedication to it over this decade. Where they started and where they're going this is a remarkable event."

Patrick Gallagher likewise as snagged some plum assignments in recent years in his field of exhibit design, including the museum at the Civil War battlefield in Gettysburg, Pa., the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C., and a variety of projects for the Smithsonian Institution. His company is working on the exhibit for the American Cemetery near Omaha Beach in Normandy, France, where the D-Day invasion took place during World War II.

How are there

The exhibits for the New Orleans museum, he said, will incorporate the most avant-garde technological wizardry, which lends a take-you-there quality to the experience — computer

hips that guide a visitor through the museum and simulation technology that replicates the experience of being in the nose cone of a B-1 bomber.

"You will at times feel what it is like to be in a space, in an event, in a location," Gallagher said. "This is a very different style of storytelling."

Nick Mueller, president of the museum, said he and the other members of the selection jury were smitten with Voorsanger's architectural design as soon as they saw it.

They liked the notion of reaking up the museum into a number of parts, he said, because it gives the opportunity to have in one building at a time as much money becomes available. They liked the parade ground, which will be 600 feet long and 14 feet above street level, because it offers a unifying device, will be a venue for public events and gives visitors a break from the intensity of the museum's subject matter. And they liked

the Teflon-coated canopy because it provides protection from the weather and substantial energy conservation and most of all, because it provides drama.

"It's just beautiful," Mueller said. "It's a signature piece, a landmark. It would be recognized all around the world."

Covering the gamut

The current museum comprises 70,000 square feet; the addition will be another 230,000. The current exhibition space of 18,000 square feet will be increased by 57,000.

The extra space, museum officials said, will let them tell the story of World War II more comprehensively and on a grander scale.

All of the major campaigns that involved Americans will be explored, from the Aleutian Islands to North Africa, from Sicily to China, Burma and India, as well as the European and Pacific theaters. Every branch of the service will be included, as well as exhibits on medical advances, scientific innovations and homefront production.

The final exhibit will demonstrate how the war shaped the history that followed it — politically, economically and culturally all over the world.

Separate from Voorsanger's plan, there are two additions under way at the D-Day Museum. The first, called Discovery Hall, is a four-story adjunct on the back of the museum designed for use by teachers and students. It includes 11,000 square feet and is scheduled to open next year.

The second is the Center for the Study of the American Spirit, on the corner of Magazine Street and Higgins Drive, designed by the local firm Eskew Architects. The building, Mueller said, will be the intellec-

cost of the expansion, the museum is undertaking a five-year capital campaign, scheduled to be announced in early February in Washington. Actor Tom Hanks, a longtime devotee of the museum, will be honorary chairman of the campaign, which will seek \$150 million, including \$30 million for an endowment.

About \$40 million has been promised, mostly from state and federal sources, although only half of that is in hand.

Mueller said he expects more support from both state and federal governments, from the museum's newly nationalized board of trustees and from individuals, corporations and foundations around the country.

Like the architecture and the exhibits in the museum's newest phase, Mueller said, the fund raising is an ambitious undertaking.

"I think it's daunting but doable," he said.

Elizabeth Mullener can be reached at emullener@timespicayune.com or (504) 826-3393.

TEXAS and OKLAHOMA declare a truce and decide to go eat.



The Thompsons, Bob & Gladys, and their daughter Nancy of Houston, called on Roy and Helen Chapele of the Edenbrook Assisted Living Center in the Woodlands, Houston, Texas the last of May, 2004. Helen and Roy have been in this center for about a year and have several more months to go before they can go home to Kaufman, Texas. Helen and Roy were in good spirits, as they always are. We all had lunch at Landry's Seafood at Woodlands and thoroughly enjoyed the time we spent together.

Roy and Helen have been cleared to go home to Kaufman, sometime around the last of July, and are really looking forward to it.

They are planning on coming to Pittsburgh this fall.

Subj: Death Notice - James V. Cook
Date: 6/3/04 12:24:47 PM Central Daylight Time
From: kevinandsylveen@yahoo.com

All Hammelburg POW's -

It's been awhile since I've seen any postings and I've lost touch with this group. I wanted to let you know at my father Lt. James V. Cook passed away yesterday. He was interned with many of you at Oflag XIII B in 1945. My last inquiry regarding whether any of you knew Dad, went unanswered, so I thought I might try again. Does anybody remember him?

