

# Post Oflag 64 Item

2007 - SPRING

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## What's New??

As was mentioned in the Fall/Winter 2006 ITEM, production of future ITEMS has been turned over to me, Elodie Caldwell. I approach this new assignment with humility, hoping to maintain the integrity of the ITEM and to follow the wonderful example so capably set by Bob Thompson and others before him. Thanks to Bob for assisting me through this transition.

The look of the ITEM will be similar to past ITEMS but with minor differences. It will include information below if available.

- COMPANY BUSINESS
- MAIL CALL
- EMAILS/LETTERS
- ARTICLES/PICTURES
- REPORTS
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- TAPS/OBITUARIES

The ITEM will continue to be published on a quarterly basis and, if all works well, you can expect to have notification of publication the first of March, June, August, and November of each year. If you would like to share information or have anything to submit, please send your submissions to either my email or street address listed at the left of this page. Both work great and I look forward to hearing from you.

Updates are posted to our Oflag 64 web site on a regular basis. We hope you'll visit it often. The address is <http://www.oflag64.org>

Warm Regards,

## A LITTLE COMPANY BUSINESS

### The 2007 Oflag 64 Reunion Is A Go and We Couldn't Be Happier!!!

A big THANK YOU goes to Jay Wagner, his wife Shonda, and his mother Maggie for agreeing to host the 2007 Oflag 64 Reunion in Tulsa OK. Plans are well under way for this reunion, which will be held Thursday, October 11 through Sunday, October 14. Mark your calendars and plan to join us at this great event. We would love to see EVERYONE there. Please also check out the colored sheet with IMPORTANT REUNION INFORMATION included with this mailing. (More details and other important information will follow soon.)

By way of introduction, the Wagner family is from Tulsa and is relatively new to the Oflag 64 organization. Jay is the grandson and Maggie is the daughter of Ralph J. Ball who passed away in 2001. At that point, Ralph had been affiliated with the Oflag 64 group for just a few years.

Here's a little history on Ralph Ball—

Mr. Ball was a US Army veteran of both World War II and the Korean War. He entered the Army as a Private in 1941 and as a lieutenant led troops in the Battle of the Hurtgen Forest as well as the Battle of the Bulge. In December 1944, he was captured by the Germans and spent the next year in various German prisoner of war camps. He was liberated from the Oflag XIII B by General Patton's 3<sup>rd</sup> Army but was later re-captured. Lieutenant Ball was liberated a second time by Patton from Stalag VIIA in Moosburg Germany. Mr. Ball returned to military service during the Korean War as a staff operations officer under the command of General John Waters. Ralph left the Army with the rank of Major. He was the recipient of the American Theatre Service Medal, European-African Service Medal, WWII Victory Medal, Korean Service Medal and the United Nations Service Medal. Later in his life, Major Ball would fondly recall the special bond that he shared with General Waters due to their POW experiences. He was a Life member of VFW Post 10093 in Florida and the Oflag 64 survivors' organization.

The Wagners have some great reunion ideas and are excited about hosting the reunion in Tulsa this year. If you would like to learn more about the Tulsa area, you can visit the following web sites:

<http://www.tulsa.com/>

<http://www.10best.com/Tulsa/index.html>

Tulsa skyline





## MAIL CALL



**JERRY ALEXIS from Pittsburgh PA** sent New Year wishes to Bob Thompson recently and reported that all of his immediate family was with him for short visits during the holidays. He said that Pittsburgh has had a rather mild winter so far but with a lot of recent rain, the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio Rivers are rising at “the Point”. He also stated: “My health has been fair and the VA is doing its best to keep me going. We have a really good system here in Pittsburgh at three medical centers as well as a regional office. Our Highland Drive Center hosts a monthly meeting of ex-POWs where we have speakers from our VA clinicians and also outsiders. As everywhere, we are rapidly growing fewer - we have at least two or three deaths every month.” Lastly, he said: “My writing days are about over, altho I keep adding background info and photos to my memoirs as I find them. *It’s always good to hear news of our Kriegies. We have missed you, Jerry, at our past couple of reunions. We hope your health improves and that we’ll see you again soon.*”

**VIRGINIA BARTON from Black Eagle MT** sent a postage fund donation. *Many people are benefited by donations to the postage fund. Thanks so much for your donation, Virginia, and thanks also for the nice note. We love hearing from family members of our fallen Kriegies.*

**BUD BOLLING from Dallas TX** recently sent a short synopsis of his return trip to Germany. He wrote: “I wish I could say that I have finished my account of the trip to Germany, but I can't...I didn't see Peter at all. He has been called to active duty, and CSM Martin Heinlein (with whom I spent an entire day at Hammelburg) indicated that Peter very probably will not return to Hammelburg....The trip was quite successful. On the first day after arrival I found, and stood on, the exact spot where I was wounded and captured by troops of the 11th Panzer Division. We had a delightful lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Bach, who took us up to the unbelievable memorial dedicated to the men of the 11th Panzer Division and my own 94th Infantry Division who lost their lives in the bitter fight for Nennig and Orscholz in January 1945....The next day, we drove up to Diez (near Limburg) where I spent ten days of the war in a castle that was really a highly sophisticated interrogation center. The food was not as much as we got at Hammelburg, but the interrogators finally gave up on me and shipped me out in a railroad boxcar for Oflag XIII-B....The next day was spent in Hammelburg with Sgt. Martin Heinlein, chief NCO at Hammelburg, now an infantry school. We spent the last two hours drinking cokes in the very nice officer/NCO club. Martin has been stationed at Hammelburg for almost twenty years....The rest of the time was spent looking for the trail we followed after we escaped. We took pictures at Gemunden, drove down the road where we walked after we ran away from Gemunden because there were so many Germans digging in as a result of Abe's attack, stayed in Wurzburg, where we watched American bombers hit the city hard, drove up to Schweinfurt, where we crossed the Main River on the same bridge we used in 1945, drove slowly down the east side of the river until we accidentally entered Obervolkach, the little town that surrendered to us a day before we met the American 42nd Division units and where we organized a platoon of forty French prisoners who had lived in the town for four years. There we met lots of citizens, all of whom were very courteous to us, even gave us bottles of wine....We stayed in Obervolkach about four hours. By this time, my German had returned completely, so we did everything but sing Deutschland uber Alles....With three days left, we sight saw. Stayed in Heidelberg, Rothenburg, and Frankfort....The trip was a great success, and I shall do what I can to compose a more detailed story.” *Thanks, Bud, for taking the time to share your experiences with us. Reading such accounts brings back memories for many.*

**LT. GEN. A. P. CLARK from Colorado Springs CO** sent a donation to the postage fund. He wrote: “I have enjoyed reading your newsletters over the years. I had friends in 64.” *Thanks very much for the donation, General, and for your nice note.*

**TOM COBB from Columbia SC**, son of George A. Cobb wrote: “Thank you for your help in finding Tom Johnson. I spoke with him at length last week. He was in the same cubicle as my father in Barracks 8-A and is the only current survivor of that cubicle. He brought my father back to life with his remembrances. This was perhaps the best Christmas gift I have ever received.” *It’s great, Tom, to hear news such as this and we’re happy to have helped.*

**DAVID CRIDER from Birmingham AL**, nephew of Woodrow Wilson Hubka and a new visitor to our web site wrote: “I am very happy to have found your Oflag64.org site in a Google search. My Uncle Woody, now deceased, was interned there from November 1944 to January 1945 and endured the Long March across Poland. He is listed in your database section. Woody's sister, Barbara Elizabeth "Betty" Hubka Crider, now 80 years old, is the only surviving member of that Hubka family of fourteen children. She has saved a rather large amount of memorabilia, including a thick bundle of cards and letters from volunteers all around the US and Canada who listened to radio broadcasts and informed families by mail of such announcements as released prisoners. Thought you might be interested.” *Thanks, David, for sharing all your information with us. Woody has now been added to the TAPS list.*

