

# The

# Post Oflag 64 Item

All the News That's  
Been Geprüft

Nearly Everybody  
Reads THE ITEM

“Get Wise – ITEM-ize”

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2022

Good Ole USA

Of Undetermined Worth

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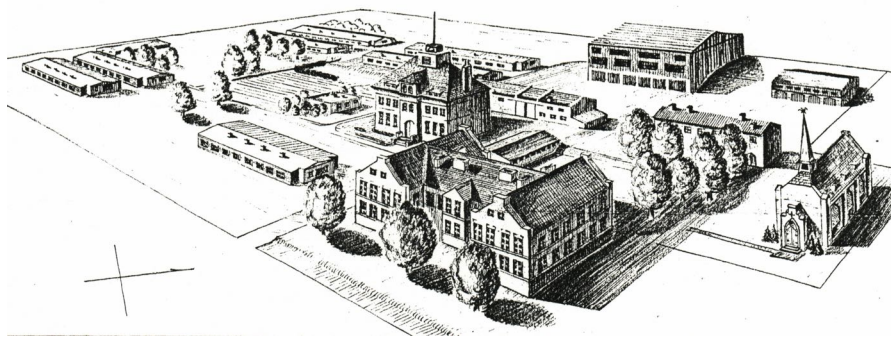
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We apologize to any others we may have overlooked and thank all who have contacted us.

*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

## WANTED: Oflag 64 Artifacts

After WWII, your Kriegy most likely brought home a number of wartime artifacts. In many cases, these artifacts were stored in safe places, usually in closets or trunks, but were rarely put on shelves for display. In recent years, many Kriegy families as they have gone through their Kriegy's belongings, have found these treasured artifacts.

We're aware that the artifacts are precious and have sentimental value to our Kriegy families, but as future generations lose interest in past wars, the artifacts as they are passed down will become less and less important. Some may end up in antique shops or in thrift stores or even thrown away. The Tin Store (our temporary museum) located on the site of Oflag 64 is the perfect place to display these invaluable historical items. Please consider donating your Kriegy's artifacts to the Friends of Oflag 64 Artifacts Committee.

All donated artifacts will be scanned or photographed by Artifacts Committee personnel prior to being carefully packed for shipment to Szubin. Any written history of the artifact would be greatly appreciated, but please do not attach anything sticky (like a Post-It) to the artifact as the glue may damage the artifact. All artifacts will be appropriately packaged - for example, paper items are stored in clear acid-free plastic sleeves - and each artifact is given a unique inventory ID number which will also identify the donor. All donations must be accompanied by two copies of the donation form accessible at this link: <https://bit.ly/3yZcnBd>. If you have questions, please contact Dave Stewart, Artifacts Committee Chairman, at: [dslvtx@gmail.com](mailto:dslvtx@gmail.com).

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**Oflag 64**



# A Little Company Business

## Many Thanks

We wish to express our continued gratitude to Minuteman Press for their ongoing excellent service in printing our ITEM each quarter. The quality of their printing and the timeliness in which the ITEM is printed is very much appreciated. Thank you Mike Vorse, Nate Howe, and Samantha Lemire!!!



And MANY THANKS to Ric Kolseth, our POW Database manager, for uploading the changes we frequently send to him. Please check the website POW Database page to make sure your Kriegy's information is correct and as complete as possible.

## 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

## 2nd Qtr. PF Contributions

**Kate Hartford**  
(in memory of her dad  
Dallas C. Hartford)

**Anne Kreutzer**  
**Lucy Lussenden**  
**Annette Nelson**

(in memory of her late husband  
Dick Secor)

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/cont-act-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 many ways.

THANKS to all who donate to our various Oflag 64 funds.

## Website Updates and Additions



If you haven't had an opportunity to visit our Oflag 64 Remembered website for a while, at [www.oflag64.us](http://www.oflag64.us), please visit it

again and take a look at What's New!

If your Kriegy kept a journal that you're not yet ready to donate, we would appreciate having scans of the pages for future museum displays. These will help put pieces of the whole Kriegy puzzle together.

We frequently receive notice that a Kriegy has passed away. The online TAPS list is updated each time we receive those notices.

Please check to make sure your Kriegy's name is there and that the information is correct.

\* \* \* \* \*

## National POW/MIA Recognition Day



Coming up on Friday September 16, and for the third year in a row, volunteers from Friends of Oflag 64 will commemorate National POW/MIA Recognition Day by placing daisies and American flags on the Arlington National Cemetery gravesites of OFLAG 64 Kriegies. If you would like to add an Oflag 64 Kriegy's name to our list to honor, please email Anne Kreutzer at:

[annekreutzer@hotmail.com](mailto:annekreutzer@hotmail.com).

If your Kriegy was interred elsewhere and you are honoring him with daisies and a flag, please take a photo and send to Anne at the email address above.

