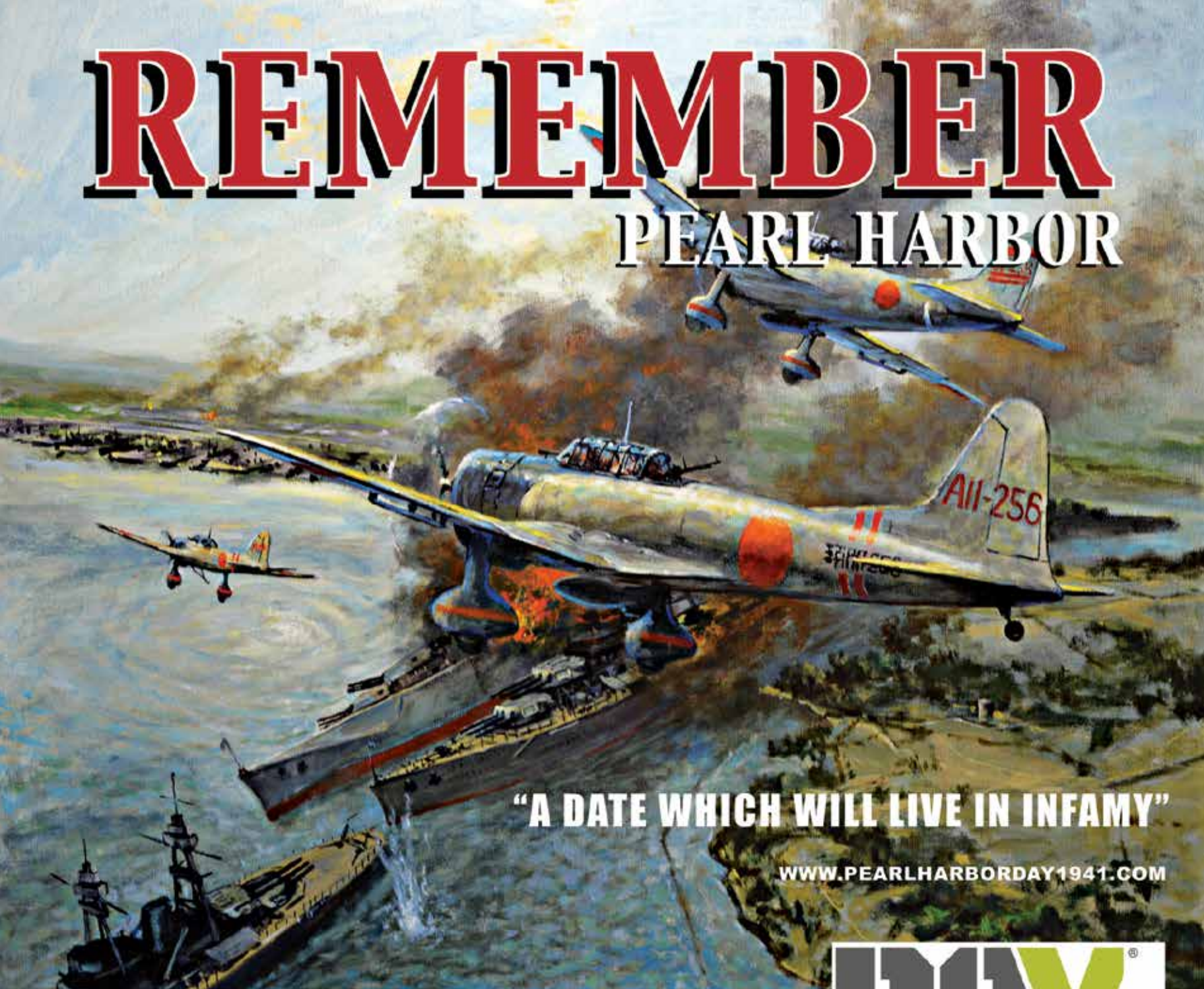


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THE END

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Jim Hackworth, Program Director, Publisher

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Pearl Harbor Day of Remembrance

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Knoxville's Pearl Harbor Day of Remembrance 2024

Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, 701 Merchants Rd., Knoxville, TN 37912