**MELODIE DEWITT** sent an email recently with news of another fallen Kriegy, James R. Shoaf II, who passed away on Saturday, January 6, 2007. His obituary appeared in the Daytona Beach News Journal on January 10 and 11 and is also included in the TAPS section of this publication. Many might remember that James was the man who built the radio known as the "bird" that received news from the BBC during captivity at Oflag 64. *Thanks, Melodie, for sending word. We know he will be greatly missed. We send condolences and best wishes to the family.*

**The DI FRANCESCO Family** sent sad news the end of December of the passing of Maria Di Francesco, wife of Dr. Vincent Di Francesco (Doc) and mother of Pat Bender, Maria Christmann and Rosa Lee. The obituary is included in the TAPS section of this issue of the ITEM. They requested: “Please pass on the news that our mother, Maria Di Francesco died in her sleep on Friday, December 29. She had been in a weakening state since Thanksgiving. She will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery.” Following the funeral, the family also sent this message: “The Di Francesco family would like to thank the Oflag 64 family for the beautiful flower arrangement and for the many phone calls, email messages, and consolation notes....We consider the Oflag 64 group our second family. Your thoughtfulness and prayers have comforted us during this sad time. (Vincent Di Francesco, Rosa Lee, Pat Bender, Maria Christmann)” *We know she will be greatly missed. We send our deepest sympathies and will keep your family in our thoughts and prayers.*

**ALAN DUNBAR from Las Vegas NV** sent a donation to the postage fund as well as money for books. *Thanks Alan for your thoughtful contributions.* He also recently called Pat Bender to express how much he enjoyed the last ITEM. He said it was one of the finest he has ever received. *The credit goes to Bob Thompson for a job well done!!* Alan also informed us that his wife passed away in November 2006. Her obituary is included in the TAPS section of this publication. *We express our sincere sympathies to you, Alan, at the passing of your wife and wish you well as you make adjustments.*

**HERB AND LOUISE GARRIS from Pinehurst NC** sent a nice note to Bob Thompson. They reported spending a week in Bermuda not long ago. “All went very well except a sort of squall one night on the return trip to Charleston SC.” Herb will send in the obituary of Gottfried Dietze as soon as he receives it, along with a short tribute, as he probably knew Gottfried better than any other resident of Oflag 64.

*Thanks for your note and for your willingness to follow-up on another of our fallen Kriegies. We appreciate your thoughtfulness. Hope to see you both at this year's reunion in Tulsa.*

**CAROLL HIGGINBOTHAM from Reno NV** sent a donation to the postage fund. He also sent a couple of pictures that we've included here. Higgie wrote: "Enclosed is a picture of me saluting General Johnny every day before breakfast, as it is number one each day on my list." *Thanks very much for your contribution, "Higgie". Without donations from the group, we would have difficulty keeping in touch and taking care of business. Also, we enjoy including pictures in our publication and hope you will send others in the future.*



**MICHAEL P. HIGGINS from Richmond Hill GA** wrote: "Hello! I am the son of ex-POW Martin J. Higgins (141st Regt., 36th Inf. Div). Please continue to send me information via email. My father (now 90) is currently in the hospital. We would be grateful for the prayers of the Oflag 64 family. Thank you." *Thanks Michael for writing. We will keep your father in our prayers and hope his health improves daily.*

**SHARON HUTCHISON from Arlington TX**, daughter of Isaac "Ike" Franklin wrote: "I can't thank you enough for finding the Christmas letter from my dad! I'm so glad to know that he was in touch with this group before he died. I knew that he was very active in the American Ex-POW organization, but I wasn't sure about Oflag 64, although I do recall seeing the drawing of the prison camp in his belongings. My dad passed away just a couple of months after that letter was published in The Item. It really touched me to read it tonight, and I sent the link to my kids, my brother and my niece." *Thanks, Sharon, for sharing your feelings with us. It's great to make such connections.*

**JIMMIE & LYNN KANAYA from Gig Harbor WA** wrote to Bob Thompson expressing thanks for the pictures from the last reunion. They "had a grand time" in New Orleans especially with No Hurricane. *Thanks for your nice note and hope to see you again at this year's reunion in Tulsa.*

**MARCIA KANNERS from Beverly Hills MI** sent a nice note thanking Bob Thompson for the picture folder of the New Orleans Reunion. Marcia continues to stay an active part of the Oflag 64 group and would like to attend another Oflag 64 Reunion this year. *Thanks, Marcia, for your updates. We always enjoy hearing from you and hope you settle quickly into your new house.*

**TOM AND SUE LAWSON from Grand Junction CO** sent a belated Christmas card to Bob and Gladys Thompson recently. Tom reported that Sue's recent knee operation had some complications, which have resulted in several doctor and hospital visits. She is doing better now but due to the difficulty in getting on and off planes feel they won't be able to attend future reunions. *We are sorry to hear that we won't be seeing you at future reunions but wish you the best and hope you will continue to stay in touch.*

**HERM LITTMAN from Spokane WA** sent a donation to the postage fund and a nice compliment to Bob Thompson regarding the last ITEM. He said “Bob, you did a great job editing the ITEM. I’m sure everyone concerned appreciates it as much as I do.” *Thanks, Herm, for your contribution to the postage fund. We appreciate it immensely. And thanks in Bob’s behalf for your kind words.*

**BOB O’NEILL from Prescott AZ** sent a donation to the postage fund along with a nice note thanking Bob Thompson for the picture history of the 2006 Reunion. *We greatly appreciate your generous donation Bob. Thanks for thinking of us.*

**JOHN (JACK) STEWART from Lincoln NE** sent a donation to the postage fund. He was at Oflag 64 from November 1944 until leaving in January 1945, ending up in Luckenwalde. He wrote: “Please keep me on the mailing list.” *We’re thankful for your donation and are happy to keep you on the mailing list.*

**TODD TROTTER from Bozeman MT** noticed that two deceased Kriegies had not been included on the website TAPS list. One was his father. He wrote: “I’d like to add two Kriegies of Oflag64 to the website taps list, they are: Oscar A. Wingren, 2nd Lt. - died 1983 and Mckie M Trotter III, 1st Lt. - died 1999.” *Thanks Todd. We appreciate the updates and have added their names to the TAPS list.*

**DONALD & GINNY WAFUL from Syracuse NY** sent a nice message during the holidays. Donald stated: “at age 90, I’m still on stage...playing trombone in a Big Band as a lifetime member of a local YMCA.” He is also looking for theater groups who would be interested in producing and performing “I’ll Be Seeing You” (the true life love story of him and his wife during war years). If anyone has any leads in this area, he would love to hear from you. *Best wishes to you in your search for leads. It’s good to hear that you’re still performing at 90 years young. Keep up the good work!!*

**BILL WARTHEN from Vidalia GA** would like everyone to know that he has ended a 50-year rental of his post office box. If you will be sending mail to him (c/o Wm. D. Warthen, Bill Warthen, or Warthen, Inc.), please use his address listed on the front page of this publication. *Wow, 50 years is quite a run. Thanks, Bill, for letting everyone know about the change. We will update our address books.*

**MARY WING from Rutland VT** sent a note relating to her husband Dale’s death in 2005. She said “He never recounted tales of his years in WWII until his later years, with the exception of his time at Oflag 64 and his escape hiding in a pig pen, and his love of the Polish people who were so good to him.” *We appreciate you sharing your husband’s feelings. Many of our men, it seems, have felt similarly. We hope you’ll be able to visit the Oflag 64 website where we’ve listed Leonard’s death in the TAPS section. Thanks, Mary, for writing.*

**LILLIAN WRIGHT from Catonsville MD** found our web site recently. She said: “Just found your website, it is great. Would like to add the name of my husband to the deceased list. William E. Wright, Jr, died in 1992. He was in Oflag 64 from September 1944 until they were freed at Hammelburg or was it Moosburg, in April 1945. He was on the long march. Never talked much about his time there. Thanks, Lillian Wright.” *Thanks for your information Lillian. William has now been added to our TAPS list. We hope you’ll keep in touch.*

### **What do you think of this idea?**

Alan Dunbar suggests: “Let our sons, daughters, and grandchildren have the reunions as a remembrance of those who died – went to heaven – our legacy will live on – Oflag 64 Forever. Last man out, then our children and their children can carry the banner.” - *Mail responses to Elodie at either address on the front page of the ITEM.*

## WWII POW: Always cold, always hungry

By Chip Womick, Staff Writer, The Courier-Tribune  
(article reprinted with permission)

ASHEBORO, NC — As he toured the National World War II Museum in New Orleans recently, a young soldier was pushing Robert Cheatham Jr. in a wheelchair. Cheatham asked the man if he had served in Iraq.