## Contact Us

Elodie: [elodie@oflag64.us](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us)  
Bill: [webmaster@oflag64.us](mailto:webmaster@oflag64.us)



# MAIL CALL



*It's always a great pleasure hearing from our Kriegies, Kriegy families and friends during each quarter. Some were contacted by us initially, some were new to our Oflag 64 Family, some had information to share, some thanked us for our website and for providing a source of information for them, some had questions, and some just wanted to say hello and wish us well. [Thanks so much to the following for keeping us in "your" loop and for sending information. We love reading about how and what you are doing. Please stay safe and well!](#)*

**Glenn Burgess**, son in law of **Kriegy Wilbur Sharpe** – received a message from a person in the Netherlands who would like more information on Kriegy Vernon L. Blank; if you have information to share, please contact me and I will pass it on

**Tom Cobb**, son of the late **Kriegy George A. Cobb** – has been working with Ann Rogers, one of our researchers on completing his dad's bio; he sent compliments to Ann for her wonderful work and will send photos to add to the biography as soon as he is able

**Susanna Bolten Connaughton**, daughter of the late **Kriegy Seymour Bolten** and **Vice President of the Board of the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin** – wrote to thank us for sending information requested as work progresses on The Tin Store and future museum projects

**Michelle Higgins Craig**, daughter of the late **Kriegy William F. Higgins** – sent information about her dad's WWII history; William was one of the few flyers held at Oflag 64

**Steven M. Fisher**, son of the late **Kriegy Leo W. Fisher** – has been looking for information on his dad for some time; he expressed thanks for the new information recently sent

**Peter P. Gaich**, son of the late **Kriegy Peter N. Gaich** – sent consent to use his dad's Veterans History Project materials; he also has documents, letters, newspaper articles that he might be able to donate to the future museum

**Kate Hartford**, daughter of the late **Kriegy Dallas C. Hartford** – wrote to thank us for providing the content for the website which has been so helpful to her in reconstructing her father's experiences; she would like to get in touch with other offspring of Kriegies who had PTSD so if you would like to contact her, please let us know; she also sent a generous donation to the Postage Fund in memory of her dad (Thanks so much Kate)

**Lynn Kanaya**, widow of the late **Kriegy Jimmie Kanaya** – sent a transcript of Jimmie's Memorial Day Tribute which took place at Arlington National Cemetery this year (see the Kriegy News and Information Section)

**Anne Hoskot Kreutzer**, daughter of the late **Kriegy Nathaniel R. Hoskot** – wrote asking for a copy of the John Waters' book; she also sent more information about her dad, compliments on the ITEM, and a generous contribution to the Postage Fund (Thanks so much Anne)

**Lucy Lussenden**, widow of the late **Kriegy Donald Lussenden** – sent a sweet note with compliments on the ITEM along with a generous donation to the Postage Fund (Thanks so much Lucy)

**Margaret Spence McClone**, daughter of the late **Kriegy Leonard Spence** – continues to search for information on her dad; if your Kriegy spent time with Leonard at Oflag 64 or any time during the war, please let us know

**Annette Nelson**, widow of the late **Kriegy Richard Secor** – sent a generous contribution to the Postage Fund in memory of her late husband (Thanks so much Annette)

**Deborah Shefrin and Shari Shefrin Shryock**, daughters of the late Seymour Shefrin - wrote about donating their dad's medals to the future museum; Deborah also sent a copy of her dad's military record and report of separation

**Dave Stewart**, son of the late Kriegy Donald B. Stewart – in his work with the Kriegy Research Group has found several discrepancies in our online POW Database; thanks to him, we've been able to make the corrections (Keep up the good work Dave)

**Paul Thriffley III**, son of the late Kriegy Paul Thriffley II – wrote with new information on a couple of the Kriegies being researched by the Kriegy Research Committee for writing their biographies (Thanks so much Paul)

**Peter Waful**, son of the late Kriegy Donald Waful – in response to our request to use his father's Veteran's History Project information for future museum purposes, sent the consent form along with a nice note thanking us for "doing this"