I'm also posting a rather long account of my dad's experiences, which was posted in June 2001. My thanks, Bill Warthen, who pressed me for answers to his questions at that time. Bill's questions forced me to spend several hours on the phone with dad to get his story, which I now have after his death.

Thanks
Kevin Cook

Bill -

In response to your questions, I spent about 2 1/2 hours on the phone with Dad this evening. I apologize in advance for the length of this e-mail, but Dad gave me about 9 pages of notes, which I will try to summarize here. Please excuse the misspellings, but I've misplaced my dictionary.

At the time of his imprisonment dad was a second Lt. He eventually was retired as a first Lt. in 1946 or 1947. He was a rifle platoon leader (small unit commander) in the 3rd platoon, Company C (Charley), 137th regiment (Harry Truman's old regiment), 35th Infantry Division of the 1st Battalion. His original commission was as 2nd Lt. Coast Artillery Corp (CAC) Anti-Aircraft(AA) and Automatic Weapons (AW) from Camp Davis, NC in November 1943. He then spent three months at Camp Haan in California in the Casual Officer Pool (COP). He proceeded to infantry school, Officer Special Basic (OSB) for 8 weeks in Ft. Benning, GA, where he graduated in Spring/Summer 1944. He was sent to Camp Fannin in Tyler, Texas at the Infantry Replacement Training Center (IRTC). In November, 1944 he was sent overseas.

He was captured on December 31, 1944 in La Ville Bon Eau (sp?) translated as Village of Goodwater, located about 10 miles Southeast of Bastogne, during the Battle of the Bulge. According to dad, his unit occupied a small building in the village. They soon realized that there was a German unit in the basement of the same building. He spoke a little German and the commander of the German unit spoke some English, so they negotiated with each other. Dad indicated that the battle in the streets was fairly indecisive at the time and it wasn't apparent who was going to win. At that time it was also common for neither side to take prisoners. Many were taken into the woods and shot by their captors. So he and the German officer agreed to speak on each other's behalf depending on which side was victorious. The Germans finally prevailed. Dad and his unit were taken into the street and for awhile they were convinced that they were going to be executed. A catholic fellow in his unit was so sure that he pulled out his rosary. However, the German commander that he had encountered in the building came forward, as agreed and his unit was spared. From there he was taken on what he describes as his "Tour of Germany". An old German Master SGT., who dad describes as very courteous and very formal, was put in command of him and other POWs. My notes from this evenings conversation are somewhat cryptic, so I may not have this sequence written correctly. My spelling is also suspect here. They marched by foot to Wittlich, Germany where they stayed in an old prison for several nights. They crossed the Rhine River in Koblenz, Germany. Stayed at a farm in Nach Monderscheid. Also spent a little time in Monchhausen, which dad found amusing because of Baron Von Monchhausen on the Fred Allen show ("Vas you der Charlie?"). While in Monchhausen he believes that it must have been the headquarters for the 28th infantry division before being overrun by the Germans. He remembers seeing file cabinets, papers and office furniture with a lot of references

to the 28th. They slept in an old schoolhouse there, which had a door on either end of the building, so two guards were posted. One night Monchhausen was hit by artillery fire from 155s. He and his comrades who were on the second story of this school building were sleeping spoon fashion to stay warm. Every 15 to 20 minutes they would hear the fluttering from the incoming artillery. Everybody would stiffen up. Then with the sound of the explosion they would relax. This went on all night. Eventually he ended up in Limburgh at Stalag XIIA. A little later he was transferred by train to Hammelburg. He was somewhat nervous about the train ride, because apparently one of the trains that left a few days earlier had been strafed by the Army Air Corp, resulting in allied casualties.

As I indicated in an earlier posting, dad was one of the POWs that kept a "recipe book". He made this out of the black wax parchment paper (similar to packing or butcher paper) from the red cross packages. The front of the paper was brown parchment and the backside was a heavy black wax. He still has this book. The very last entry has "27th March 14:30 Major General Von Goekkel (sp?) surrenders Oflag XIII B to Col. Goode."