“Yes, two tours,” the soldier said. “I oughta be pushing you instead of you pushing me, for gosh sakes,” Cheatham replied. Such is the patriotism of this old soldier.

If the young soldier had asked, Cheatham might have told him that he, too, had served his country overseas, earning a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star during World War II. He was a second lieutenant in the 26th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division when German soldiers under the command of Field General Erwin Rommel, also known as “the Desert Fox,” overran his unit in the Kasserine Pass in the mountains of central Tunisia.

Cheatham, who was 22 at the time, had arrived in North Africa the day after Christmas 1942. He was captured on Feb. 20, 1943.

“That is when America lost its innocence in World War II,” Cheatham said. “We really got our butts beat. We got our butts beat but we slowed Rommel down enough so he could not accomplish his goal of reaching the coast and cutting off a bunch of Americans.”

He remained a prisoner for the duration of the war, until Patton’s 3rd Army arrived on April 29, 1945, to knock down the prison gates.

“I would say that I was never mistreated,” Cheatham said in a recent interview. “I made friends for life — fantastic friends,” he said. But that does not mean that his confinement was a cakewalk. “Number one,” he said, “except for the middle of the summer, we were always cold and, number two, we were always hungry.”



Photos by Clifton Hughes / The Courier-Tribune

**DEDICATED SERVICEMAN** — Robert Cheatham Jr. of Asheboro, left, was a prisoner of war for more than two years during World War II. The photograph above features a picture of Cheatham from his U.S. Army days as a second lieutenant, the Purple Heart and Bronze Star he earned for his service. Cheatham has been active in Asheboro’s American Legion Post 45 since moving to town in the 1970s, having served as a vice commander for several years. He is a member of the Randolph County Honor Guard and the Randolph County Veterans Council.

A native of Abbeville, S.C., Cheatham graduated in 1942 from Clemson College with a bachelor’s degree in textile chemistry. At the time, Clemson was an all-male military school.

“The day I graduated,” Cheatham said, “they gave me a diploma in one hand and orders to report to the Army in the other.”

He went to Camp Croft, S.C., for what he calls “a six-week refresher course” in June of 1942. Then he was assigned to an infantry training battalion for basic training. By November, he was bound for North Africa. He and his fellow soldiers arrived in Tunisia the day after Christmas.

After his capture, he and his fellow soldiers were paraded in front of jeering Arabs through a little town named Gafsa. Then they headed to Sfax, a small town on the Mediterranean Sea, before going to Tunis. Then were flown to Sicily, then traveled to Capua, Italy, near Naples, before

boarding a train — and packed in boxcars like cattle — bound for Germany.

For about three months, Cheatham was in a prison camp for British soldiers near Munich.

“That was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me,” Cheatham said. “The Limeys taught us how to be prisoners of war.”

Lessons included tunnel digging and map-making.

Next he moved to Oflag 64 in Poland, a camp for American Army officers, where he lived from June 1943 until Jan. 21, 1945. Between those dates, the population at OFLAG 64 grew to more than 1,500, including many captured during the D-Day invasion of Normandy. One of the POWs was Lt. Col. John Waters, son-in-law of U.S. Gen. George S. Patton.

When word that the Russians were coming arrived in January of 1945, Germans forced the men of Oflag 64 to take a 350-mile westward march through snow and ice to a stalag at Hammelburg, Germany. (He earned his Purple Heart for the frozen feet he suffered during this forced march in sub-zero temperatures.) Cheatham said there was no food; prisoners slept in barns along the way.

While Cheatham was at Hammelburg, an American task force was sent to strike at the camp in an attempt to free the POWs. Cheatham was one of the prisoners who escaped through a breach in the barbed wire fence.

“I took off across the woods, but I was picked up in about three hours,” he said.

The raid failed and most of the POWs who escaped were recaptured.

Cheatham and his fellow prisoners were taken to a stalag at Nurnberg for a few days, then many of the POWs were made to take to the road again. This time, they marched about 90 miles to a camp at Moosburg. Allied bombing was constant in the region at this time. Cheatham remembers the marching men being strafed along the way by a pair of P-51 Mustangs — American fighter planes.

Soldiers from Patton’s Third Army arrived to liberate the camp on April 29, 1945. Patton himself soon and spoke to the former POWs. Sixty years later, Cheatham still remembers that a pair of Red Cross women showed up, too, attracting a lot of attention from the men.

The liberated soldiers remained in the camp for several more days before heading for France where they had to wait for ships to take them home. So Cheatham and a buddy hitchhiked to Paris to do a little sightseeing.

“We did everything you were supposed to do — and everything you ain’t supposed to do,” Cheatham said, grinning at memories of the Louvrve Museum, the famed Folies Bergere music hall, and more.

Oflag 64 was guarded by the Germans, but operated by senior American officers. Cheatham has joked over the years that while incarcerated he earned a B.S. in the card games of cribbage, Hearts and pinochle and a PhD. in bridge. The camp had a library with several thousand books and a small hospital, staffed by captured medical officers. There were a couple of dentists, too.

The prisoners published a newspaper, called The Oflag 64 Item, of goings-on at the camp. Frank Diggs, who had worked at The Washington Post before the war, was the editor. Cheatham covered sports — camp games of baseball, basketball and such, for the publication.

He also helped dispose of dirt from a tunnel fellow prisoners were digging to escape — and helped draw maps for the effort. The dirt was stored in boxes and hidden in an attic or scattered around the compound.

“Those tunnels were works of art,” he said.

But a thwarted escape attempt at another camp — which was dramatized in the 1963 hit film “The Great Escape,” starring Steve McQueen and James Garner — resulted in just three men escaping and 50 organizers being shot. In the wake of news about that tragedy, the Oflag 64 tunnel project was shut down.

Cheatham received CARE packages from home. He remembers getting some saccharine in one shipment, a valuable commodity among prisoners. He also recalls trading his ration of coffee, another hot item, because he did not drink coffee.

When he wrote home, Cheatham tried to be upbeat.

“You weren’t untruthful, but you did your best to write in a manner to keep them from worrying so much,” he said.

An excerpt from one letter, written on July 25, 1943, illustrates:



*Dear Folks,*

*I just finished dinner but it wasn't much like the dinners I had at home. If I were at home I'd listen to Sammy Kaye. Does he still come on? Does he still play 'Dear Mom'? Here I ate soup — or hot water with a little fat in it. Will I ever have those fried chicken and fresh string beans for dinner? I will but not soon. I wish I could pull a Rip Van Winkle and sleep for a couple years. This afternoon I'll lay out in the sun (not as hot as home because we wear jackets all the time & sleep under a blanket). I'll eat supper at 5:30, be counted at nine, listen to a translation of the news, and go to sleep at 10:30 when the lights are out. Every days the same except when we eat a chocolate bar on Monday out of the Red Cross boxes. What an existence! ...*

The only time Cheatham remembers being downhearted was when he learned of a failed attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler in 1944.

“I never gave up. I always believed we would win the war and I would go home.”

After the war, in 1949, Cheatham married Frances Parker. (She died in 1998.) They did not have any children. He worked for a succession of large companies, including Celanese and Uniroyal, before moving to Randolph County in 1973 to take a position with Rampon (now ETI). Cheatham joined the American Legion after moving to Asheboro. He served as vice commander for several years and worked with the Boys State program, an annual summer training session for high schoolers. He was at the VA Hospital in Salisbury several years ago when someone mentioned that he might like to volunteer some time at the facility.

