

# The

# Post Oflag 64 Item

Nearly Everybody  
Reads The ITEM

Oflag 64's Home  
Newspaper

“Get Wise – ITEM-ize”

2nd Quarter 2021

Good Ole USA

Of Undetermined Worth

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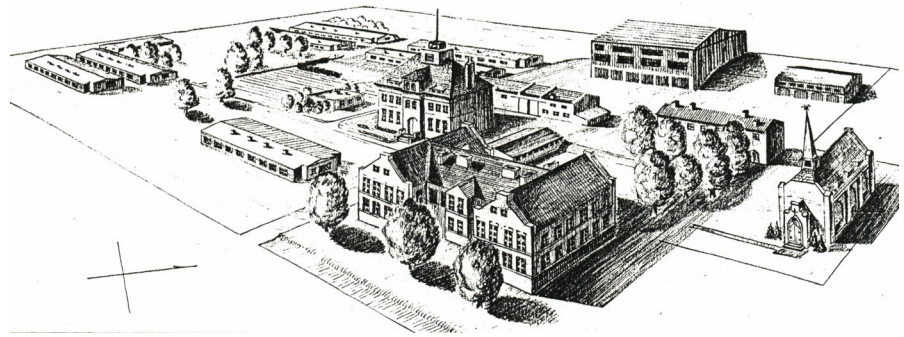
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We apologize to any others we may have overlooked and thank all who have contacted us.

*NOTE: The Oflag 64 Remembered website and the Post Oflag 64 ITEM are independent entities and do not operate under the auspices of any other organization.*



Drawing by Jim Bickers, shown without barbed wire fences or guard towers

## FACES WITH THE NAMES

Over the past few months, the “Oflag 64 Remembered” Kriegy Research Group (KRG for short) has been working on a Faces With the Names Project for the future POW Museum. It involves researching each of our Kriegies’ lives and putting together biographies (with photos) which include a portion about their younger years, more about their military lives including pre-war, capture, captivity, liberation, and a portion about their post-war lives. The group is also searching for Kriegy writings, interviews, videos, war logs, journals, and diaries to help create a more complete picture of each Kriegy.

In some cases, family members have agreed to write their Kriegy’s biography. The researchers have received some great ones so far and would like many more. (See pages 7-13 for an example of a great family-written bio.) *Would you consider writing one for your Kriegy as well?* The KRG has some great writers who would be willing to assist you if you wish. They can also provide you samples of previous bios that have been written, if that would be helpful.

If you would like the KRG to focus on your Kriegy in one of their future biographies, please let us know. Send military photos showing any aspect of your Kriegy’s war experiences, an obituary if you have one, and any other photos you feel would be appropriate. Please also send the name of his Unit and Division if you have that information. We will pass the information on to the researchers.

Our best to you always,  
Elodie Caldwell, ITEM Editor, [elodie@oflag64.us](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us)  
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# A Little Company Business

## Financial Contributions

There is now more than one way to contribute to Oflag 64 related funds.



For contributions to the **Postage Fund ONLY** (which not only covers the cost of printing and mailing the ITEM to our remaining Kriegies or their widows, but also pays for running the Oflag 64 website), please make your checks payable to Oflag 64 Postage Fund, and send them to:

### Bret Job

2801 SW 46<sup>th</sup> St  
Cape Coral FL 33914-6026

OR

### Elodie Caldwell

2731 Terry Ave  
Longview WA 98632-4437

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. PF Contributions

Anne Hoskot Kreutzer

For financial contributions to the **future museum only**, please write your check to:

Friends of Oflag 64, Inc.  
12768 Turberville Lane  
Oak Hill, VA 20171-2214

OR

donate **ONLINE** at:

<https://friendsofotlag64.org/contact-us>

You can also access the donation page on the Polish-American Foundation website at:

<http://www.szubinpowcamps.org/en/foundation/support-us>

These funds are separate from the Postage Fund and will be used to

help support the future Museum in various ways.

THANKS to all who have so very generously donated to our various Oflag 64 funds over time.

*Thank You!*

## Researching Records



The Oflag 64 Remembered Kriegy Research Group (KRG) would like more information on Oflag 64 Kriegies, specifically about those who were captured together and/or marched out or escaped together. Some marched to Hammelburg, some to Luckenwalde, some to Moosburg, and possibly other places. Knowing the names of those who were together at different times will help create a more complete story. If you have a Kriegy diary, war log, journal, notebook or book written by your Kriegy which might tell his story more fully, please contact me at: [elodie@oflag64.us](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us). Please also consider either donating or scanning these items.

## Donating Artifacts

If you're looking for a place to donate Kriegy records and memorabilia, the Polish-American Foundation in Szubin would appreciate receiving them. Please contact Dave Stewart, our Artifacts Committee Chairman, at: [dslvtx@gmail.com](mailto:dslvtx@gmail.com) for more information. Donations should be sent to him with two copies of the donation form (included at the end of this ITEM) to the address listed on the form.

If you have already donated artifacts, thank you so much. Descriptions will be written for each of them (with your help regarding information about the artifacts). The artifacts and write-ups will eventually be used in displays in the future museum.

For more information regarding Friends of Oflag 64, Inc., please visit their website at: <https://friendsofotlag64.org/artifacts>

For museum news and information, please visit the Foundation website at:

<http://www.szubinpowcamps.org/en/>

## POW Recognition Day



Last year our Oflag 64 Family participated in a "Daisy Campaign" on POW Recognition Day to honor former Oflag 64 POWs by placing small flags and daisies at their Arlington National Cemetery gravesites and other gravesites located at cemeteries across the nation. National POW/MIA Recognition Day in the U.S. this year will be September 17, and we'd like to honor our Oflag 64 POWs once more. If your Kriegy family member is interred at Arlington and wasn't honored last year, please let us know so we can include him this year. Anne Kreutzer will again be visiting each Arlington gravesite and will take photos. Please email her at this address: [annekreutzer@hotmail.com](mailto:annekreutzer@hotmail.com). If you will be visiting your Kriegy's gravesite at Arlington or any other cemetery on your own that day, please let us know, also please take photos (with flag and daisy if possible) and send them to Elodie at: [elodie@oflag64.us](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us).

On this day (just like on Memorial Day with the little red poppies), please consider wearing a Daisy in honor of your Kriegy or other POWs and encourage others to do the same. It's a grassroots movement. Let's help get it going.