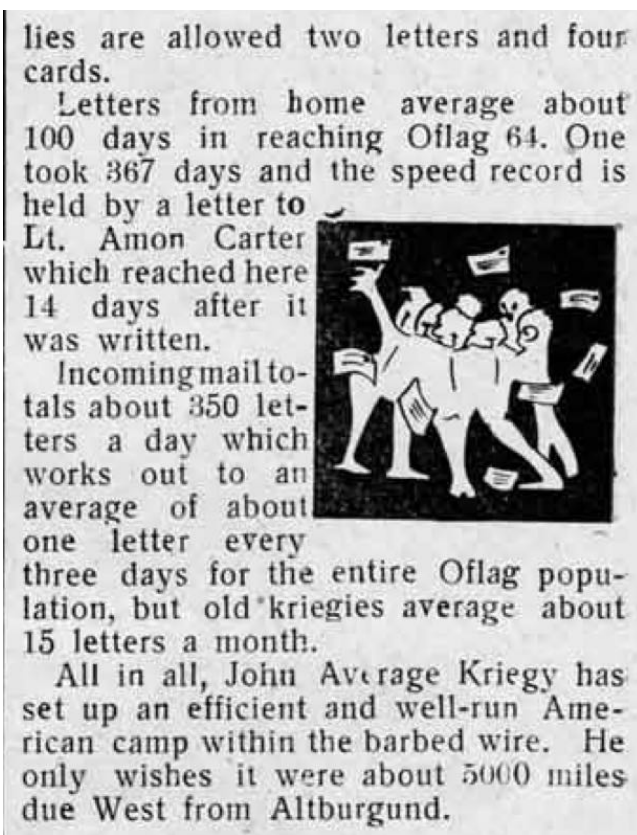
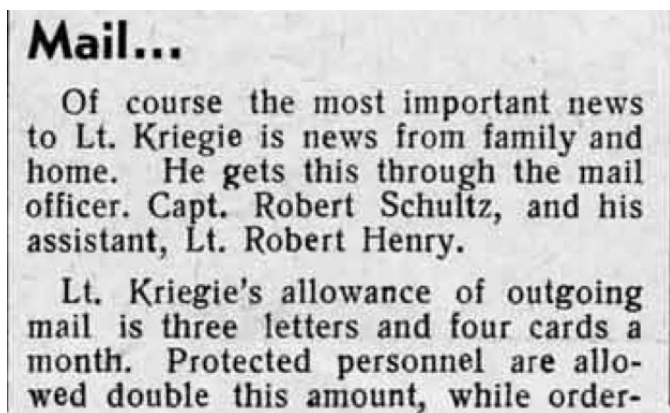
**Marvin Williams**, researcher and friend of the Oflag 64 Family – wrote with possible contact information for Charles Drake, Thomas Drake's grandson; he also sent some web links with articles and information we didn't previously have; additionally he sent a video link on Chaplain Eugene Daniel, the first US Chaplain captured by the Germans during WWII; click on this link: <https://bit.ly/3Ome5VP>

**Mariusz Winiecki**, President of the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin – wrote to thank us for sending information that will be helpful to The Tin Store and future museum projects

**Bob Winton**, son of the late Kriegy Clifford Winton – is looking for his father's obituary and will send it as soon as it's found; obituaries help us learn more about our Kriegies and write biographies for them

\* \* \* \* \*

In January 1945, not long before our Kriegies were marched out of the camp, they were surveyed about a variety of topics. One was Mail. This was what was shared in the January 1, 1945 ITEM.



\* \* \* \* \*

Please check the **Library of Congress** website at <https://bit.ly/356b4Hq> to see if your Kriegy participated in the **Veterans History Project**. If he did, we would like permission to use his video interview and/or transcripts as we help prepare for displays in the future museum. The above link takes you to my father's file (Reid Ellsworth). Just enter your Kriegy's name in his place and push enter. See the last page of this ITEM for the **Consent to Use Materials** form. Please use the same form if your Kriegy participated in any other similar project.

# Kriegy News and Information



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY



and best wishes to our great **KRIEGY PATRIOT AND HERO**



Rupert Starr - age 100

July 16

\* \* \* \* \*

### Find a Grave

Sadly, after several attempts to create our own Oflag 64/Oflag 64Z POW virtual cemetery, we are unable to do so due to restrictions placed on our project by the Find a Grave folks. We apologize, we were so hopeful. Possibly things will change in the future. Thanks to Kathy Zelazny Thomas for her tireless efforts in attempting to make things happen.

In a previous ITEM, we mentioned finding the original Oflag 64 POW virtual cemetery page on Find-A-Grave. We have since discovered that if a Kriegy already has a memorial on Find-a-Grave, to have him also showing on the Oflag 64 POW virtual cemetery, you must email the POW's Find-a-Grave number (found on the memorial page) to the creator of the virtual cemetery page and he will add the Kriegy to the list. If you don't have a burial location or number, send him the Kriegy's name and he will try to locate the Kriegy in one of the various resources at his disposal. You can reach the creator by accessing the following link.

<https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/932587?page=1#sr-40534852>

Then click on the following:



[Back to GPoppa profile](#)

**GPoppa**  
MEMBER FOR 14 years · 3 months · 12 days  
FIND A GRAVE ID 46925364

[Send Message](#) [Follow](#)

If your Kriegy isn't listed on Find-A-Grave at all, and if he made it all the way to Hammelburg, please add him to the Oflag 64 POW Memorial page by clicking on the virtual-cemetery link above.