The next Sunday, he went to help at the chapel service. Now, he leads a contingent of local folks, including local high school JROTC members, who go to the service one Sunday every month.

From 1991 until last May, Cheatham also made the hour-long drive to the VA Hospital every Thursday to help veterans fill out claims paperwork. He's proud that he was able to help many veterans through the sometimes confusing maze of requirements to receive benefits.

An original member of the Randolph County Honor Guard, Cheatham helped provide a salute at the funerals of veterans until he fell and

injured a shoulder. A past commander of the Randolph County Veterans Council, Cheatham is also proud of the Randolph County Veterans Monument on Worth Street.

He's an active member of First Presbyterian Church in Asheboro, organizing and promoting the Memorial Day service there for several years. He is a member and past president of the Golden K Kiwanis Club and particularly enjoys one club project — reading to children in the Head Start program. Club members also coach the youngsters in learning the Pledge of Allegiance. Initially, he was reluctant to read aloud since he'd never spent much time around children. (He and his wife had no children.) So, he bought gingerbread cookies and passed them out instead of reading.

“After a while the cookies got so expensive I had to read.”

Now he relishes the chance to read. At his suggestion, the children to call him “Old Man Bob.”

“It's a real fun thing to do,” he said. “We always say we get more out of it that the children do.”

Shortly after the war, an annual reunion was started of the 1,500 soldiers who were prisoners of war in Oflag 64 or at Hammelburg. Cheatham did not attend until sometime in the 1980s. He's been to most of them, held in various cities around the country, since then. He recently returned from this year's reunion in New Orleans where he toured the D-Day Museum.

Only 124 of his 1,500 fellow POWs are still living.

“It could be that this is our last reunion,” he said. He has enjoyed the camaraderie but one thing he will not miss is the annual memorial service at which the names of those who have died in the past year are read.

One year, Cheatham led the local Veterans Day parade, which will be held at 2 p.m. today in downtown Asheboro. When his health stopped him from walking in the procession, he started showing up just to watch.

“I have gotten there early enough to watch it go by, and man, that is great,” he said.

Spoken like a true old soldier, one who deserves a salute any day, but particularly on Veterans Day.

# City Banker Helps Reunite Italians With Veteran of WWII

Author unknown

Originally published in a Pocatello, Idaho newspaper in 1983

A Pocatello bank executive had a major role in reuniting a member of the Pocatello High School graduating class of 1933 via mail with an Italian family who aided him during World War II.

The PHS graduate of 50 years ago, who will be here this weekend for his reunion, is Reid F. Ellsworth, Phoenix, Ariz.

The Italy family, named Cenciotti, protected Ellsworth behind enemy lines during the war in the 1940s. However, it has been 40 years since they communicated.

And the Pocatellan who had a hand in bringing them together is Dolly Lotz, a vice president with Idaho Bank and Trust Co.

At a banking convention Mrs. Lotz met Mrs. Nick Hackenberger, Durham, Ore. She and her husband had traveled to Italy two years ago and met a tour bus driver, who inquired if Oregon was close to Idaho. He then asked how to go about locating someone who had lived in Pocatello prior to World War II. That person was Ellsworth, and Mrs. Lotz knew how to reach him.

When she returned home, she contacted Irma Nugent, Ellsworth's sister, for his address. This was sent to the Hackenbergers, who forwarded it to the tour bus driver in Rome.

Ellsworth was also sent the bus driver's address. When Ellsworth looked at it, he was disappointed. "To my dismay, the name mentioned was Umberto Proietti, a name I had never even heard," he said.

Eventually, a letter came from Rome telling Ellsworth that Proietti (the tour bus driver) is married to a Cenciotti daughter. This daughter would have been in the five to eight age range when Ellsworth was in Italy. He also learned



## From WWII to Today

While serving in the military during World War II, Reid F. Ellsworth received much help from an Italian family. But that was 40 years ago, and Ellsworth, now of Phoenix, Ariz., hadn't communicated with them for some time. Recently a Pocatellan had an important part in bringing the ex-resident and the Italians in contact again. Now Ellsworth (inset photo today) is thinking about a trip overseas to renew this friendship.

that Mr. Cenciotti was deceased, but that his widow is 83 and still living.

Looking back to the war years, Ellsworth said he spent the last portion of his period of evasion,

prior to capture, with the Cenciottis. "I was treated (and considered) almost a member of the family," he continued.

After the war, he maintained a correspondence with them for several years. Then his accelerated school schedule at the University of Arizona College of Law and his employment left little time for writing. With little opportunity to speak or hear the Italian language, his vocabulary tended to evaporate. "I just didn't have time to look up words in an English-Italian dictionary nor check grammar in a textbook," he recalled. The communication came to an end about 1947.

However, the Cenciotti family had kept a memento he had given them – a silk map of France on which he had written his name and Pocatello address. The Italians framed this map, which now hangs in the living room of the tour bus driver and his wife in Rome.

The detailed silk map, which covered areas of possible escape, was issued to Ellsworth on a bombing mission during WWII. The target for Nov. 10, 1943, was Bolzano, a rail center line in extreme northern Italy through which German supply and troop trains had to pass to support combat in the southern part of that country. The servicemen were given both Italy and France maps. When Ellsworth was shot down on that November date, he decided to travel south in Italy, hoping to get back through his own combat lines, when and if an opportunity developed.

Describing this, he said, "I traveled for some five weeks mostly on foot, through the mountains and hills, arriving at the home of these friends-to-be (the Cenciottis) some 35 miles or so north and inland from Rome."

Since communication has been renewed, Ellsworth has written a letter in Italian to the family with the help of an English-Italian dictionary and grammar book. He has received his second letter from them and is talking about a visit to Italy in the not too distant future.

While in Idaho for the class of 1933 reunion, Ellsworth and his wife will be houseguests of

Wayne and Madge Little in Aberdeen. Little, Ellsworth and the late Garron Brian were called the Three Musketeers during their PHS years. The Ellsworths also will go to Idaho Falls to see relatives before heading back to Phoenix.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Note: In 1986, Mr. and Mrs. Ellsworth traveled to Italy where they served a two-year mission for their church. Both learned the Italian language and were able to visit with the Cenciotti family while there. Mrs. Ellsworth has since passed away, but Mr. Ellsworth has continued to maintain contact with his Italian family. He now lives in Farmington, UT with his daughter, Janet Ellsworth.*

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

(World War II Trivia)

Stalin's original name was Josif Djugashvili. In 1913 he began using the pseudonym Stalin meaning "Man of Steel".

Benito Mussolini, during the First World War, was an editor for an Italian newspaper partly financed by the British and French. At that time he was an opponent of the Germanic Central Powers (he also served in the Italian army until wounded).