Dad remembers the Green Hornet soup, but not the buzzing sounds made by the POWs. He said that the original Sr. American Officer (SAO) before Col. Goode arrived from Oflag 64 was a Col. Cavender (sp?). Dad's barracks was near the main road next to the main gate. Dad has a list of the 40 men in his barracks which he wrote on a Kriegesgefaner Post. He will send it to me. His work group consisted of 6 POWs: Dad, Leo Champagne from New Orleans, LA, Frank Smysor, First Name? Kornegay, First Name? Brown (a Quartermaster) and First Name? Saylor from Cincinnati, Ohio. Dad indicates that morale was very low before Col. Goode showed up. Goode provided good leadership and improved the morale quite a bit. He also indicated that the 106th was referred to as the "Hungry and Sick" as a play on words.

After the liberation by Baum's forces dad believes he was wounded in Hollrich. He was riding in the third tank in the column. The tank was a Sherman M4A3. Bill you stated you were on a light Stuart tank at the column's head. He wants to know if that was LT. Nutto's. He was sitting with his butt in the commander's access with his legs dangling out. He thinks his was the first tank hit. He thinks this was the case, because there was a roadblock to the front of the column and tank ditches either side. By crippling a tank back in the column, the Germans could potentially prevent the forward tanks from backing out and escaping. He indicated that the tank he was on did not get hit directly by the panzerfaust, otherwise he speculates that he might have been incinerated. He believes that it hit somebody's leg, exploded and sent shrapnel out everywhere. He was hit in the right foot and right leg by two pieces of shrapnel. At the time, he thought his legs were possibly blown off as he felt the impact beneath his knees. He slid down the tank to the tank tread guard and fell head first into the ditch. He did this in a diving fashion with his arms outstretched because he was not sure he had his legs and did not want to land on what stumps he might have had. As it turns out this was not a good thing, because he ended up breaking his wrists and jamming his arms (it was quite a drop).

Two other POWs he knew were in the ditch. They asked if he was hurt. They took off what remained of his right boot (only the top buckle was secured in tact, with the right side of the boot completely blown off). He remembers that the flesh on his right foot was "flowering". His comrades took 12 inch square felt cloth used by POWs as makeshift socks and tried to use them as bandages to dress the wound. At the same time, they kept hearing the tanks and halftracks above (he was still in the tank ditch - it was wet) trying to manoeuvre. He recalls the treads being steel, not rubber like many today, so they kept making this click, click, click sound as they tried to move slowly over the pavement. Eventually the task force backed away.

He and his fellow POWs could hear some groaning above. He remembers hearing a German saying (in German) "How many soldiers?" "How many tanks?" They also heard a pistol shot and a nearby groan stopped. He and his comrades started to make their way down the ditch, with his friends supporting him on either side. The ditch eventually shallowed out. They proceeded along, but then were shot at. His friends dropped him and started to run. Fear took over inside him and he got up and also ran on his wounded foot and leg. He says it's amazing

what you can do when your really terrified. Eventually he and his comrades made it back to the task force. His friends loaded him onto a halftrack. He never saw them again, but eard from one of them about ten years ago. The other friend had already passed away.

He ended up at Hill 427 with the rest of the task force. Initially he was taken into the barn with the rest of the wounded and laid in the center aisle. He indicated that the barn had two truck doors, one on each end, and a walk in door that had been nailed shut. He doesn't remember the makeshift red cross on the roof. He doesn't remember other buildings in the area.

He felt okay about being in the barn until he learned that the wounded were going to be left behind. He negotiated with somebody and convinced them that he had been in the infantry and could still fight. That got him out of the barn (later described as a sheep fold).

He was put into a halftrack, given an M1 rifle and an army blanket which he wrapped around his legs. He was in the halftrack for up to one hour. During this time he remembers others preparing to leave. They took gasoline out of halftracks slated for abandonment, set incendiary grenades on the engine blocks of approximately 8 halftracks. Baum was riding up and down the column in his jeep as preparations were made. He remembers a couple of the incendiary grenades popping and starting to burn. Then the Germans let loose.