## The Tin Store Update

In the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter ITEM, you may remember reading information about an upcoming exhibition in Szubin. Alongside that information were two photos, one of The Tin Store in 1943, where the POWs stored the tin cans they pooled from their weekly Red Cross parcels and the other dated 2022 telling of renovations of that building giving us a glimpse into the future. Since that time, you'll see that a major renovation of "The Tin Store" has taken place. We're excited to see what all will be contained therein. Below is a photo provided by The Polish American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin showing the recent renovation. The accompanying Facebook comment: "The POWs' Tin Store never looked this good." Agreed!!! Check out this link for more information and photos: <https://cutt.ly/xF8XuRv>



\* \* \* \* \*

### **Special Memorial Day Tribute to Colonel Jimmie Kanaya Held at Arlington the day before Memorial Day - 2022 (sent by Lynn Kanaya)**

Colonel Jimmie Kanaya, U.S. Army (Ret), was born on October 3, 1920, in Clackamas, Oregon, and became a three-war, decorated veteran, serving a total of 34 years.

When asked about his medals and awards, Jimmie would say, "I was just doing my job." Yet his actions on the battlefield belie his modesty; his record was exemplary. A medic in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, he received a Silver Star for evacuating the wounded on Hill 140 in Italy and Battlefield Commission from the Rome/Arno campaign for valor and gallantry in action against an enemy. For a solo evacuation of his platoon sergeant, who was mortally wounded, he received the Bronze Star with Valor, two oak leaf clusters, and a Combat Medical Badge. The Bronze Star's inscription on the back cites "meritorious and heroic achievement." His Purple Heart was earned in the Voges Mountains of France for being wounded in combat against the enemy. In that battle, Jimmie, along with others, was taken prisoner.

Most of his time as a POW was at Oflag 64, in Schubin, Poland, a camp for Army officers, where he was ruthlessly interrogated. In January 1945, ahead of the Allied advance, Kanaya and the other POWs were forced on an eight-week 400 mile death march to Oflag XIII B at Hammelburg, Germany. During the

brutal 45-day march, there was no stopping for warm fires or time to dry boots and socks. Food was minimal, and there were no medical, bathing, or hygiene supplies. Kanaya witnessed frozen hands, arms, and bodies sticking out of the snow. Boots, gloves, and other clothing were retrieved from the dead to survive. Jimmie suffered frostbite and neuropathy in his lower extremities. Kanaya was a POW until the end of World War II, all while the Kanaya family was imprisoned unconstitutionally in Minidoka Relocation Center, Idaho, and incarcerated until the end of the War.

Kanaya continued his Army service after WWII and was part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) during the Occupation of Japan. He worked as a translator/interrogator at Far East Command in Tokyo. During the Korean War, he was attached to the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, Eighth Army (Forward), and United Nations Command in Korea. In July 1962, he was attached to the Medical Department Operations and Training Advisor to the Vietnamese Army Medical Branch, Military Assistance Advisory Group.

Colonel Kanaya retired in 1974 from his last position as Deputy Commandant, Medical Training Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. At his retirement after thirty-four years of service, Jimmie was awarded the Legion of Merit for "exceptional meritorious conduct in performing outstanding services and achievement." The French Government also recognized Colonel Kanaya. During the 60th anniversary of WWII in June of 2004, Jimmie was given French Legion of Honor by the French Minister of Defense for services rendered in the liberation of Bruyères and Biffontaine. In 2012, he received the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor Congress can bestow, for his service with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

While Jimmie made the military his life's work, he never gave up on his goal of earning undergraduate and graduate degrees. He valued education and recognized that the knowledge he gained from coursework helped him do a better job and become a better leader. For 22 years, Kanaya took courses near his Army postings and earned enough credits to graduate from college and receive a master's degree a few years later.

As with many other 442 veterans, Colonel Kanaya's service would pave the way for future generations of Japanese Americans serving in the military. The words of Timothy 2:4:7-8 describe Jimmie's journey in life. "I fought the good fight, I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." This humble hero inspires us all to continue doing our best, be of service, and relish the life of freedom that he and others fought so hard to achieve.

## Explanation of the Tribute

On Sunday, May 29, 2022, the Japanese American Veterans Association, the Japanese American Memorial Foundation, the Japanese American Citizens League, DC Chapter, and JACL National will honor our nation's fallen heroes in the 74th Annual Memorial Day Service at Arlington National Cemetery in the Columbarium Ceremonial Courtyard. The service will be followed by the laying of flowers at the nearly 100 gravesites of those who the sponsoring organizations remember at Arlington.

The theme of the service will be Defending Our Freedoms in Adversity and will feature keynote speaker Dr. James McNaughton who served in the U.S. Army and as the command historian for the U.S. European Command, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, and the U.S. Army Pacific. Dr. McNaughton is the author of "Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II." A student representative from Spark Matsunaga Elementary School will also speak, and a special tribute will be made to Colonel Jimmie Kanaya, U.S. Army, a decorated three-war veteran who served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

This Memorial Day observation is the longest, continuous annual event held at ANC. Key Kobayashi, MIS veteran and one of the founders of JAVA along with the JACL DC Chapter began the Memorial Day gravesite decoration program in 1948. When Key passed away in 1992 his family continued the tradition, with son Turner Kobayashi currently serving as coordinator.