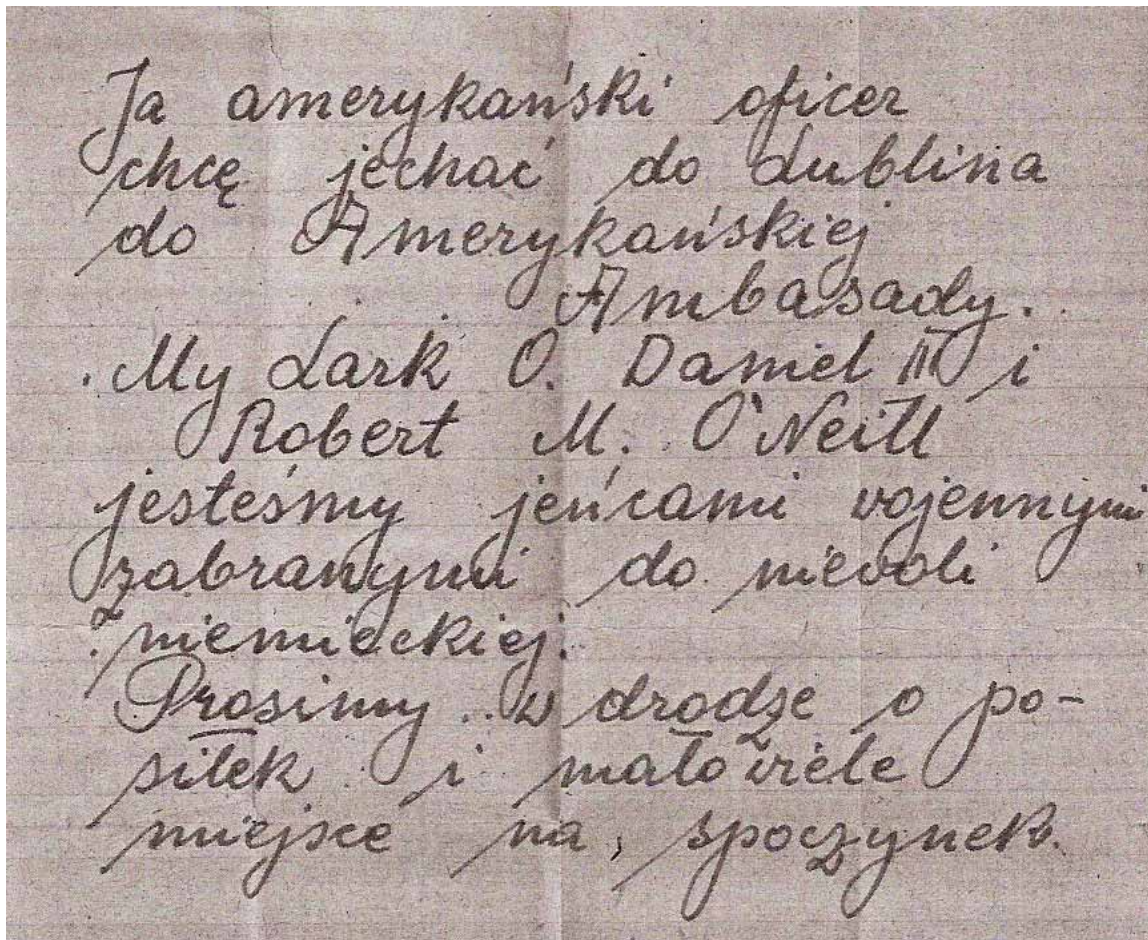
Heinrich Himmler, the evil head of the Nazi SS, was once a chicken farmer.

You've heard of suicide or kamikaze bombers - but how about suicide battleships? On 7th April 1945 off the island of Okinawa the Japanese battleship Yamato, which had not been given fuel for its return journey home, arrived with several other ships to attack the American fleet. The Yamato, which was one of the two largest battleships ever built, and her accompanying ships, were sunk by American aircraft before they reached their target.

Adolf Hitler was a teetotaler, vegetarian and non-smoker.

## Some Interesting Memorabilia

Robert (Bob) M. O'Neill of Prescott AZ sent this to Bob Thompson not long ago with the following note: "I was rummaging through some OLD files and papers the other day and finally found the statement I carried with me after escaping. It was written by a Pole, who knew some English. We, Lark and I, wrote out in English what we wanted to say and he wrote this. Lark O. Daniel III is listed on the original roster of Oflag 64-page 53.



Ja amerykański oficer  
chcę jechać do Dublinia  
do Amerykańskiej  
Ambasady.  
My Lark O. Daniel III i  
Robert M. O'Neill  
jestemy jeńcami wojennymi  
zabranymi do niemieckiej  
niemieckiej.  
Prosimy w drodze o po-  
silek i mało wiele  
miejsce na, spoczynek.

TRANSLATION: I am an American officer, I want to go to Lublin to the American Embassy. We, Lark O. Daniel III and Robert M. O'Neill, are German prisoners of war. Please, while enroute we need a meal and a place to rest/sleep.

*Translation: Courtesy of Lukasz Lapka from Szubin, Poland*



Addresses

Adam B. Rodriguez, 201 Edmund St. San Antonio, Tx.  
 Robert T. Thompson, Stigler, Okla.  
 Thomas L. Feaney, 2121 Gidding St., Chicago, Ill.  
 Edward Kern, % Murwin, RD 41, Newton, N.J.  
 Robert Corbin, 124 Orchard Springs, Dayton, Ohio  
 D.B. Smith, 1500 Summit Ave. Baltimore, Md.  
 Jim A. White, 1765 Orchard St. Berkeley, Calif.  
 Earle Sidde, 801 Leach Ave, Des Moines, Iowa  
 T.D. Garrett, 1619 Wheeler, Houston, Texas  
 Wallace L. Akin, Richmond, Kansas  
 Harry Wood, Hotchkiss, Colorado  
 R.C. Sullivan, Rt. #1, Box 243, Glendora, <sup>Calif.</sup>  
 Kenneth Gusler, 902 Penner S.E., WA.  
 W.W. Heritage, 503 Burnham St. Burlington, N.C.  
 George H. Sparks, Blanco, Texas  
 Robert H. Conant, Westminster, Md.  
 Donald W. Johnson, 204 W 9<sup>th</sup> St. Crowley, La.  
 J.A. Drake, 314 Park Rd., Jackson, Mich.  
 Harvey C. Kubista, 925 Carmen Ave, Chic. Ill.  
 Ernie A. Schulbach, 2936 James St. Ft. Worth, Tex.  
 Edward M. Hockard, 531 E. 114<sup>th</sup> St. Cleveland, O.  
 Malcolm A. Baldwin, 161 S. Springfield Ave, Spring. Md.  
 Lauren L. Destin, Dod Bonita, Alberta, Can.

At Moosburg, after we had been liberated, a bunch of us got together and began to write down everybody's name and address that we could think of. This is a copy of my list.

--Bob Thompson

Note Newton Cole's name. He is the POW whose uniform and POW memorabilia were purchased on eBay by the Oflag 64 group and donated to the National WW II Museum in New Orleans. →

Leonard Lanzilotti, 19 Fulton St. Moosburg, N.Y.  
 Robert A. Hawn, 21 E. Stratford St. Housaonville, Pa.  
 Julian T. Sullivan, 6724 N. Berwyn St. Chicago  
 Enrico Verga, 719 Notwood St. Highwood, Ill.  
 Charles A. Free, 5064 Mansfield Ave. San Diego  
 James H. Wood, 469 Shannon Ave. Atlanta, Ga.  
 David W. Crist, 16128 Orchard Ave. Fortson, Cal.  
 A.A. Baldwin, Springfield, N.J.  
 Chesley Russell, 101 Woodland Ave. Eudora, Miss.  
 Walter D. Gale, % Walter Baker Shoe Co. Dorchester, Mass.  
 J.P. Ammon, 1000 1/2 17<sup>th</sup> St. Chicago  
 Everett G. Roberts, 1511 1/2 11<sup>th</sup> St. New York  
 Edward G. Henriksen, 1000 1/2 17<sup>th</sup> St. Chicago  
 Ferris R. Wade, Rockwall, Texas  
 Harold V. Shaw, 2603 1/2 130<sup>th</sup> St. Richmond, Va.  
 Long Island, N.Y.

## INFORMATION STATION

### HAVE YOU SEEN A BOX LIKE THIS??

Here is a picture of an interesting box that another POW gave my dad. I'm not sure about the language, but I think it's Czech. The box was decorated at Oflag 64 with small pieces of wood carved from matchsticks -- I think. It was apparently a cigar box, although it's not the same dimensions as cigar boxes I see nowadays.

This box is a treasure in my home, and I keep some of my dad's medals and other mementos in it. I thought it would be interesting to pass the picture around to see if anyone else connected with Oflag 64 has ever seen anything similar. I would love to know the name of the person who carved it -- although that would probably take a miracle. With the reunion coming up, I thought this might be a good time to inquire. Were there any Czech prisoners there?