# MAIL CALL

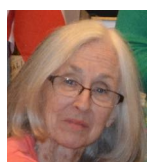


CINDY SHARPE BURGESS, daughter of Kriegy Wilbur B. “Bill” Sharpe, sent a photo of a small get-together her dad and a few other Kriegies had in 1981. She also sent a photo of Bill’s 99<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration and Jimmie Kanay’s Arlington funeral service. (See the Kriegy News and Information Section.) *Thank you, Cindy, for these great photos.*

BEN CHAPPELL, son of the late Kriegy Roy J. “Tex” Chappell, Jr. has been in contact with Ann Rogers, one of our Kriegy Research Group (KRG) bio writers, about his dad’s biography. In their emails back and forth, Ben shared a couple of stories that could be added to the bio. He also mentioned celebrating his mom’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday with her in January. (See the Kriegy News and Information section.) *Thanks, Ben, for sharing the stories about your dad. Thanks also for the photo of your mom on her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.*



GREG CLINGAN, son of the late Kriegy James LeRoy “Lee” Clingan, in response to our request for his dad’s bio, sent some great information and photos of his dad during WWII and afterwards. *Thank you, Greg, for the information you shared about your dad. He was an amazing man!*



JUDY CASNER FLETCHER, daughter of the late Kriegy H. Al Casner, contacted Dave Stewart (our Artifacts Committee Chairman) not long ago regarding an artifact donation of utensils her dad probably used at Oflag 64. (See the Kriegy News and Information Section.) *Thanks so much, Judy, for the artifacts you sent. They were received in good condition and are being prepared for transport to Poland.*



DAVID GLENDINNING, son of the late Kriegy John A. Glendinning recently sent a copy of the bio he wrote on his dad, along with supplementary photos. One photo included his dad in a little theater production of

“Seventh Man”. We didn’t previously have this photo but it has now been added to our website. Names of Kriegies we’ve been able to identify have been included with the photo. (See the Kriegy News and Information Section.) *What a wonderful bio and great pictures as well. We look forward to more like yours. Thanks so much David!*

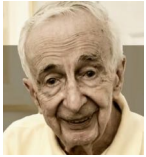
TERRY RALSTIN HAMLIN, daughter of the late Kriegy James F. Ralstin, has been in communication with Ann Rogers and Dave Stewart regarding information on her dad, some pertaining to his bio and some pertaining to a possible donation of artifacts. She will keep in touch as she goes through her father’s materials. *Thank you, Terry, for sharing information with the KRG. Every bit of information received helps make each Kriegy’s story come alive.*

DANIEL HABIG, son of the late Kriegy Francis M. Habig, in response to our email request for his dad’s bio, apologized for the delay in getting back to us. Unfortunately, he lost a brother to COVID earlier in the year and wanted to get with family to discuss the bio and possible artifact donations before getting back to us. He will be in contact with the Artifacts Committee regarding possible donations to the Museum. *Thanks, Dan, for getting back to us. We were so sorry to learn about the death of your brother. Such devastating news! Our thoughts, prayers, and heartfelt condolences are sent to you and your family. We know he is greatly missed. We look forward to your dad’s bio and artifacts when the time is right.*

SHARON FRANKLIN HUTCHISON, daughter of the late Kriegy Isaac E. “Ike” Franklin wrote a beautiful bio on her dad with supporting photos. His story was shared with her local DAR chapter [Daughters of the American Revolution] and then with us. (See the Kriegy News and Information Section.) *Thanks so much, Sharon, for permission to use your dad’s story in this ITEM. It’s a great example of what family-written bios can contain.*



WARREN JONES, son of the late Kriegy Charles L. Jones, sent a scanned copy of Page 6 of the October 1944 ITEM which contains a photo of his mom and a little note to the left, from his dad pointing to “my wife”. (See the Kriegy News and Information Section.) *Warren, what a beautiful lady! Thanks for sharing this treasure with us.*



ROBERT E. LEVIN SR., Kriegy, wrote to express appreciation of our honoring him in the last ITEM as he turned 101. He said “I’m still enjoying life....Here’s to celebrating 102!!” *So good to hear from you, Bob. Let’s definitely look forward to 102! Each year is a milestone. Thanks for keeping in touch.*



DAVID LITTLE, grandson of the late Kriegy Thomas H. Wingate, recently contacted us regarding information he was looking for on our website. After a bit of emailing, we learned that David is planning to write his grandfather’s bio and will send pictures and two poems his grandfather wrote while a POW. He sent scans of his grandfather’s diary for our files. What an amazing glimpse into another Kriegy’s life. David made a donation to our non-profit and hopes to travel to Szubin next fall. He also agreed to join the KRG. *David, so good to learn about you and your grandfather through the information and diaries you shared. Thank you for writing your grandfather’s bio and also for your generous donation to the non-profit. The KRG enjoyed meeting you during their last ZOOM meeting.*



JEAN RIGHTLEY, niece of the late Kriegy James A. Rightley, recently contacted us with information about her uncle who was captured the day after he dropped into Normandy. She mentioned that her uncle made tapes (now digitized) of his war experiences with a brief history of his life which she would be willing to share with us. Jean also wrote that “He was interviewed by his local TV station on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day”. *Jean, it was a pleasure hearing from you and learning about your uncle who we previously didn’t know. We have added his name to our TAPS list, added you to our email list as requested, and are looking forward to reading your uncle’s bio in the future.*

KARL SIGLER, grandson of the late Kriegy Thornton V. Sigler, wrote that he recently photographed his grandfather’s WWII scrapbook which includes documents and photos. As he gets time, he will edit the raw photos and send them to the Artifacts Committee. He also expressed appreciation for efforts to preserve our Kriegies’ histories. *Karl, we appreciate what you and our other Kriegy families do to help keep our Kriegy stories alive. We look forward to receiving the photos and any other items your family would like to donate when the time is right.*



ROBERT STEWART, son of the late Kriegy Donald B. Stewart, responded to my request for photos of his dad’s POW days. He referred me to The Oflag 64 Record, Mariusz Winiecki’s blog, and the story he submitted back in 2018. He agreed to expound on it and add what more he could, then revisit donating some of his dad’s treasures to the new Museum. He also gave us permission to use his copyrighted article. *Robert, it was great hearing from you. Thanks so much for the information you shared and for being willing to work further on your dad’s story. We look forward to learning what you might donate to the Museum, by way of artifacts, and hope all is well with you.*



PAUL J. THRIFFILEY III, son of the late Kriegy Paul J. Thriffiley, Jr. has been so instrumental in finding information that will help the KRG bio writers. Fifty-nine newspaper articles, reports, etc. have been found for 7 Kriegies in the last quarter. Separately, in response to our request that he write his dad’s bio, Paul said “Yes”. *Paul, your “finds” have been so helpful to the KRG as they write bios or collect POW and WWII information for the new Museum. Thank you so much for your continued willingness to serve our Kriegies and their families in this way. And thank you for agreeing to write your dad’s bio. Please share any articles and photos you find on him as well.*

TIM TURNER, Godson of the late Kriegy Loyd A. Taylor, sent us photos and information, including a flash drive with interviews which were done with Loyd in previous years. This information, coupled with emails from Phil Smith who wrote a story about Loyd, has been a wonderful addition to our Kriegies’ stories. *Tim, we greatly appreciate the*

information and photos you've shared. Please share again any time. Thank you so much!