All are invited to attend the program at Arlington. Attendees should plan on arriving by 9:30 am to clear security.

**The program was live-streamed on JAVA's Facebook feed on Sunday, May 29, 2022, at 10:00 am EDT, 7:00 am PDT, and 4:00 am HST.** Please view the video on <https://www.facebook.com/Japanese-American-Veterans-Association-201704733192222>.

# Kriegy Bios, Artifacts, Artifact Descriptions

We're happy to include the following family-written bio in this issue of the ITEM. It was written and submitted by Ann Rogers, niece of the late Kriegy Frank N. Aten. Photos are from family files and Google Images.

## 2LT Frank N. Aten (701st Tank Destroyer Battalion) 1914 – 1987

Frank Newell Aten was born on June 16, 1914, the son of Rev. and Mrs. Floyd Aten of Tyler, Texas and was "Texas to the bone." Having nine brothers and sisters at home and extended family throughout the state, Frank learned survival skills at a young age, which served him well during his US Army career and as a Prisoner of War in WW II. He was also known for his quiet wit and generosity.

Frank attended Tyler public schools and following his family's professional newspaper careers, he also worked for the Tyler-Currier-Times, but other family connections to The Texas Rangers (law enforcement agency) would lead him to join the military.



Aten at Oflag 64 in 1943.

Prompted by his love of horses, he joined the Horse Drawn Artillery (Texas National Guard, 112th Cavalry) as an enthusiastic recruit and spent the next eleven years as an enlisted man where he exhibited exceptional leadership potential. These qualities were to have a profound effect on Frank when he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. After completing training in the tank destroyer officer's training school, he continued as an instructor at Camp Hood in the fall of 1942 and departed for North Africa shortly thereafter.

Assigned to the First Armored Division as Executive Officer, Co. A, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion, Frank's presence at Sidi Bou Zid, Tunisia, led to his capture on February 14, 1943.

The following text appeared in the Tyler (Texas) Currier-Times Newspaper: *WAR PRISONER—2nd Lieut. Frank N. Aten, son of Reverend Floyd Eugene Aten, last night was reported captured as a prisoner of war in the North Afrika area where he has been with the Tank Destroyer Command, United States Army. In a wire to his father, the Adjutant General's Department stated: "The Secretary of War desires me to express his regrets that your son, 2nd Lieut. Frank N. Aten, has been reported captured in the North African area. Additional information will be sent you when received." Lieutenant Aten, a native of Tyler, attended Tyler High School and formerly was employed by the Currier-Times Telegraph. He received his commission in October at Camp Hood, Texas, and volunteered for*



701st Tank Destroyers



1st Armored Division



foreign duty shortly thereafter.



*Aten Silver Star*

Second Lieutenant, Frank N. Aten, was awarded the SILVER STAR for gallantry in action during the WW II campaign against Rommel's Afrika Corps on February 14, 1943 in the vicinity of Sidi Bou Zip, Tunisia. "Selfless actions and concern for his wounded, trapped, and captured fellow soldiers in the face of overwhelming odds reflect credit upon himself and his organization."



The photo on right displays Frank's wife, Frances Riggs Aten, accepting the Silver Star on his behalf by Brig. Gen. Charles K. Nulsen, Commander of Fort Sam Houston.

*Frances Aten accepting Aten Silver Star*

His subsequent internment as an American POW for the next 2 1/2 years was spent primarily at Oflag 64 in Szubin, Poland, but drawing on his "riding the rails" adventures during the depression years, his adaptability to diverse environments and his acquired ability to outwit security measures enabled him to endure substandard conditions in multiple jails and camps and execute five escape attempts from such varied locations as moving trains and jails within prison camps. These recounted stories, joining those of many other Kriegies (the German word for prisoner of war, Kriegsgefangenen was shortened by the Allied prisoners to Kriegies), have become legendary.



*The Oflag 64 "Escape Artists" (Aten is on the right)*

A memorable example involves his first escape. This happened as he was being transported via a German train from Capua, Italy, toward the Brenner Pass. After a station stop and being mindful of the guards, Frank balanced himself on the open window, set his feet in motion to match increasing speed of the train, and managed to jump without injury. Frank's plan was to make his way to Switzerland through the Alps. This first bid for freedom, however, soon resulted in sobering thoughts as he found himself in a foreign land with few resources and adverse weather conditions.

Eventually, locals became aware that he dressed differently and did not respond when spoken to. Alarmed that he could be a dangerous foreigner, the Carabinieri police were summoned. In the midst of this increasingly large audience, an Italian woman with babe in arms exited her house and pushed her way into the crowd while handing Frank a thick venison sandwich and a glass of wine. Signaling his thanks, he told her that he was an American officer as she continued to shout at the crowd.