I resized the picture so it would go through email easily, but I could send a larger version if anyone is interested in examining the detail. I find it amazing that such a box could last through the war and the trip home.

I also have a GI flashlight that my dad kept all those years. I haven't examined the Oflag 64 website closely enough to know what all is available, but it would also be interesting to compile a bibliography. I have 3 or 4 books for starters. My apologies if that is already out there...

Sharon Hutchison - Daughter of "Ike" Franklin  
[sharonhutchison@netpowwow.com](mailto:sharonhutchison@netpowwow.com)

### Roger J. Teyssier

Searching for information on my Uncle:

- Roger J. Teyssier, O-398234, Capt.
- Unit: 755 Tank Bn, attached to the F.E.C. (French and Algerian units)
- Captured 9-11-44 on or about the Winter Line, Italy
- Entered Oflag 64 on 1-1-45
- Trained in Texas, California, England, and Africa
- Entered the Army in late 1941, early 42 from Philadelphia
- College: U. Alabama, and Drexel U. (Phila) where he played football
- Spoke French and had a big nose (picture attached)

Let me know if you need other data.

Best regards, and with appreciation,

Jerry (Wynn) Kimble

3381 Wilderness Dr.

Powder Springs GA 30127

770-425-5071

[wynnkimble@bellsouth.net](mailto:wynnkimble@bellsouth.net)



### Thomas J. Bugg, Jr.

My father, 2nd LT. Thomas (Tommy) J. Bugg, Jr. was a POW at OFLAG 64 and had two close friends from that time Edwin James Betts from New York and John Kroschewsky from Pennsylvania (a glider pilot). They were together on the march and then spent two weeks back home with my Dad and Mom in Ashland N.C. and then they served together for a time at the Texas Base of Camp Walters. If anyone knows current contact information or other information regarding their outcome he would be most interested in learning more.

I have found them in the OFLAG 64 database and in the National Archives database, however I have been unable to gain further information. Any information would be greatly appreciated.

I spoke with Kroschewsky Gus J. this AM and he is NOT the gentleman that I was looking for. Gus Kroschewsky shared with me that he was not even a POW in that camp although he was in the Army Air Corp and was actually shot down, but he made it to the Russian control.

My gap is that Dad does not remember exactly the spelling of his buddy's name - He believes his name was John, he was from Pennsylvania, he was a glider pilot, he was tall and thin and the spelling of the last name escapes him, but Kozelski or something like that.....beginning with K and a ski or sky ending - Polish? I can find no trace of a name like that on the roster or in the Archives. Thanks for any and all leads.

Warmest regards,  
T. J. Bugg  
8044 Montgomery Road, Suite 260  
Cincinnati OH 45236  
Work: 513.366.3769  
Cellular: 513.703.7801  
[tjbugg@centennialinc.com](mailto:tjbugg@centennialinc.com)

\* \* \* \* \*



## **D-Day Museum Update**

(From a letter to Pat Waters)

Hi Pat,

Just a note to say hello and to let you know what's been happening here at the D-Day Museum since you guys were here. To begin with the POW exhibit has temporarily been put in mothballs. In its place was a Congressional Medal of Honor exhibit for about two months.

Replacing the MOH exhibit there is now an Anne Frank exhibit, which is due to run for about two months also.

As each week passes we are seeing more and more school groups come to tour the museum. Most are local schools but what is a pleasant surprise to us is the distance many others travel to get here, some as far away as south central LA, southeast MS, but also as far away as southwest AL. We actually have kids from Mobile travel all that way just to see the museum. Isn't that something? To some of them however, it's just an excuse to get out of school for a day. But for many of them, the teachers have prepared them well and they have an enlightening and sometimes sobering experience, especially when they hear it come from out of the mouths of some of our volunteers who put boots on the ground there. For instance Tom Blakey, an 82nd Airborne paratrooper who jumped in on the night of 5th/6th of June and who still has his "cricket". Or Bob Bannon, who flew 34 missions in a B-24 bomber. Or Jack Sullivan, a 100th Division POW captured in France and finally wound up in a camp that many of you just might remember.....Stalag 7A, Moosburg.

Another thing we are seeing more of is WWII veterans bringing their wives, children and grandchildren to see the place. Just last Wednesday, I met a marine veteran who was on Midway Island and 8 of his family members who came all the way from Sacramento CA. They saw the city as well of course, but the main purpose of their traveling all that way was to see the museum.

So I guess what I'm trying to say is that we will survive. We, the museum will survive. We, the city of New Orleans (which gives me a lump in my throat as I write this) will survive. And this great nation that we all love so dearly, will survive.

And now my friend let me get down off my soapbox and go have lunch. Hope your family is healthy and happy and we meet again soon.

From way down yonder in the land of cotton,

Larry McBrayer, D-Day Museum

## OFLAG 64 WEB CONNECTION

The new and improved version of the Oflag 64 Web Site is up and running at <http://www.oflag64.org>. We acknowledge and are grateful for the contributions of many. Here are some nice comments from some nice folks.

\* \* \* \* \*

**What a nice job you've done on the new web site. This is an awesome memorial to the men of Oflag 64 and their families! Thank you so much on behalf of the thousands of people who will use this web site!**  
**Charlie Turnbo**  
**Salado TX**

*I was on the site yesterday and it is very nice! Thank you for all you do for those of us trying to learn about our fathers and their fellow Kriegies during their days as prisoners.*

*Regina Oldfield Puzzo*  
*Alice M. Oldfield*  
*Westfield NJ*

It really looks great. Kathy EZELL  
Coral Gables, FL

**Thanks so much for letting me know about the new format. I think it is great, and you have done an amazing job on it.**

**Boyce Nunnally**  
**Louisville KY**

**EXCELLENT WORK! Thank you!**  
**T. J. Bugg**  
**Cincinnati OH**

*The new Oflag 64 website looks great. You guys are doing a terrific job. Thanks very much.*

*Lucy Lussenden*  
*Livonia MI*

*A Really good job.*  
*James (Jim) Cockrell*  
*St. George UT*

**Thanks for your email :) New design of Oflag 64 site is very nice.**

**Lukasz Lapka**  
**Szubin, Poland**

**Well Done! Outstanding Work! Oflag 64 will "Continue to March". Thank you all for the fine work.**

**Jimmie Kanaya**  
**Gig Harbor WA**

\* \* \* \* \*

*Thank you so much for the wonderful job!! The website is wonderful and so well done. It's a wonderful tribute to the men. Thank you, Thank you.*

*Lynn Kanaya*  
*Gig Harbor WA*

*Please welcome these new individuals to our Oflag 64 family. They have recently found us on the website.*

*Gary Bond*  
*Major Richard M. Coffman (USAF Ret.)*  
*Pete Corbett – son of William J. Corbett*  
*David Crider – nephew of Woodrow W. Hubka*  
*Linda Farber – relative of Leo J. Farber*  
*Nathan Jonas*  
*John Simcik*  
*Paul J. Triffiley III*  
*Todd Trotter - son of McKie Trotter*  
*Charlotte Webber*

**This is FANTASTIC. Thank you so much for all your work!!**

**Julie Rathbone Gionfriddo**  
**Livermore CO**



## PUBLICATIONS

The following publications might be of interest to you. Many of them were written by our men. Your local library is a good place to check for availability. If you can't find what you're looking for there, check Amazon.com or write to the author or publisher.

