

Dave Stewart's Oflag 64 Living History Report

Historical events depicting the daily life as well as escape attempts of former WWII American POWs held at the former Oflag 64 POW camp in Szubin were re-enacted on Saturday, September 16, 2017.

This unique event was organized by the Mayor of Szubin Artur Michalak, the Municipal Office of Szubin, the Regional Museum of Szubin and the Historical Re-enactment Group "Green Light" in conjunction with the MOAS Reform School in Szubin, the Szubin Culture Hall, the Schools Complex in Szubin, the Club of Photography Lovers "Flesz", and Mariusz Winiecki, the local historical researcher of the Szubin WWII POW camp for allied forces and author of "The Oflag 64 Record" blog. Besides the Historical Re-enactment Group "Green Light" members, approximately 70 re-enactors from many other Poland-based re-enactment groups attended the event.

The first historical show entitled "Arrival of American POWs" presented the arrival of US Army officers to Oflag 64 in June 1943. The second historical show entitled "The Fake Drunk Party" presented the clever escape plan in the middle of May 1944 masterminded and carried out by Lt. Col. John H. Van Vliet II, 2nd Lt. Frank N. Aten, 1st Lt. Roy J. Chappell Jr., 2nd Lt. William F. Higgins and 1st Lt. Richard W. Secor. Four of the five officers escaped, but were recaptured a short time later. The third historical show entitled "The Escape of a British Aviator" dates back to the time when the site was called Oflag XXI-B and held the POW officers of the Commonwealth Air Forces who were later moved to Stalag Luft 3 in Sagan in April 1943.

Five members of the Oflag 64 Association attended the "Living History – Oflag 64". They were: Susanna Connaughton, daughter of the late 2nd Lt. Seymour R. Bolten, Dave Stewart, son of the late Capt. Donald B. Stewart, Cindy Sharpe Burgess, daughter of 2nd Lt. Wilbur B. Sharpe, Lauren Burgess, granddaughter of Sharpe, and Glenn Burgess, son-in-law of Sharpe.

Producer David "Wino" Weinstein, the great-nephew of 2nd LT. Leonard Feldman, filmed the reenactment event for an upcoming documentary entitled "Feldman, Portrait of a POW" that he plans to release in the US in the near future.



Historical Re-enactment Group "Green Light" (Photo courtesy Dorota Maik vel 'Winnie – the photographer')