Many Americans believed that the war was unpopular with average Italians as many had family members in the US and had no love for the pact between Mussolini and Hitler. Her actions, according to Frank, seems to bear this out. That night Frank was placed within a room in the

Town Hall as no secure environment had yet been established for American soldiers—their entrance into the war was too new. The next day Frank was seated on another train toward Bolzano, Italy, and his first experience with an established P.O.W. encampment, but not his last.



*Aten while at Oflag 64*

The photo on the left shows Frank while a POW at Oflag 64.

Eventually after multiple escapes, the German hierarchy became aware of his Houdini abilities and tagged him as an “escape artist”—not as a compliment but as a reminder that his antics would jeopardize his chances of survival. “Stay in the camp. The war will soon be over and you can go home” they cautioned him. These not-so-disguised threats only encouraged Frank to envision the next escape plan.

Christened “Kid Nitro”, he was active in camp activities including organizing and participating in various sports, abilities he had developed when playing semi-pro baseball in an earlier life. For these initiatives, Frank was awarded the YMCA Sports Badge, awarded by the World’s Alliance YMCA with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. This badge has been awarded to few individuals and is “a service which raised the morale of players and fans alike—important diversions for men in forced imprisonment.”



*WWII YMCA Sports Badge*

“The major key to survival,” he told his family on his repatriation, “was to stay positive and believe that you will return home.” He also credits his family’s uplifting support through letters and packages during his many months as a prisoner.

He did return to his family and his Texas, and during the remainder of his 20-year US Army career, attained the rank of Captain before retirement. While on active duty, other assignments included a return to Germany in support of the Berlin Air Lift, Administrative and Public Information Officer at the San Antonio Army and Air Force Recruiting and Induction Center, and the Army Security School at Fort Devens, Massachusetts.

Central Texas became not only his permanent home base, but his professional one as well—two of which included his position at the Schreiner Institute in Kerrville and as Manager of the Olmos Tower in San Antonio. His hobbies included involvement in Kerrville Little League Baseball and “supervising” his home-based workshop. Frank also attended Army Unit Reunions and stayed in touch with many former Kriegies.



Frank Aten died in June 1987 and was buried with full U.S. Army Military Honors in the Fort Sam Houston Cemetery. Honorary pallbearers included family members and members of the Oflag 64 POW Family. Surviving him are his current wife, Frances Riggs Aten and former wife, Noreen Aten, and daughter, Sharron Pacheco. In his lifetime, Frank Aten's integrity, resourcefulness and code of honor endeared him to all who knew him personally or who had read or heard about his experiences. For these many qualities, he will be remembered and his bravery, honored.

In addition to the Silver Star he received for his actions in North Africa, and the YMCA Sports Badge mentioned earlier, he also received the Prisoner of War Medal, the European-African-Middle-Eastern Campaign Medal, the WWII Victory Metal, the Berlin Air Lift Medal for Humanitarian Action during the Berlin Air Lift, and the Korean Service Medal with two Bronze Campaign Stars.

*Many thanks to members of the Aten family for their assistance and for material contributions concerning his biography. A special thanks to George Harcourt for providing the grave marker.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Printed in the July 1, 1944 ITEM

— Fourth of July —  
**M E M O R I A M**  
By: James Godfrey

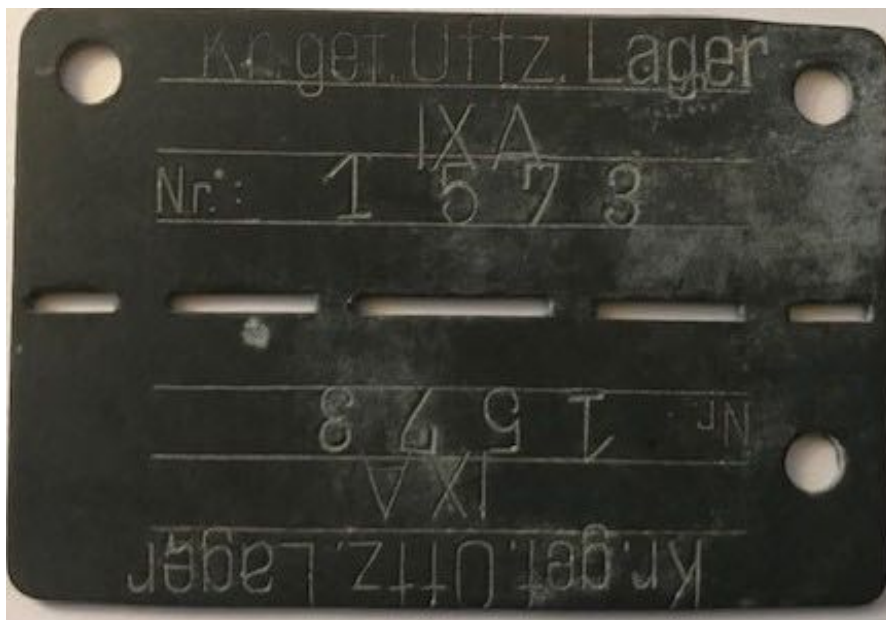
Silent in a chapel one moment we stood.  
The trumpet spoke your benediction  
Across this alien land,  
And in the soul of every man  
Came whispers from his God.