1. **Diary of A Kriegie** by Ed Beattie. Diary of Ed Beattie, A UPI Correspondent captured near the Moselle River in Sept '44. Publisher: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York NY
2. **Escape to Russia** by Howard "BOOMER" Holder. Story of Boomer Holder as he went across Russia in 1945. Publisher: Iberian Publishing Co., Athens GA
3. **Home Was Never Like This.** Diary of Col Yardley. Publisher: Yardley Enterprises. Evergreen, CO.
4. **In the Presence of Mine Enemies** by Eugene L Daniel, Contact Rose Daniel at 5100 Sharon Road #603, Charlotte NC 28210-4720.
5. **Justifiable Pride** by William D. Stevens, Jamal Books, 2340 Devoe Drive, Lincoln NE 68506, 402-488-6005.
6. **Katyn Forest Video** (Beta or VHS). Ray Towers, Jr., 25105 Vista Greens Court, Hayward CA 94541, 415-582-4871
7. **Kriegie** by Kenneth Simmons. Diary of an Air Force Pilot. Publisher: Thomas Nelson and Sons. New York NY.
8. **Kriegsgefangenen** (Prisoner of War) by Clarence Ferguson. Publisher: Texan Press, Waco TX
9. **OFLAG 64, 50th Anniversary Book.** Anniversary Committee. Publisher: Evanston Publishing Co., Evanston IL.
10. **Passages to Freedom**, Joseph Frelinghuysen, 1990, Publisher: Sunflower University Press, 1531 Yuma (Box 1009), Manhattan KS 66502-4228, 800-258-1232 (\$17.95, includes S & H)
11. **Raid.** The story of the Task Force Baum raid on the Hammelburg POW Camp. Publisher: Dell Publishing Co. (A few copies are available at \$8 each through our organization. Please make checks payable to the Oflag 64 Postage Fund c/o Elodie Caldwell.)
12. **Roads to Liberation from Oflag 64** by Clarence Meltesen. Story of Liberation from Oflag 64. Publisher: Oflag 64 Press. San Francisco, CA (\$25.00)
13. **A Ramble Through My War** by Charles T. Marshall, Publisher: Louisiana State University Press, 1999. (\$29.95)
14. **The Escape Factory** by Lloyd Shoemaker. Story of a secret organization in Wash DC that maintained contact with all POWs in WWII. St Martins Press. New York NY

15. **The Water and The Rock** by Charles Jones. Diary of a man captured in Africa. Publisher: Anchor Publishing Co., Northwood, IA
16. **The Welcome Swede** by Frank Diggs. Publisher: Vantage Press, New York, NY (\$11.00)
17. **33 Months as a POW in Stalag Luft III** by Albert P. Clark. Publisher: Fulcrum Publishing, 16100 Table Mountain Parkway, Suite 300, Golden CO 80403, 800-992-2908 (17.95 pb)

### Other Publications

The following are available through the Oflag 64 organization. (Please make your check payable to Oflag 64 Postage Fund and mail it to Joe Seringer.)

<b>Oflag 64 Audio Tape</b>	5.00
<b>The Oflag 64 Directory</b>	3.00
<b>Original Roster-Oflag 64</b>	10.00
<b>The Men of Oflag 64</b>	20.00
<b>My Tour of Russia</b>	5.00
<b>Tribute to TF Baum</b>	15.00
<b>Hammelburg Roster</b>	\$ 7.50
<b>The Waters Story</b>	\$19.50

Write directly to the following contacts for these publications.

**Press Releases** by Ted Roggen, 101 Westcott, Houston TX 77007 (\$10.95)

**Vic Kanners Diary.** Contact Dave Kanners, 5479 Sandy Lane, Columbiaville MI 48421, 810-793-2719 (FREE)

**Americans Behind the Barbed Wire** by Frank Diggs, Story of Frank's trip across Russia in 1945. Publisher: Vandemere Press, P. O. Box 5243, Clearwater FL 22205 (New price is \$22.00 and includes Shipping and Handling.)

### Postage Fund Donors

Virginia Barton  
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Thanks to all who have generously donated to the postage fund. Without such contributions, mailing the ITEM and other materials or information would not be possible.

If you would like to help, please send your donation to:

Joe Seringer  
 1700 N. Atlantic Ave. #144  
 Cocoa Beach FL 32931  
*(through April 30, 2007)*

or to

Elodie Caldwell  
 2731 Terry Avenue  
 Longview WA 98632



## TAPS



### **MARVIN CHEVALIER**

*Published on August 22, 2006*

Iowa City

Marvin was born July 4, 1921 at rural Dundee, Iowa, the son of Freeman and Hattie (Goranson) Chevalier. He graduated from Strawberry Point High School in 1937 and the University of Iowa in 1942 with a Bachelor's of Commerce degree. Marvin joined the army in January 1943 and was sent to officers candidate school at Fort Benning, Ga. He graduated 2nd Lt. Infantry. He was assigned to camp Swift FX with the 97th Infantry Division. In April, 1944 Marvin was sent overseas and assigned to the 28th Infantry Division. He was captured by the Germans, November 7, 1944. The prison camp was liberated April 7, 1945 and Marvin returned to the States. He was honorably discharged from the army October, 1946.

Marvin and Faye MacTaggart were married June 21, 1946. Marvin began his banking career at Union Bank and Trust Co., Strawberry Point. He was employed at Monticello State Bank and then Citizens State Bank, Postville, IA, where he became President and CEO. He retired in 1983. Marvin and Faye moved to Iowa City in 1991.

Marvin held several banking related positions culminating with two terms on the Iowa State Banking Board. He served on the University of Iowa Alumni Association Board of Directors, the Upper Iowa University Board of Trustees and Iowa Women's Athletic Development Board. Other memberships included American Legion Post 518, Masonic Lodge 204, Friends of the University of Iowa Hospital, HAWK and Quarterback Club. He was an ardent supporter of University of Iowa athletics, particularly wrestling. Marvin provided ongoing encouragement to many individual athletes. Marvin was confirmed at St. Sebald Lutheran Church. He was a former member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Strawberry Point, St. Paul

Lutheran Church, Postville and a current member of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Iowa City.

Survivors include three sons, John Chevalier and his wife Beverley of Peterborough, Ontario, David Chevalier of San Jose, CA and Paul Chevalier of Beaumont, CA; one daughter, Denise Chevalier and her husband Boris Gregoric of Iowa City; two grandchildren; Brett Chevalier and his wife Cara of Malden, MA, Danielle McKinlay and her husband Mat of Kingston, Ontario; two great grandchildren, Alex and Emma McKinlay; one brother, Donald Chevalier and his wife Evelyn; one sister, Darlene Brady all of Strawberry Point, IA.

He was preceded in death by his wife Faye, January 18, 2001, granddaughter Ruth, three brothers, Darrell, Vern and Maurice, and one sister, Mildred Thurn.

Visitation will be Tuesday, August 22 from 4 to 8 p.m. at Lensing Funeral Service, 210 Holiday Road, Coralville. The funeral service will be held Wednesday, August 23, 11 a.m. at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 1300 Melrose Avenue, Iowa City. A memorial services with military rites will be held Thursday, August 24, 11 a.m. at Strawberry Point Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to University of Iowa Foundation - Wrestling Program; Christian Children's Fund; St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Iowa City.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **MARIA AGNES DI FRANCESCO**

Homemaker, Volunteer

*From the Washington Post, January 5, 2007*

Maria Agnes Di Francesco, 91, a homemaker and volunteer for many years in Southeast Washington, died Dec. 29 of congestive heart failure at Riderwood Retirement Community in Silver Spring.

Mrs. Di Francesco was born in Foggia, Italy, and grew up in Waterbury, Conn. She came to Washington to attend Trinity College and received her bachelor's degree in 1936. She briefly attended graduate school at Catholic University before her marriage.

In the late 1930s, she worked at the Italian Embassy and at Catholic University, and she was a substitute teacher at Eastern High School and Notre Dame High School. During World War II, she taught English and French at Surrattsville High School in Clinton.

After the war, Mrs. Di Francesco and her husband settled in Southeast Washington, where he practiced medicine for 40 years and she volunteered at the D.C. Cancer Society. For the society, she helped map Southeast Washington and Prince George's County into zones for volunteers.

She held a number of volunteer positions at Providence Hospital and was named an honorary lifetime member of the Women's Board of the hospital. In addition, she volunteered with the Literacy Council of Montgomery County and was a member of the Italian Cultural Society of Washington.