11:30 am, Seating Welcome, Larry Sharp, Master of Ceremonies
Introduction of Special Guests and Dignitaries..... Larry Sharp
Invocation..... David Stanton, Chaplain-DAV Chapter 24
Marine Corp League, Louisville, TN 37777
Posting of the Colors Central High School Junior ROTC
Pledge of Allegiance Garrett Hanas, Commander,
Disabled Veterans of America, Chapter 24, Knoxville, TN
National Anthem.....Performed by Central High School Choir
Box Lunches for Guests.
Moment of Silence in Remembrance of 2,403 Pearl Harbor Servicemen & Civilians
killed in the attack.
Wreath Presentation..... Central High School AFROTC
Introduction of MOH Recipient Joe Marm
Benediction, Taps



Pearl Harbor Survivors Association Motto:
Remember Pearl Harbor – Keep America Alert
(Good Today, Good Yesterday, Good Tomorrow)

Please silence all cellphones, pagers, and electronic devices.



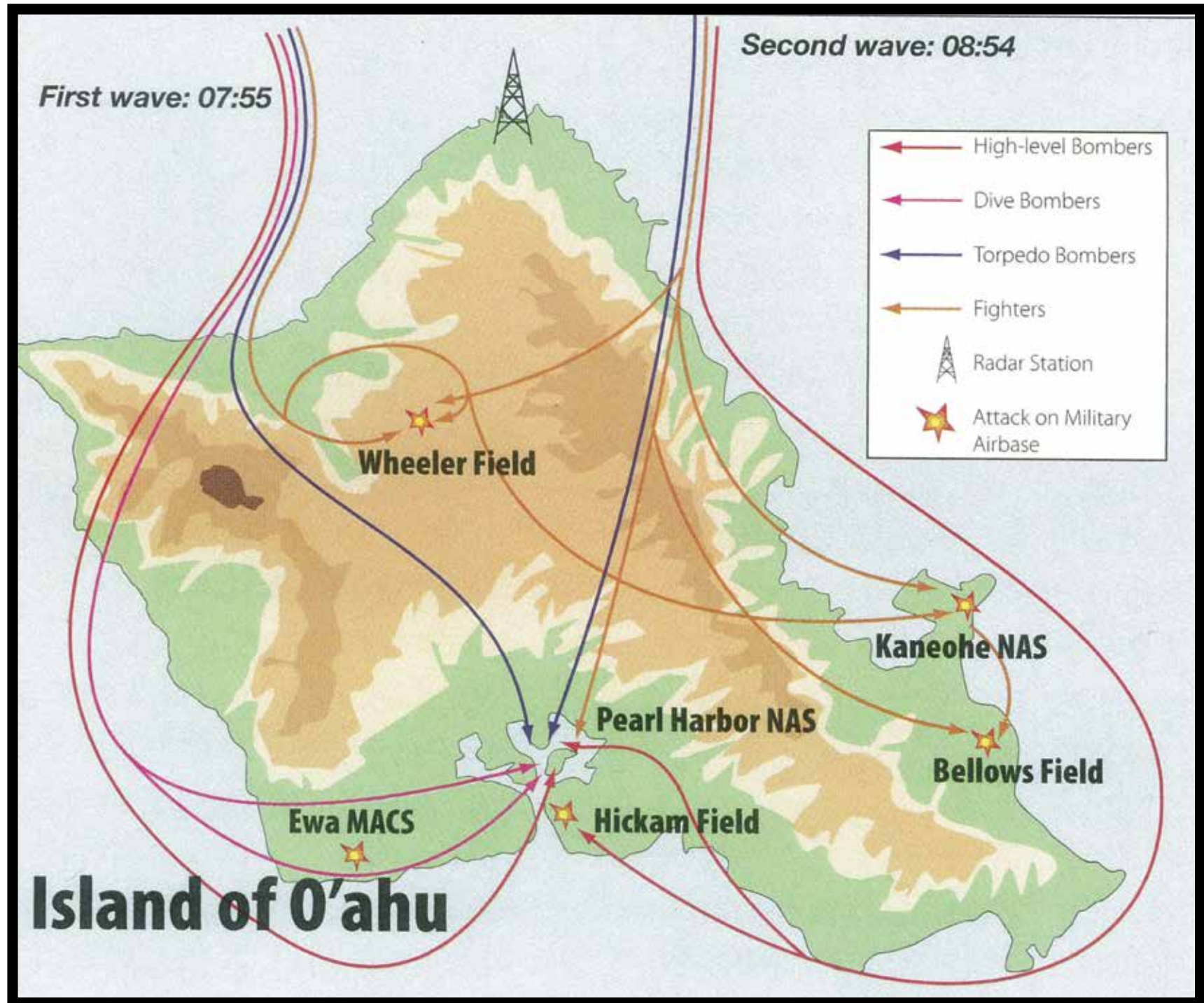
Japanese Air Assault on Oahu

The surprise attack that lasted on 1 hour and 15 minutes began at 7:55 AM, Hawaii time. The Japanese strike force which was able to sneak in from the north consisted of 353 Aircraft, launched from 4 carriers. These included 131 dive-bombers, 103 level bombers, 79 fighters, and 40 torpedo planes. The strike force also consisted of 35 submarines, 2 battleships, 2 heavy cruisers, 2 light cruisers, 9 oilers, and 11 destroyers.

The Japanese losses were 64 killed and 1 captured. They lost 29 aircraft and 5 midget submarines during the attack.

It was weeks before the number of Americans killed in the surprise attack was known. The final number was 2,403. The number lost in the various services was: Navy—2,008, Army—218, Marines—109. There were 68 civilians killed.

The number of ships either sunk or heavily damaged was 19. 8 battleships were among these—Arizona, West Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, California, and Oklahoma. 60 other ships suffered less-severe damage. 188 airplanes were lost and 159 were damaged.