ROBERT W. VICEK, son of the late Kriegy John W. Vicek, has the most interesting story to tell. Not only was his dad a POW at Oflag 64 during WWII, but his uncle (his mom's brother), a German citizen fighting on the side of Germany, was captured by the Americans and held in an American POW camp during the same time period. Robert has written a draft of a book comparing the two men's lives. In addition to all he knew about his father, he also knew his uncle well and spent quite a bit of time with him after the war. Such amazing and interesting family dynamics! *Thank you very much, Robert, for sharing this incredible story with us. We hope you're able to finalize the book and publish it whichever way suits your family best. Thanks also for your dad's life story/death article.*



PAT WATERS, son of the late Kriegy John K. Waters, wrote that he had recently been to a luncheon with another Kriegy Kid, Anne Kreutzer, and other friends and commented that it was so wonderful. *Thank you, Pat, for sharing the news about your luncheon. It really IS wonderful to spend time with other Kriegy families. It's like sharing old times together. There's definitely a bond. Our dad's would love to have heard that the "Kids" were getting together.*

TOM WIDMER, whose dad's good friend was Thomas D. Rush, one of our Kriegy's, wrote hoping to connect with someone who might have information about Thomas and some long march details. We contacted another Kriegy family who knew Thomas hoping that a connection could be

made. *Tom, thanks for contacting us. We hope you were successful in getting the information you were searching for. If you have information to share regarding Thomas' POW and WWII experiences, we're also interested.*



MARIUSZ WINIECKI, our good friend in Poland and President of the Polish-American Foundation, responded to a recent question of mine regarding whether Poland was part of Germany during WWII or more likely "occupied". There was quite a conversation about it, but it was finally determined that the best reference to Poland during WWII was that it was "German Occupied Poland" and that Oflag 64 was a part of that occupation. Other POW camps that were in Poland have different stories. *Thanks so much, Mariusz for your clarification and knowledge about the subject.*

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Many thanks to members of the Kriegy Research Group (KRG) who meet regularly on Zoom to follow-up on research projects that are being done. If you would like to join the research team, please contact me at: [elodie@oflag64.us](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us) There are many different resources to research; many hands help move projects along more quickly and smoothly.



Thank you Kriegies and Veterans for your devoted service to our country during war and peace time. We wish everyone a delightful and peaceful Independence Day!!

## Kriegy News and Information



to another great KRIEGY PATRIOT AND HERO -- Rupert D. Starr, July 16 -- Age 99  
We wish you the very best, RUPERT!

\* \* \* \* \*

On June 24, **Kriegy Bill Sharpe** celebrated his **99th birthday**. It was quite a difference from 78 years ago when he reached his 21st while imprisoned at Oflag 64. This day he had balloons, several flavors of cake, and the company of family and the staff at Maple Grove (his assisted living home). Many thanks to everyone for all the birthday cards. He read them all and commented on each one. Bill is pictured at left with his daughter Cindy Burgess.



\* \* \* \* \*

### Jimmie Kanaya's Arlington Funeral Service

Jimmie's service was perfect in every respect. Lovely sunny day but extremely hot at 101 degrees. All met at Arlington Cemetery on June 30 about 10 a.m. and were led to the transfer station about 11 a.m. The transfer station is where the remains are transferred to the caisson. Cars moved slowly and attendees were asked to follow or walk behind the caisson. With Lynn's permission, a number of folks chose to walk. One member mentioned that the men suffered the long march so we could at least follow the caisson!

Following the beautiful service at the gravesite, attendees were asked to join the group for lunch at a restaurant overlooking the Potomac River. Such a great time as we had a number of JAVA members, "Japanese American Veterans Association", which was fascinating at best. Such a wonderful and cohesive group who didn't leave the restaurant until 4 p.m. (Photos and narrative by Cindy Burgess)



Jimmie's Caisson



21-gun Salute

Lynn Kanaya with Guests



\* \* \* \* \*

## Kriegy Bios

For families considering writing a biography on their Kriegy family member, we thought it might be helpful for you to read a family-written bio of one of our Kriegies. Sharon Franklin Hutchison, daughter of the late Kriegy Isaac "Ike" Franklin wrote the following and has given us permission to print it in this ITEM. Formatting is somewhat different than her original, but the content is all there.

### **Ike Franklin, Prisoner of War**

By his daughter, Sharon Franklin  
Hutchison for the Lucretia Council Cochran  
Chapter, DAR



Ike Franklin was an enlisted man in an officers' prison camp. It is not altogether clear how or why he got there, but it has been speculated that his services as a medic were useful to the Germans. For whatever reason, Oflag 64 in Szubin, Poland was my father's residence for over a year and a half during World War II.

I was 16 months old when he shipped out with the Texas 36th Division of the U.S. Army, formerly the Texas National Guard. After a short time in North Africa, on September 9, 1943 the 36th was involved in a beach landing at Paestum, Italy, on the Gulf of Salerno. (The 36th was the first American combat division to land on the continent of Europe.)



This campaign is described in the book **Salerno, A Military Fiasco** by the British author Eric Morris. It certainly proved to be a fiasco for my dad, because that is where he

was captured. After five almost sleepless days and nights of picking up bodies of the dead and wounded, and having narrowly escaped death twice, his luck ran out around midnight on September 14. A detailed description of his capture is recorded in the book by Eric Morris, who came to the States around 1980 to interview several ex P.O.W.s including my dad. Within hours of being captured, German officials tried to convince him to renounce his citizenship and join forces with the Third Reich. The Gestapo already knew that he had a wife and two small children in Fort Worth, Texas and even told him our street address. "Your grandmother is German," they said, "and you are fighting your own people." When he refused to be intimidated, saying he was proud his ancestors had the good sense to leave Germany and go to America, they broke his nose and kicked his teeth out. He was soon on his way to Oflag 64.

For the next eight months, my mother and my grandparents had no information as to his whereabouts – thus the designation MIA – Missing in Action. I can only speculate as to the effect this had on me, because I was too young to be aware of such things as war. I only recall feeling secure and loved, although the adults in the household must have been nearly frantic with worry. I was fortunate to live in a loving home with my dad's parents and his maternal grandmother during this time, along with my mother and brother. I learned later that both my mother and grandmother worked as seamstresses to assist in the war effort and also to help support the family, but I have no recollection of their being away. They must have taken turns caring for me. (I was nearly four when Daddy came home from the war.)