Dad says everything was chaos. He tried to get out of the halftrack, but his legs got tangled in the army blanket. He ended up dangling upside down, half in and half out of the halftrack. He remembers calling for help to some folks running nearby, but they were busy trying to save their own skin. Eventually he worked his way out of the blanket and made it behind the far wall of the barn. It provided good cover and he huddled there. Dad says that he remembers that the firing stopped at least on one occassion, but that the American forces on the far side kept up small arms fire. So the Germans started firing again. Dad remembers people scrambling trying to find something white so they could surrender.

One thing, dad disagrees that everybody in the barn was killed immediately after it was hit. People were inside screaming and several attempts were made by him and others to get to them, but to no avail.

After the surrender, dad was laid with others in a row. He remembers looking over at one of Baum's tanks. There had been a box of cigarettes on it. During the battle the tank was hit and the cigarettes were scattered like snow around tank. While he was lying there German soldiers and cadets would walk by, quickly grab a couple cigarettes off the ground and put them in their pockets. At the same time two German officers were pacing along looking at him and the others in the row. He said he didn't like the way they were looking at him and thought they might be considering executing some of the prisoners. He noticed an American Lt. who seemed to be helping organize things. Dad said to the LT. "Don't leave, I don't like the way the German Colonel is looking at me." The LT. said, "You don't have anything to worry about." This fellow eventually helped Dad to a jeep being used to transport the wounded back to Oflag XIII B. Dad sat up in the front seat. The driver was a Corporal, who told dad that there were K-rations under the seat. Dad grabbed cigarettes for trading, chocolate bars and toilet tissue, but discarded the rest for fear of retribution from the Germans. He says that he feels what he did at the time was pretty greedy and feels guilty about it.

Dad was placed in a hospital bed in a long narrow room (like a barracks) next to a doorway that he thinks led to a smaller private room. He thinks it may have been John Waters room and he could hear groaning coming from that room. During this time his leg became badly infected and swelled up like a watermelon. As a result, he was one of the first four selected to be sent to Bad Kissingen so the Germans could declare it as an open city. Eventually 18 POWs were sent there. At the time, he didn't realize what was happening and thought that he and

the other three were being singled out as examples to be executed by the Germans over repatriation issues. An American doctor, Major Brendt helped make the selection. Dad thought he was arguing for his life, and at one

time threatened to kill the major if he ever made it out alive. He said Major Brendt kept telling him, "This may be your life." Obviously, Major Brendt was very concerned about dad's condition. He was very sick from the infection.

Dad was sent to Bad Kissingen with three others (a captain from the 45th division with one arm amputated at the elbow [an old wound] and two LT's, one being a paratrooper Lt Ellie or Ely?). Dad remembers Lt. Ellie or Ely always having a severe case of trench foot during his stay at Oflag XIII B.

In Bad Kissigen, a German doctor operated on dad's leg and saved it. The doctor told dad that had he been a German soldier, he probably would have lost his leg. Dad remembers the nurse there Sophie Planck. After the war Sophie wrote to dad because she along with many other Germans had fallen on hard times after the war.

Eventually dad was sent back to the U.S. He spent 10 months in Crile General Hospital in Parma, Ohio near Cleveland. While there he bumped into Major Brendt. I think dad indicated that Brendt was now a Lt. Colonel. Dad looked at him and said, "Last time I saw you I told you I would kill you." Brendt was stunned. He didn't recognize dad because dad had put quite a bit of weight back on. Dad said, "You probably saved my life when you sent me to Bad Kissingen." Brendt made the connection and they had a long conversation about their experiences. Dad never saw him again.

After Crile, dad spent 18 months in Percy Jones Hospital in Battle Creek, Michigan. He was retired from the army at Percy Jones as a 1st Lt. He is listed as 1st LT. AUS RET. He still has his Certificate of Service papers, which he says were referred phonetically as "Bonafidees" by you servicemen.

Today, dad is a retired mechanical engineer in Youngstown, Ohio. He volunteers a lot of his time at a WWII museum in Hubbard, Ohio (I incorrectly listed it as Girard, Ohio in an earlier posting). The museum is put together by a fellow named Henry Venedda and according to dad is getting tremendous recognition as one of the finest WWII vehicle museum's in the country. The museum is staffed by former veterans who volunteer their time and tell their story. Henry is currently over in Bastogne on a purchase mission.