Briefly you lived, violently died...  
You would not have us mourn for that;  
But in some heart, fire-bright your love  
Will live, a changeless thing.

We hallow those who sought our sacred soil  
Strange centuries ago:  
The gentle iron men shaping Truth  
To a nation's fundament,  
They who perished with the pangs of  
her childbirth  
At frozen Valley Forge or fabulous Alamo,  
Or healing with their blood at Gettysburg  
The mortal wound of brotherhood,  
Or dying without doubt at Chateau-Thierry  
When all the world was one dark dream,  
Or writing now — and not in sand...  
The epic tale of our people around the  
shores of earth.  
For ignominy and injustice are repel-  
lent to the blood  
Which bears the strong sweet substance  
of America:  
On this their spirit holds.

We hallow those who make our herita-  
ge more noble,  
Who fail us not in whatever  
Final, terrible, tempestuous hour —  
You, the legendary figure,  
You, the fallen of our day:  
Receive our tribute and our thanks.

## Artifact Inventory ID No. 1.02 (Class I Artifact)



Donated by 2LT Wilbur Blaine Sharpe (*photo by Glenn Burgess*)

**Artifact Description:** 2LT Wilbur Blaine Sharpe's Oflag 64 POW Dog Tag.

**Artifact History:** 2LT Wilbur Blaine Sharpe was issued this POW identification dog tag at Oflag IX-A/Z at Rotenburg an der Fulda, Germany in mid-March 1943 which he wore for the remainder of his captivity. The dog tag is stamped with Sharpe's POW number "1573".

**Photo of Oflag 64 POW:**



2LT Wilbur Blaine Sharpe (*photo from Sharpe Family Archives*)

## Artifact Inventory ID No. 99.15 (Class I Artifact)



Donated by Janice Parks Brown, Vivian Parks David, and Walter Parks, children of Walter Samuel Parks Jr. (M.D.) (*photos by David Stewart*)

**Artifact Description:** Shoe made from a blanket by Dr. Parks while interned at Oflag 64

**Artifact History:** 1LT Walter S. Parks Jr (M.D.) made the homemade shoe from a blanket while at Oflag 64. The stitching in the shoe is very uniform (see Artifact No. 99.38 for a video description of the homemade shoe).



1LT Walter S. Parks Jr (M.D.)  
(*Photo from the Parks Family Archives*)

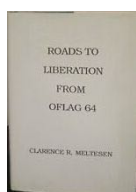
# Publications

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

- *"My World War II Experiences" by the late Kriegy Donald Lussenden*
- *"The Colonel" by the late Kriegy James F. Skells*
- *Milton E. Dowse – 3D copy of online publication*

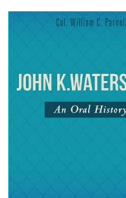
**Looking for these? Please contact.....**

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 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, \$15.99 includes S&H. Please write your check to the Oflag 64 Postage Fund. (Thank you, Pat, for sending these copies.)

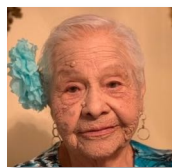
# TAPS



Gratefully our 6 remaining Kriegies are still with us!! However, we have learned of the following Kriegy widow deaths. We extend our sincere sympathies to their families. We know they are greatly missed.

## *Coleta Serda*

2022



Coleta S. Serda, 98, co-founder of Serda's Barber Shop in Pharr, passed away Wednesday, April 13, 2022, at her residence in Pharr.

Our mother, like most all mothers, was the glue that kept our family together. She was unselfish,

kind, caring, loving, attentive, sensitive, nurturing, funny, witty, and very faithful to God. Her energy level was always at full capacity and when not busy tending to her home, children or plants, she enjoyed giving of her time to different organizations and/or individuals in need. Mom was loved by all who came into contact with her. She was bigger than life and never realized it. She instilled in us to always be honest, responsible, respectful and faithful to our Lord.

She is preceded in death by her husband, (Kriegy) Gabriel Serda Sr.; her daughter, Esperanza Garcia; her parents, and seven siblings.

Mrs. Serda is survived by her four children, Gabriel (Dinnie) Serda Jr., Javier (+Imelda) Serda, Angel (+Rosa Elia) Serda, Pat Serda (David) Garcia; 11 grandchildren; 17

greatgrandchildren; six great-greatgrandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. with a 6 p.m. rosary Wednesday, April 20, 2022, at Memorial Funeral Home in San Juan. Funeral service will take place at 10 a.m. Thursday, April 21, 2022, at St. Anne's Catholic Church in Pharr. Interment will follow at Palm Valley Memorial Gardens in Pharr.