Eventually, word came through the American Red Cross that my dad had been

located at Oflag 64. The term Stalag is more familiar than Oflag, due to publicity in books and movies such as "The Great Escape." Tunneling efforts were carried out in most prison camps, including Oflag 64. A good source of information about the day-to-day life in prison camps can be found in the book *The Welcome Swede*, which describes the work of the War Prisoners Aid, International YMCA and Red Cross in obtaining needed supplies and items that made life less miserable. It was long after the war, in fact long after my father passed away, that I learned of the sporting events, arts and craft classes, libraries, orchestra, glee club, newspaper, theatrical productions, and religious services in Oflag 64. This information cast an altogether different light on how I envisioned prison life. These were aspects of P.O.W. camps that might appear to be "fun and games," but in reality, they served two purposes: maintaining the prisoners' sanity, and creating a distraction while tunneling efforts were going on.

Communications between prisoners and their families were few and far between. Postcards, but not letters, could be sent from the camp, scrutinized carefully by German guards before they received the official Oflag 64 stamp of approval. One well-known fellow prisoner was Amon Carter, Jr., whose father, the publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, invited my granddad to visit him at his office anytime he wanted to "talk about their boys" or to just sit quietly and reflect.

My father probably suffered from what today we would call PTSD, but while I was growing up it just seemed that he occasionally withdrew into his own private world of sadness. Three events were significant in changing that in his latter years. The first occurred after I had graduated from college. I was visiting my parents who were living in Corpus Christi at the time, and a friend happened to be vacationing there at the same time, so my parents invited him over for dinner. I had told him that my dad had been a P.O.W., but it didn't occur to me to mention that the subject was "verboten." Innocently, my friend said, "Well, Mr. Franklin, I'm thinking about going to school in Germany, and I understand you spent

some time there, so I was wondering if you could tell me about your experiences." After I crawled out from under the table, I was delighted to see my dad light up and start telling stories I had never heard. He told of being crammed into a boxcar for eight days with other prisoners. He also told the story of "The Long, Cold March" when he spotted a pair of boots in the ditch, and at the risk of being shot, he stepped out of line to pick them up. His own were worn out, and he was willing to take the risk. The evening turned out to be quite pleasant and a much-needed catharsis for the suppressed memories held for so many years.

The second turning point was the television series "Hogan's Heroes." When it first came out, I was dreading my dad stumbling onto it. I figured it would upset him to see a comedy making light of such a dark subject, but he actually loved the show and looked forward to seeing it every week. He laughed out loud for the first time in a long, long while. Enough distance had passed that it was a good experience for him and played a big part in his healing process.

The third turning point occurred after my mother passed away and my dad remarried. His new wife required a lot of social activity and encouraged him to get more involved with the American Ex-Prisoners of War. Within a year or two of the war's end, Daddy had gone to a few reunions of his old Army buddies in the 36th Division, and he had maintained several close friendships, but he seemed to experience a new birth with Sybil by his side. She enjoyed spending time with her new friends in the Ex-P.O.W. auxiliary, and Daddy became very involved in various roles as Commander, Chaplain, and newsletter editor. I helped him with the newsletter, and noticed how enthusiastic and full of life he had become. But nothing compared to what I saw when he served as national chairman of the ex-P.O.W. convention held in Fort Worth in 1981. It was hard for him to contain himself when a new idea would hit his brilliant mind and he had to rush off to make it happen.

Daddy's latter years were a mixture of organizational work, illness, travel to



reunions, and then adjusting to the loss of his second wife to the same disease that had taken my mother. He was able to enjoy 18 years of retirement from his work as a systems analyst for the Army Corps of Engineers. I knew that he was a genius, but I didn't realize until after his death that he was more important than I thought he was! In preparing his obituary for the newspaper, I found the book that recorded his burial plans and wishes, and saw that he had been Chief of the Systems Branch of the Corps in Fort Worth. Thinking it was a typo, I did him a disservice and wrote that he had been "a chief", not THE Chief. Later I found his retirement papers and regretted that I had not known more about his work. Even in his retirement, he stayed connected to computers, and owned some of the first personal computers on the market. In fact, I am indebted to him for giving me my first computer and insisting that I learn to use it. This was long before the internet, and I believed that the computer age had passed me by. Daddy enjoyed dialing up to an online information service and playing dominoes with unseen friends half a country away. He would be totally blown away by today's internet, smart phones, and all the other technology that has developed since his death in 1990.

A couple of years before his death, I asked my dad to write the story of his military experiences, and he did – on his Commodore 128 – and printed it on a dot matrix printer. His typical dry sense of humor came through loud and clear. In describing his ocean voyage overseas, he said he was seasick only once -- from the time they boarded ship till they arrived 13 days later. He also said "I was not a private as long as some fellows, but I was a private more often than most of them." It was a streak of insubordination that took him up and down the ranks several times, and I honestly don't know whether I should think of him as a sergeant or a private. But his memoirs disappointed me in one way – there was a large gap between September 14, 1943, and April 22, 1945. He described in full detail his Army career before his capture and after being liberated from prison camp by the Russians, but for the time in between,

he said "that's a story to be told another day."

One of the ways my dad dealt with his P.O.W memories was by honoring his Army buddies and raising money for monuments in Paestum, Italy; Fort Worth; and Brownwood, Texas. The one in Brownwood was dedicated



just a few days after his death in 1990. He was also instrumental in petitioning Congress to issue a P.O.W. Medal that was finally approved (retroactive to 1917) in 1985. In so doing, the thousands of brave men who survived the camps were finally recognized