Survivors include her husband of 64 years, Dr. Vincent James Di Francesco of Silver Spring; three children, Rosa T. Lee of Fort Pierce, Fla., Patricia Bender of Philadelphia and Maria Christmann of Silver Spring; and five grandchildren.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **LISELOTTE DUNBAR (LILO)**

*Published November 07, 2006.*

*From the Las Vegas Review-Journal.com*

Liselotte Dunbar, 80, a homemaker, of Las Vegas, passed away Friday, Nov. 3, 2006. She was born April 3, 1926, in Schelisa, Germany, and resided in Nevada since 1979. Liselotte is survived by her husband, Alan Dunbar; sons, Victor of Spokane, Wash., and Ralph of Yakima, Wash.; daughter, Evelyn of Sacramento, Calif.;

sister, Giesela of Amhurst, Ohio; brothers, Tom of Palm Springs, Calif., and Hans of Spokane, Wash.; and four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Visitation will be from 10 a.m.-noon Wednesday, Nov. 8, at Palm Mortuary, 1600 S. Jones Blvd.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **JAMES RILEY "JIMMY" SHOAF II**

*From the Daytona Beach News Journal Online  
1-10-07*

Funeral service for James Riley "Jimmy" Shoaf II, 88, Palm Coast, will be 11 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 11, 2007, in the chapel of Craig-Flagler Palms Funeral Home, 511 Old Kings Road S., Flagler Beach, with the Rev. Richard McCleery, chaplain of Hospice of Volusia/Flagler officiating. The family will receive friends Thursday from 10 a.m. until the time of service. Burial will be in Beverly Hill Memorial Gardens, Morgantown, W.Va. Mr. Shoaf passed away Sat., Jan. 6, at his apartment at Alterra Sterling House, Palm Coast. Jimmy was born April 21, 1918, in Smithfield, Pa., and had lived in Palm Coast since 1981, coming from Ft. Lee, N.J. He leaves his loving wife of 69 years, Doris; two loving sons, James R. Shoaf III, and his wife, Claire, Santa Clara, Calif., and John R. Shoaf, Morgantown. Jimmy had two deceased brothers, H. Kenneth and Ralph; and two surviving brothers, John H. Shoaf, and his wife, Sue, Boulder, Colo., and Thomas B. Shoaf, and his wife, Betty, Grand Junction, Colo. Jimmy served his country honorably in the Army, 1st Armored Division during World War II, earning a Purple Heart and Bronze Star. During his service he was detained for 27 months in the German prisoner of war camp Oflag 64. He was retired as an engineer for RCA. Jimmy was a charter member of Military Officers Association of America, and a member of VFW Post 8696, American Ex-Prisoner of Wars, American Legion, DAV, and Kiwanis Club of Flagler-Palm Coast. The family would like to thank Hospice of Volusia/Flagler and Kiwanis Club members for all their care and concern during this difficult time. Memorial contributions suggested to Hospice of Volusia/Flagler, 7 Florida Park Drive, Palm

Coast, FL 32137, or Kiwanis Club of Flagler-Palm Coast, P.O. Box 350423, Palm Coast, FL 32135. Arrangements are in the care and trust of Craig-Flagler Palms Funeral Home.

A nice tribute to “Jimmy” Shoaf follows:

### Ode To Daddy

Daddy, you are a man we cannot forget, its true,  
Because we have so many fond memories of  
you.  
You graduated from WVU, and got your degree,  
Then joined the Army to serve your Country.  
You were captured and a POW in German Prison  
Oflag 64,  
For twenty-seven months were treated worse  
than a human should endure.  
But you made a positive out of a negative  
situation,  
By building a radio out of scraps for  
communication.  
You received a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star  
too,  
When you finally came home your family was so  
proud of you.  
You were so active in many organizations in  
Town,  
People always found you interesting to be  
around.  
You and Mamma danced like Rogers and  
Astaire,  
The two of you so happy, like you were floating  
on air.  
You and Mamma were married sixty-nine years,  
When you got sick, Mamma took care of you,  
hiding her tears.  
John and Skip made you proud as can be,  
You showed them your love in your actions, and  
verbally.  
We will miss you Daddy, now Mamma is alone,  
But we will keep in touch with her on the phone.  
We salute you Daddy, we are so proud of you,  
You were a great husband, Father, Patriot, and  
Hero, just to name a few.  
Now you are out of pain, and God has you in his  
care,  
And we will remember you in our daily prayers.

You had a long fruitful life, and accomplished  
more than most,  
But you will not be forgotten as THE BEST  
DADDY IN PALM COAST!

Claire & James Shoaf III (Santa Clara)

\* \* \* \* \*

As time goes by, we are losing more and more  
great men. In an effort to keep the TAPS section  
of the Oflag 64 web site up to date, we are  
attempting to collect current information on ex-  
POWs. If you can confirm information about  
any of the following individuals, please let  
Elodie know as soon as possible. Our records are  
showing death dates within the last 5-10 years.

Alloway, Norman Lee (KS)	2004
Angevine, William H. Jr. (NC)	2001
Becker, Richard F. (FL)	2003
Bond, James B. (TX)	2003
Cotter, Michael F. (GA)	2001
Davis, James E. (MD)	2002
Gibson, Charles R. (MI)	2003
Gray, William R. (FL)	2002
Herr, George L. (PA)	2004
Miller, John W. (CO)	1998
Morton, Thomas O. (MA)	2001
Patterson, Edwin H. (KS)	2000
Plummer, Robert C. (MD)	2005
Shimatsu, Hisae (HI)	2002
Stansell, John A. (TX)	2005
Tallman, Harold L. (FL)	2006
Watts, James H. (CA)	2002
Wingate, Thomas H. (NC)	2005



**From:** "Michael Higgins"  
<darienhighlanders@hotmail.com>  
**Date:** February 26, 2007 8:04:25 PM PST  
**To:** elodie@oflag64.org  
**SUBJECT:** MARTIN J. HIGGINS

Dear Elodie:

On behalf of my family thank you for your kind words at this time of sorrow.

My father passed away shortly after 8:00 AM, Eastern Standard Time, this morning, 26 Feb 2007.

Before joining the Infantry, he served in the last horse cavalry unit of the U.S. Army - the famed "Buffalo Soldiers" of the Indian Wars fame.

There is a tradition in the U.S. Cavalry which maintains there is a special place, a Valhalla, where only cavalry troopers can go after they pass away called "Fiddler's Green." It is a place in the shade, where they can dismount with plenty of cool water for their mounts and themselves. There, they will see all their fallen comrades - and can recall old times.

Dad is there at Fiddler's Green. His life was one magnificent ride.

I am sure by now, Dad has pulled up a chair, lit his pipe, and is holding court with the likes of former 8th Cavalry trooper, General George S. Patton, whose fighting style he so admired. I am also quite sure by now he has posed the eternal question to 7th Cavalry trooper, General George A Custer: "What, in Heaven's name, were you thinking at Little Big Horn?"

America has lost another hero. We will remember him with great fondness in our hearts. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

He has fought the good fight, He has finished his course, He has kept the faith.

With kindest regards, I remain,  
Sincerely, Michael Higgins  
Proud son of Captain Martin J. Higgins -

Co E, 10th Horse Cavalry (Buffalo Soldiers),  
2nd Cavalry Div, "Ready & Forward"

Co.A., 1st Bn, 141st Regt., 36th Inf Div., 7th  
Army Corps, U.S. Army. "Remember the  
Alamo"

Commander, "Lost Battalion," Oct 1944, Vosges  
Mtns., Eastern France.

Survivor, Winter Death March from OFLAG 64  
to STALAG 3A (Luckenwalde)

Survivor and escapee, STALAG 3A, April 1945

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*It is with sincere sympathy that we send our  
condolences to the family and friends of Martin  
J. Higgins. We know he will be greatly missed.*

*All our best to those left behind as adjustments  
and changes occur. We will keep you in our  
thoughts and prayers.*

*Sincerely,  
Members of the Oflag 64 Family*