Dad says that more and more WWII buffs are familiar with Baum's raid. He has befriended officers in the military who perk up when he mentions Hammelburg. So you all are a well recognized bunch.

Now, a question from dad. Does anybody know if it is true that the Hammelburg Raid is used as a school problem at Fort Knox? He has heard rumors to this effect.

One final thing from me. Dad never talked too much about his war experiences when I was growing up. As a kid, I remember him as a great baseball coach, scoutmaster, brilliant engineer who was always involved with his kids' lives. I knew he had been wounded and a POW, but that was about it. Everyday, he opens up a little more and tells me about his war experiences. I am in awe of what you all went through, and hope that we can all keep in touch and share this phenomenal part of American history.

Regards
Kevin Cook

Sunday, April 11, 2004

Lampru

JACKSONVILLE — Funeral services for retired Jacksonville veterinarian Dr. Paul Donald Lampru, 85, of Jacksonville will be Monday at 3 p.m. at First United Methodist Church of Jacksonville with Rev. James Robertson officiating. Burial will be in Jacksonville City Cemetery with full military honors. The family will receive friends at the church Monday 1-3 p.m.

Dr. Lampru died Friday in Jacksonville.

Survivors include his wife, Lucy Williams Lampru of Jacksonville; two daughters and their husbands, Carole C. and James M. Campbell of Anniston and Dr. Anne Lampru and Edward Greene of Land O'Lakes, Fla.; two sons and their wives, Paul D. and Patti Lampru Jr. of Roswell, Ga. and James Williams and Judy Lampru of Powder Springs, Ga.; eight grandchildren, Georgia Lampru Hine, Sophie Anne Lampru, Elizabeth R. Campbell, John Paul Lampru, Lillian Greene, Paul Edward Greene, James Paul Campbell and James W. Lampru Jr.

Dr. Lampru obtained a doctorate of veterinary medicine from Auburn University in 1949. He taught in the Auburn School of Veterinary Medicine from 1969-1970 and practiced Veterinary medicine in Jacksonville from 1971-1990.

He was an Army veteran of World War II. He was wounded in action in Sicily and was a prisoner of war for 19 months in OFLAG 64 in Poland. He served 33 years in the Army and National Guard, retiring in 1969.

His military awards include European-African-Middle East Campaign Medal, Purple Heart, Distinguished Service Cross, Combat Infantry Man's Badge, Bronze Star Medal, World War II Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, American Defense Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal with oak leaf cluster and an Army Commendation Medal.

He enjoyed traveling, golf and bridge.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 1025, Jacksonville, AL 36265.

Lucy Lussenden sent in this news about Don on June 11. Due to the timing we do not have time for the formal obit in this issue of the Item. It will be placed in the next issue.

Dear Family and Friends,

Many of you know that Don passed away at 5:20 AM on Wednesday, June 9th (one day before his 83rd birthday). He had surgery for colon cancer on May 26th and seemed to be on his way to recovery. On May 31st he was doing just fine--sitting up, talking with us, hugging, even ate some real food in the evening. Then at 7:30 AM on June 1st, the doctor called to say that he needed help breathing in order to get rid of too much carbon dioxide and so they intubated him. He again seemed to be getting better and they removed his breathing tube. But, the diabetes that had been gradually destroying his organs for nearly three decades finally won out. Don's kidneys were not able to process all of the medicine and fluids that he was receiving and basically shut down on about June 8th. Don's heart was affected by this and he passed away on June 9th. Fortunately, Don had been intubated again for several days and was not awake during this difficult time.

Don is at the Harry J. Will Funeral Home on 37000 Six Mile Road in Livonia, about 3/4 of a mile east of I-275. Visitation is today from 2-8 PM. Funeral service is Saturday, June 12 at 10:00 AM. Viewing on Saturday begins at 9:30 AM. We will proceed to the cemetery afterwards for a short service in the chapel, to be followed by a luncheon for all who can join us. A military honor guard and Piper will participate in Don's services.