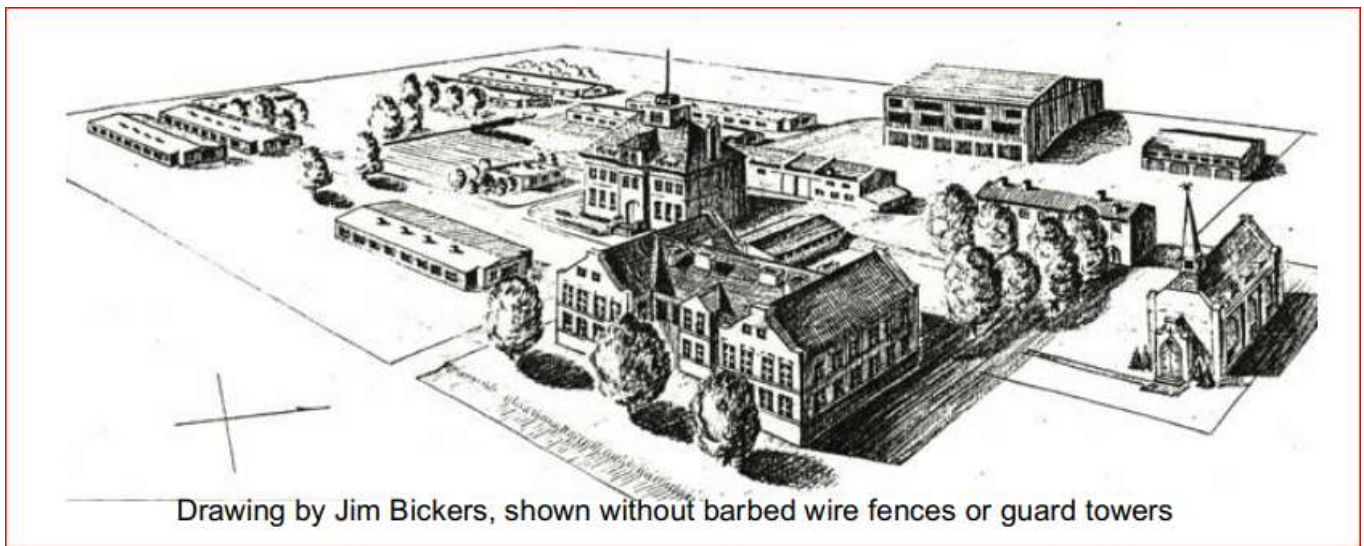
for their service. There remains much unknown about the atrocities of life in a P.O.W. camp, but there was a bond between comrades that would last for the rest of their lives. When my dad was dying in the Veterans Hospital in Dallas, he was visited by his friend Col. Roy Chappell, a fellow Oflag 64 resident who had been involved in a couple of escape attempts. (Daddy was unconscious and within hours of passing.) Describing the visit, Roy said he just stood at the bedside and wept.

Sgt. Ike Franklin, aka PFC Ike Franklin, was a survivor. Some people, including his doctor, called him "a tough old bird." The inhumane conditions of P.O.W. camp caused health problems for the rest of his life. He was a very tall man, 6'5", but returned from the war weighing 110 pounds. As a medic, he had cared for many other prisoners who suffered from malaria, dysentery, near starvation and other debilitating conditions. The last six weeks of his life were spent in the VA Hospital, a place he had successfully avoided since the war. He described it to me and my brother as a place where old soldiers go to die. He finally checked in for "the last roundup" (his words) because he had run out of options. He just needed to be cared for. A few days after his death, I ran into his internist who had not heard the news. The doctor asked how he was doing, and when I told him my dad had passed away, he looked genuinely surprised. "I guess I really didn't think he would ever die. He was such a survivor."

It has now been seventy five years since Oflag 64, and a permanent museum is in the process of being put together in Szubin, Poland, in the one remaining building that once housed American officers as “guests of the Germans.” Much can be learned about Oflag 64 by visiting the website oflag64.us, maintained by family members of some of the ex-P.O.W.s. Perhaps the experience can best be summed up in the words of Col. Thomas Drake, himself a prisoner and the Senior American Officer of Oflag 64:

*“Let no man believe that there is a stigma attached to having been honorably taken captive in battle. Only the fighting man ever gets close enough to the enemy for that to happen. That he is not listed among the slain is due to the infinite care of providence. Be proud that you carried yourselves as men in battle and adversity. You will be enriched thereby.”*

Drawing of Oflag 64 campgrounds. A Polish boys’ school had been converted to barracks to house over 1400 American officers and a few enlisted men.



This hand-carved wooden box was made by a fellow P.O.W. at Oflag 64 and given to Ike Franklin. The design is made of thinly sliced match sticks. It was probably made in an “Arts and Crafts” activity, closely supervised by German guards.





THE VICE PRESIDENT  
WASHINGTON

June 6, 1981

Mr. Ike Franklin  
2005 Grand View Drive  
Fort Worth, TX 76112

Dear Mr. Franklin:

Greetings on the occasion of the 34th  
National Convention of Ex-Prisoners-of-War, Inc.

Certainly there are never words adequate  
enough to express the appreciation that all  
Americans owe you. Your display of courage --  
your endurance of suffering and pain -- your  
willingness to sacrifice for your country -- all  
are indicative of the price you paid to preserve  
our freedom.

Your presence here today is a testament  
to your fortitude and inner strength -- and I  
join with all Americans in saluting you.

Barbara joins with me in extending our  
very best wishes for a most happy reunion. Our  
thoughts are with you.

Sincerely,  
  
George Bush

Article in the Arlington Daily  
News on July 7, 1982

**Arlington Daily News**  
Arlington's Only Local Daily Newspaper

Circulation 400-430      Founded 1948      VOLUME 21 - NUMBER 132 - ARLINGTON, TEXAS - Wednesday, July 7, 1982      24 Pages      4 Sections      15¢

## Ex-POWs oppose military action

By MARTY WIEDER  
Daily News Staff Writer

Frank McDaniel told a small crowd outside Arlington city hall Tuesday that the American Ex-Prisoners of War are a close knit group.

"But we hope we don't grow," McDaniel said.

Shortly after the 1 p.m. flag raising ceremony honoring POW's and those missing in action, the commander of the American Ex-Prisoners of War Fort Worth Chapter learned of the United States' plan to send 1,000 Marines to Lebanon.

"We haven't got any business over there," McDaniel said. "What do we think we can do? I surely don't agree with it."

McDaniel and several Arlington members of the Ex-POW's attended the ceremony to proclaim July 5 through 9 "POW/MIA Week" in Arlington.

Councilman Leo Berman, former mayor Tom Vandegriff and Ken Baldwin, substituting for Rep. Martin Frost, spoke to the gathering. Mayor S.J. Stovall presented the proclamation to McDaniel.

McDaniel, who was held prisoner three-and-one-half-years in the Philippines during World War II, said he feared U.S. intervention in Beirut would cause the war to grow.

"We were in World War II, Korea and Vietnam," he said. "Didn't we learn something?"

Chaplain Ike Franklin, who gave the invocation following Berman's introduction, disagreed.

"If we need to be there to preserve peace, we'll then fire," Franklin said.

Berman, a retired Army colonel who spent two years in Vietnam, said Arlington has many reasons to honor the more than 1,000 men still thought to be missing or held prisoner.

"We sit in an area between two military installations -- Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth and the Naval Air Station in Dallas," said Berman. "And we literally have thousands of ex-military people in the metropolises."

Berman was credited with first requesting the special week.

After the presentation of the proclamation, the 1st Troop, 3rd Squadron 16th Cavalry Regiment of the Texas Army National Guard presented the colors. Lt. Col. John Yull, a former Vietnam POW who was shot down in a B-52, raised the black flag bearing the words "They shall not be forgotten."