Special thanks to Las Palmas Nursing / Rehabilitation Center in McAllen, All State Hospice Agency and Intercity Ambulance Service. A very special thanks to Carmen, our mother's dedicated and loving provider.

Funeral services are under the direction of Memorial Funeral Home in San Juan.

Obituary found at:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/themonitor/name/coleta-serda-obituary?id=34303434>

## *Lelon G. Thompson*

1929 ~ 2020



Lelon Labelle Graham Thompson, age 91, died peacefully on September 25, 2020. She was born June 26, 1929 in her grandparents' farmhouse in

Kosse, Texas. Her parents were Hattie Faye Freeman Graham and Thomas Graham. When Lelon was young, her family moved to Bryan, Texas and would return to Kosse in the summers to spend time with her grandparents.

Lelon married (Kriegy) Morris Edwin Thompson June 3, 1948, at College Avenue Baptist Church (now Central Baptist) in Bryan, Texas. Morris and Lelon began their married life in Bryan, but moved to Dallas after Morris graduated from Texas A&M University. They had three children: Morris Jr., Max, and Wanda.

After their youngest child started school, Lelon worked as a bookkeeper for accountants and banks, yet found time to attend college as well. Through the years she attended North Texas

State University in Denton and Richland College in Dallas. In 1982 she received her B.S. in Gerontology from the University of Texas Allied Health Science Center. Lelon worked for Senior Citizens of Greater Dallas from 1982 until 1990. She then served as a volunteer working with senior adults in several churches.

Lelon's involvement with her churches over the years was an extension of her life. These included: Northlake Baptist Church of Dallas, First Baptist Church of Kaufman, Lake Highlands Baptist Church of Dallas, Cliff Temple Baptist of Dallas, and Trinity Baptist Church of Dallas.

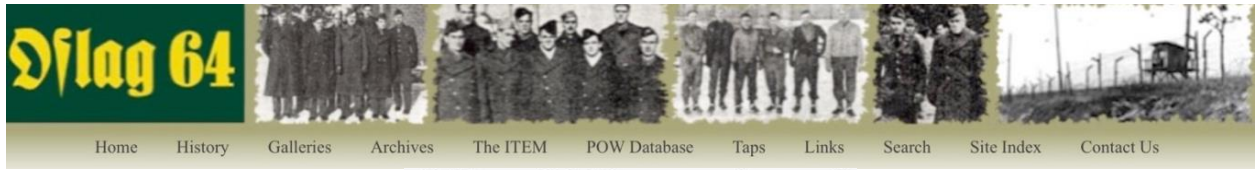
Lelon was preceded in death by her husband, Morris E. Thompson, Sr., her son, Morris, Jr., her sister, Tommie Jo Ackerman, and her brothers Max Graham, Bobby Graham, and Jack Graham. She is survived by her sister Ann Massey, sister in law Ann Graham, daughter-in-law Mary Thompson, son Max Thompson and his wife Sandra, daughter Wanda Meador and her husband Scott. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Sam Thompson and his wife Margaret, Leah Herbert and her husband Geoff, Dan Thompson, Zach Thompson, Sara Jane Thompson, and Lianna Meador. There are also six great grandchildren: Calliope, Sasha, Lula, Woodrow, Beatrice, and Theodore.

At this time there will not be a service. We appreciate all of your thoughts, prayers, and messages. In lieu of flowers please make donations to Alzheimer's Association, Dallas & Northeast Texas Chapter Office, 3001 Knox Street, Ste. 200, Dallas, Tx 75205, or Dallas Public Library, Gifts Assistant Dallas Public Library, 1515 Young Street, Dallas, TX 75201. The family would like to thank all of the caregivers at The Villages of Lake Highlands who have assisted in taking care of our mother, grandmother, and friend over the last five years.

Obituary found at:

<https://everloved.com/life-of/lelon-thompson/obituary/>





## Oflag 64 Remembered

Honoring our Kriegy Patriots and Heroes

### Consent to Use Materials

I, (please print name) \_\_\_\_\_, authorize the entities checked below to release videos, transcripts, and any other POW-related information pertaining to the following named individual (please print name) \_\_\_\_\_ to the publishers of the *Oflag 64 Remembered* website, to the *Oflag 64 Kriegy Research Group*, and to the *Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin*.

The materials may be used by the parties mentioned above to create a history of Oflag 64 POWs as they work to create a new museum in Szubin, Poland where the POWs were interned during WWII. (Please check at least one.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Hometown Heroes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oral History Project/National WWII Museum
- \_\_\_\_\_ National Home Front Project
- \_\_\_\_\_ New Oral History Project/Smithsonian Magazine
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Memory Project
- \_\_\_\_\_ Veterans History Project
- \_\_\_\_\_ Veterans Testimonial Project
- \_\_\_\_\_ Witness to War Project
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