I thank all of you who have called or visited, and welcome all who are able to come and say goodbye to Don for the last time. I know that Don was loved by all who knew him. For you who are unable to visit, I know that you are visiting with him in your hearts.

Love to all,
Lucy

Washington Post 04/09/04

Washington Post 03/26/04

Charles Wilmarth 'Wil' Kouns Army Officer, EPA Engineer

Charles Wilmarth "Wil" Kouns, 90, a World War II prisoner of war and retired Army colonel who also had careers as an engineer with NASA and the Environmental Protection Agency, died of congestive heart failure March 9 at Goodwin House retirement community in Alexandria.

Col. Kouns, who had lived in Alexandria off and on since 1950, was a native of Salina, Kan. He began his military career as a 1939 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

At the start of World War II, he was a commanding officer in the 82nd Airborne Division. He led a battalion in a parachute drop behind enemy lines in Sicily in 1943 and was captured and held prisoner in Italy, Germany and Poland.

After two other attempts, he successfully escaped at the end of the war in 1945.

His postwar assignments included various staff positions on the joint Brazilian-U.S. military commission in Rio de Janeiro, the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and headquarters of the Caribbean Command in Panama.

He retired from active military duty in 1961 and five years later received a master's degree in geology from George Washington University.

Col. Kouns then worked about 20 years at Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, mainly analyzing moon rocks. As a geologist, he selected the lunar rock embedded in a stained-glass panel at Washington National Cathedral. He also held two patents on remote optical sensing.

In the late 1980s, he became an engineer at the EPA, from which he retired in 1994.

Col. Kouns was a member of the George Washington Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and Christ Episcopal Church in Alexandria.

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Marion Putnam Kouns of Alexandria; three children, Beth Lamond of Middleburg, John Kouns of Springfield and Martha Rosenquist of Philomont in Loudoun County; two brothers; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

WASHINGTON POST 3/26/04 Nathaniel Ramsey Hoskot Army Colonel

Nathaniel Ramsey Hoskot, 92, a retired Army colonel who in retirement volunteered at information booths at Reagan National Airport and the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, died of heart disease March 22 at Woodbine Nursing Home in Alexandria.

Col. Hoskot was born in Dayton, Ohio, and raised in Boise, Idaho. He was a 1933 graduate of the University of California at Berkeley. He went to work for the Union Oil Co. in the San Joaquin Valley of California and entered the Army Reserve in 1940.

During World War II, he parachuted into Normandy after midnight on D-Day, June 6, 1944. His assignment was to be a liaison between the 101st and 82nd airborne divisions, but he was captured.

He received the Silver Star for his actions the next day, when his POW convoy was strafed by Allied planes. German guards were shooting prisoners who tried to get off the trucks, some of which were on fire, according to his award citation. Col. Hoskot, who had leapt to safety from the back of a jeep, put himself between the guards and the POWs and helped unload prisoners from the trucks. He was held in a prisoner-of-war camp in Poland until 1945.

After the war, he was stationed in New Delhi as the assistant military attaché and then became the first military attaché in the new country of Pakistan, where he helped set up the U.S. Embassy. He returned to the United States in 1948.

He served in the 3rd Infantry Division during the Korean War. He was later commander of headquarters in Heidelberg, West Germany, and chief of staff of the Berlin command. His last assignment was at the Pentagon, where he was the Army liaison to the White House during the Kennedy administration.

In addition to the Silver Star, his decorations included the Legion of Merit, two awards of the Bronze Star and the Purple

Heart.

After his retirement from the military in 1963, Col. Hoskot was director of operations in international sales for Hughes Aircraft's helicopter division, working two years in Vietnam. He later worked for an aeronautical company in Milan and returned to Northern Virginia in 1982.

He volunteered with Traveler's Aid at National Airport for 17 years and with the information desk at the Air and Space Museum for 13 years.

Survivors include his wife of 69 years, Ellenor Knupp Hoskot of Alexandria; three children, Nathaniel R. Hoskot of Fallbrook, Calif., David Breck Hoskot of Pacific Palisades, Calif., and Anne H. Kreutzer of Woodbridge; a brother; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.