Following the Pledge of Allegiance a ritual horn played the national anthem.

President Ronald Reagan has designated July 9 as National POW/MIA Day.

The city of Arlington plans to raise the POW/MIA flag each year to remember the war veterans, Berman said.

**CALL TO THE COLORS** - Ike Franklin, Chaplain of the American Ex-POW's Fort Worth Chapter, salutes as the color guard raises the POW/MIA flag. Mayor S.J. Stovall declared July 5-9 "POW/MIA Week" during the proclamation ceremony Tuesday.

Daily News Photo by ED CUMMIS



# CAPTURED

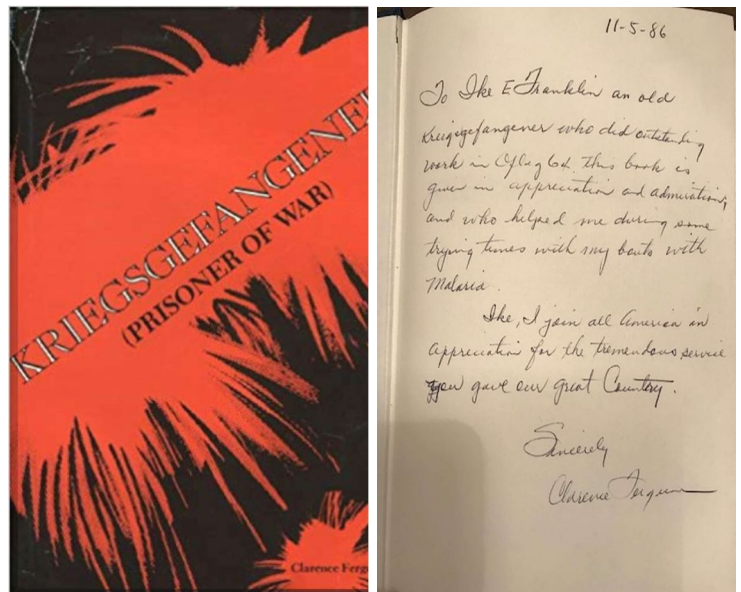
In Ike Franklin's own words  
(excerpted from his military memoirs)

## THE INFERNO OF SALERNO


In early September, I think it was the fifth or sixth, we sailed toward our baptism of fire. The Salerno landing was a surprise operation (to everyone but the Jerrys). They had dug their self-propelled 88-MM guns into the side of Mont Soprano and were zeroed in on the beaches. We landed near the town of Paestum, where there was an ancient Greek temple of the goddess Diana. Boy, did they paste us! Casualties were high on both sides, and it was about a week before the beachhead was firmly established. By that time, I had been told 'for you, the war is over.'

At the town of Altavilla where Commando Kelley won his Congressional Medal of Honor (the first issued to an American on European soil in WWII), I was captured by the Germans. I was serving as liaison agent for my collecting company (C, 111th Medical Battalion) with the Third Battalion aid station of the 143rd RCT (Regimental Combat Team) and when the litter section of the aid station was cut off, I took a couple of litter squads from our ambulances and furnished litter bearers from the front lines to the aid station. When the Third Battalion infantrymen withdrew, we medics stayed behind to care for the wounded. About midnight a German patrol overran and captured us. For the next twenty months I was held Prisoner of War but that is another story, and I will not trouble you with it now...

Signed book by POW Clarence Ferguson, a  
Kriegy from another POW Camp



Article in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram on November 28, 1945



**PHOTOS SHOW DIFFERENCE**—Pfc. I. Earl Franklin of Fort Worth, left, as he appeared shortly before going overseas with the 36th Division, and at right, as he was photographed in a Nazi prisoner of war camp.

### Prison Camp Thanksgiving Of Starving Men Is Recalled

On Thanksgiving of 1944, Pfc. I. Earl Franklin and his buddies in a German prison camp were so near starvation they roasted a cat and called it rabbit; they ate stale bread and called it plum pudding.

On Thanksgiving Day 1945, Franklin, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Franklin and husband of Mrs. Mamie Ruth Franklin, 2402 NW 27th, ate real turkey at William Beaumont General Hospital, El Paso, where he is recovering.

Of that prison camp Thanksgiving, Franklin said that he and his buddies, though faint from hunger, carried out their observance as best they could.

"Out of starvation and suffering, freedom took on a new light," he said. "We were thankful for the feeble spark of life left us. The experience will forever make us thankful for simple things we used to take for granted—the right to eat, to work and to sleep."

Franklin served with the 11th Medical Detachment of the 36th Division, and was captured in Italy in September 1943. For 20 months he was imprisoned in various German camps. Shortly after his capture, Nazi officers suggested to Franklin that he join the "Free American" group, composed of Americans of German descent, to assist the enemy on the Eastern Front.

"They told me they knew my maternal grandmother was German-born, and they accused me of fighting her people and said I was ashamed of my heritage," Franklin said.

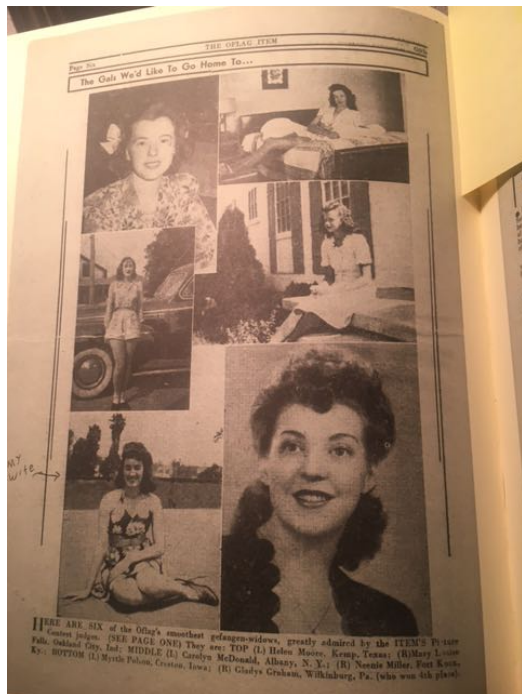
"I refused to join the group. I told them I was not ashamed of my heritage, but proud that my ancestors had had sense enough to go to America."

That remark cost Franklin. The angry Gestapo beat him, knocked out his teeth and crushed his nose. He was treated in a German hospital where the diagnosis on his chart was "bronchitis."

"This Thanksgiving I am just thankful to be alive," he said, "and grateful that my two children, Morton Lee and Sharon Ruth, and my wife and parents, live in a country where there is liberty to believe and speak freely."

This scanned photo from the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book was sent by Warren Jones. His mom is pictured at the lower left of the October 1944 Issue of the ITEM.

These artifacts, used by her dad during the war, were recently sent to the Artifacts Committee by Judy Fletcher.



This “new-to-us” photo was sent by David Glendinning. Included in the photo standing left to right are: John Glendinning (David’s dad), next one is unknown, Lou Otterbein-center, next one is unknown, and Larry Phelan. Kneeling right is Ray Goad, kneeling left is unknown. The production was “Seventh Man”. If you can identify those who are “unknown” to us, please let us know.



This photo was sent by Cindy Sharpe Burgess. It was taken at a small get-together of Kriegies in 1981. Those in the photo include from left to right: Frank Diggs, her dad Bill Sharpe, Herb Garris, George Juskalian, and Vincent “Doc” Di Francesco. *What a distinguished-looking group!*

Thanks to Ben Chappell for this photo of his mom, Helen Chappell, on her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in January. (Looking young as ever.) Ben wrote that she is still doing very well, that they had a great time together, and that she was thrilled when she learned about the biographies being written. Helen and her husband, Roy, attended many Oflag 64 Reunions.



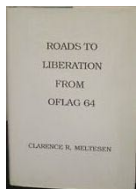
# Publications

**We're currently looking for a copy of each of the following.** Please let us know if you find one or have one to donate.

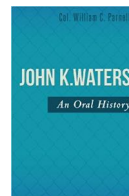
- *"Country boy infantry: "The Blue Devils" 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 1944-1945" by the late Kriegy Carey E. Ashcraft, Jan. 1, 1987*
- *"My World War II Experiences" by the late Kriegy Donald Lussenden*
- *"People Too" by the late Kriegy William H. Schaefer*
- *"The Colonel" by the late Kriegy James F. Skells*
- *Milton E. Dowse – 3D copy of online publication*

**If you are looking for any of the following, please contact.....**

Marilyn Kanners Beckham (Vic's daughter) for a copy of **Vic Kanners Diary**, 3608 W BRADFORD DR, BLOOMFIELD HILLS MI 48301-3353. [beckhammarilyn@hotmail.com](mailto:beckhammarilyn@hotmail.com)



*Lynne Meltesen, daughter of the late Kriegy Clarence Meltesen, has sent us a few more copies of his fantastic resource book, "Roads to Liberation". If you would like a copy, please contact [Elodie Caldwell](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us) at [elodie@oflag64.us](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us). The book is available at no charge but you are asked to pay for S & H. (Thank you Meltesen family for this service.)*



Pat Waters, son of the late Kriegy John Waters, sent several copies of the "**John K. Waters Story**" which can be purchased by contacting [Elodie Caldwell](mailto:Elodie Caldwell), \$15.99 includes S&H. Please write your check to the Oflag 64 Postage Fund. (Thank you, Pat, for sending these copies.)

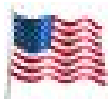
# TAPS

*Marvin R. Drum*

*1922 ~ 2003*

DRUM, MARVIN R., born February 4, 1922 passed away in his home December 14, 2003. Lifelong resident of Garland, Texas he was preceded in death by his wife of 57 years Marybelle and his son Tommy R. Drum. He is survived by his daughters, Jody Wade and Sandy Woodfin, along with 6 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren. He was a former Student of Texas A&M/Class of '44, former [Hammelburg] POW during WWII with the 12th Armored Division, and a member of the First Christian Church of Rowlett.

Marvin's complete obituary was published in the Dallas Morning News (2003)



*Warren Richard Ohlhorst*

*2021*

No obituary is available but the following notice was published in the Logan Herald Journal in Logan UT on January 26, 2021.

Warren Richard Ohlhorst, 98, died on Thursday, January 21, 2021, in Wellsville, Utah. Arrangements were by Allen-Hall Mortuary



Published by HJnews.com

# *James Franklin Ralstin*

2008

Ralstin, James F., 88, retired geologist, died Friday, November 14, 2008. Funeral service will be held 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 18, 2008 at Plymouth Congregational Church, 202 N. Clifton. He was an Army Ranger during World War II and was captured by German forces at the landing at Anzio and assault at Cisterna. While he was a POW, Jim escaped and spent over three months eluding his captors in Poland and Russia, prior to the end of the war.



Jim was a pilot and an avid outdoorsman, enjoying hunting, fishing and playing polo throughout the world. He was a longtime member and Past President of Fairfield Polo Club. He was a member of Wichita Lodge #99, Wichita Consistory and Scottish Rite, a Past Potentate of Midian Shrine and Royal Order of Jesters.

Survivors include his wife, Anna, son, Dr. James Ralstin and wife Mary Ca of Shawnee, KS, daughter, Terry Ralstin-Hamlin and husband Mel of Raleigh, NC, step daughters, Valerie Marsters of Wichita and Barbara Canevari of Granite Bay CA, step son, Bill Bloss of Idaho, brother, Robert Ralstin of Wichita; six grandchildren, Laura Hamlin-Stanley, John Hamlin, Mary Ralstin, Rebecca Ralstin, James Ralstin and Allison Ralstin; three step-grandchildren, Bill Hepworth, Joyce Winters and Cheri Villa.

He was preceded in death by his daughter, Mary Ralstin and son Russell "Rusty" Ralstin, and sister, Margaret Mobley. Memorials have been established in his name with Plymouth Congregational Church, American Cancer Society and Midian Shrine Plane of Mercy.

Published by the Cochran Mortuary & Crematory

# *James Alva Rightley*

1920 ~ 2020

Former German POW and Albuquerque native James Alva Rightley passed away peacefully on Monday, August 25, with his wife and daughter at his side. He was 95.

He was predeceased by his two sons, Ronald and Damon Rightley, mother Mary

Sullivant Rightley, father Alva Edward Rightley and brother Edward C. Rightley.

James was born on March 18, 1920, and lived in Madrid, New Mexico until he was 3 at which time his father was killed in a coal mining accident in Madrid. James, Edward and their mother then returned to Albuquerque where both boys grew up, graduating from "old" Albuquerque High School in 1938 and 1939.

James is survived by his wife of 59 years, Patsy Rightley; daughter Candance Moore (husband Thomas Moore) and son Keith Rightley. He is also survived by his beloved 11 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and many nieces and nephews. He was deeply loved and admired by all who knew him. He shared a brilliant sense of humor, gentle kindness and a kinship with the angels.

James worked at the Albuquerque Little Theater during high school and after WWII during college. He was a member of the National Guard, Co. "D", 120th Engineers from 1937 - 1940. He began his federal service at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, completed OCS in 1942 as a 2nd Lieutenant and eventually completed the Parachute School Jump Course in Fort Benning, GA, after which he was shipped overseas to North Africa as a 1st Lieutenant with the Army 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion of the 82nd Airborne Division, Co. "B". He engaged in several skirmishes and battles and made at least 4 combat jumps. The jumps were in Sicily, Naples, Foggia and Normandy where he participated in Operation Neptune (part of Operation Overlord). He was shot and captured by the Germans within 2 days of his drop into Normandy. He spent 9 months at OFLAG 64 at Szubin, Poland, until January 1945 at which time he effected a successful escape.



He walked across much of war-torn Poland led from village to village by the men from each particular village, housed and fed each night by someone in each village, sleeping in barns, attics and homes. During his life he never forgot the Polish citizens and credited them with his life. He eventually made his way to Odessa, Poland, where he met up with Allied troops and was shipped back to the US. He left active duty in 1946.

For his service, James was promoted to Captain after his escape and throughout his overseas time was awarded a Purple Heart, Distinguished Unit Badge (he was the Unit Commander - 1339), American Theater Service



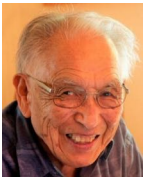
Medal, European African Middle Eastern Service Medal with 3 Bronze Stars and 1 Bronze Arrowhead and the World War II Victory Medal. He was discharged in 1946 after almost 2 years overseas and 2 more years in the US.

Services for James were held on Friday, September 11, 9:30 am, at Grace Church, 6901 San Antonio Dr., Albuquerque, NM, 87109, (corner of Louisiana and San Antonio) followed by interment at Santa Fe National Cemetery.

James' complete obituary was published in the Albuquerque Journal on Sep. 9, 2015.

## *James Nobuo Yamazaki*

1916 ~ 2021



James Nobuo Yamazaki, 104, peacefully stepped away from this life, in his White Salmon, Wash., home March 5, 2021, the seventh anniversary of his sweet wife Aki's passing.

His extraordinary life began, July 6, 1916, in Los Angeles, born to Rev. John Misao and Mary Tsune Yamazaki. Growing up, he stayed busy with attending (and cleaning) St. Mary's Episcopal Church, school, sports, playing in the actual L.A. river, going to the beach, Boy Scouts, ROTC and even learning to play the trombone. James graduated from L.A. High, [UCLA](#), and was attending Marquette University Medical School, when he received his commission to the Army a week before Pearl Harbor. After finishing his Internship, he was assigned to be the lone Asian and Battalion surgeon for the 590th Artillery Battalion in the 106th Infantry Division.

After a whirlwind romance, Jim married Aki Hirashiki while at Medical Field Service School. Months later, James had to leave a pregnant Aki to ship out to Europe. He was captured at Battle of the Bulge, marched and bombed while transported in trains, hundreds of miles, to POW camps. He witnessed the mutilated Wereth Eleven being buried by kind Belgium farmers. Another farmer fed and sheltered him and the wounded soldiers he accompanied on their long winter march.

Upon completion of his military commitment, Jim and Aki moved to Philadelphia then Cincinnati for his pediatric residencies at the prestigious Children's Hospitals. Residency

complete, he was recruited to study the effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan with the ABCC (US Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission). With newborn son, Paul, they traveled to Hiroshima, but they were not allowed to live in the English Military compound because they were of Japanese heritage. Consequently, transferred to Nagasaki, where James was Physician in Charge, setting up the initial studies of children and fetus exposed to the radiation of the bomb, an experience that would convince him that nuclear weapons should never be used again, a message he reiterated for the rest of his life.

In 2007, Jim and Aki left their Van Nuys home of 55 years to move closer to family in Washington. Their marriage would last just shy of 70 years and as Jim would say "Not just 70 years, 70 GOOD years." He was preceded in death by Aki, son Noel, grandson Masami, his siblings John (Fumi), Peter (Joy) and Louise, as well as most of his generation friends.

This remarkable man's life touched so many. He will be deeply missed but his life fully revered and celebrated by his son Paul (Sara) of San Francisco, daughters Katharine of Taos, New Mexico, and Caroline (Brad) Roberts of White Salmon; grandchildren Yuki (Andrew) Romero, Taro, Mariko, Jazmin (Austin) Krentz and Taniya; seven great-grandchildren; many nieces, nephews, cousins, his loving caregivers and countless friends of all ages.

James requested that no services be held, nor flowers or koden sent.

James' complete obituary was published in [columbiagorgeneews.com](#) [James was a Hammelburg Kriegy.]

\*\*\*\*\*

## *Jimmie Kanaya*

1920 ~ 2019



Jimmie Kanaya, Col. USA. Ret. was laid to rest with Honors at [Arlington National Cemetery](#) on June 30, 2021. His obituary was printed in a previous ITEM. Members of our Oflag 64 Family were present at the service to honor Jimmie and support his widow, Lynn. See photos and a description of the day's events in the Kriegy News and Information Section.



**Friends of Oflag 64, Inc., Artifact Donation Form**

A 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization

EIN: #84-1889226

**Friends of Oflag 64** supports the **Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin** by fundraising, collecting artifacts, publicizing and promoting the museum of POWs, so that the history of the POW camps in Szubin and the courageous Polish citizens who assisted them will be preserved for generations to come.

Donor name:

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Address:

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Phone:

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Kriegy (POW) Name and Relationship:

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**Friends of Oflag 64** only accepts artifacts from donors who acknowledge they have full ownership status of the artifact at the time of donation. This document will serve as that acknowledgment and as substantiation of your donation. No goods or services were provided to you in return for your donation of the artifact.

**Please retain a copy of all pages of this document for your records and tax purposes. Also send a copy to accompany your artifacts(s) to:**

Dave Stewart  
[DSLVTX@gmail.com](mailto:DSLVTX@gmail.com)  
7903 Diamond Trail  
Lago Vista, TX 78645-4446

All donated artifacts will become the property of the **Friends of Oflag 64**.

**A copy of this document will accompany the transfer of these artifacts to the *Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin* as outlined in the Partnership Agreement signed between *Friends of Oflag 64* and the Foundation. The data will be shared with the Foundation and not with any other entities.\***

**The sharing of personal data is voluntary. If you wish to opt out, please initial below.**

**Opt Out \_\_\_\_\_**

Donor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Artifacts Committee Acceptance Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Additional information may be found at: [www.friendsofotlag64.org/artifacts](http://www.friendsofotlag64.org/artifacts) - FOUNDATION INFORMATION CLAUSES.*

*\*The Polish-American Foundation's Personal Data Processing Policy is in accordance with the regulations of the European Parliament and the Council (UE) 2016/679 of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regards to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC, known as "General Data Protection Regulation."*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Explanation or story of artifact: \_\_\_\_\_

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