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THE FINAL TOLL

In the first hours of America's Pacific War, the nation suffered one of its worst wartime losses: 2,403 men, women, and children were killed in the attack. This is a partial list of persons, military and civilian, who died as a result of the attack or were killed later that day in the performance of their duties.

Civilian



Ewa

Yaeko Lillian Oda, 6 Francisco Tacderan, 34

Honolulu

John Kalauwae Adams, 18 Joseph Kanehoa Adams, 50
Nancy Masako Arakaki, 8 Patrick Kahamokupuni
Chong, 30

Matilda Kaliko Faufata, 12 Emma Gonsalves, 34
Ai Harada, 54 Kisa Hatate, 41
Fred Masayoshi Higa, 21 Jackie Yoneto Hirasaki, 8
Jitsuo Hirasaki, 48 Robert Yoshito Hirasaki, 3
Shirley Kinue Hirasaki, 2 Paul S. Inamine, 19
Robert Seiko Izumi, 25 David Kahookele, 23
Edward Koichi Kondo, 19 Peter Souza Lopes, 33
George Jay Manganelli, 14 Joseph McCabe, Sr., 43
Masayoshi Nagamine, 27 Frank Ohashi, 29
Hayako Ohta, 19 Janet Yumiko Ohta, 3 months
Kiyoko Ohta, 21 Barbara June Ornellas, 8
Gertrude Ornellas, 16 James Takao Takefuji,
aka Koba, 20

Yoshio Tokusato, 19 Hisao Uyeno, 20
Alice White, 42 Eunice Wilson, 7 months

John Rodgers Airport

Robert H. Tyce, 38

Kaneohe Naval Air Station

Kamiko Kookano, 35 Isaac William Lee, 21

Pearl City

Rowena Kamohaulani Foster, 3

Wahiawa

Chip Soon Kim, 66 Richard Masaru Soma, 22

Waipahu

Tomoso Kimura, 19

Honolulu Fire Department



Hickam Field

John Carriera, 51 Thomas Samuel Macy, 59
Harry Tuck Lee Pang, 30

Federal Government Employees



Hickam Field

August Akina, 37 Philip Ward Eldred, 36
Virgil P. Rahel

Pearl Harbor

Tai Chung Loo, 19

Red Hill

Daniel LaVerne, 25

United States Army



Camp Malakole

F BATTERY 251ST COAST ARTILLERY (AA)

These soldiers were shot down by Japanese planes over John Rodgers Airport while taking flying lessons.

Henry C. Blackwell, Sgt Clyde C. Brown, Cpl
Warren D. Rasmussen, Sgt

Fort Barrette

C BATTERY 15TH COAST ARTILLERY

Joseph A. Medlen, Spl

Fort Kamehameha

C BATTERY 41ST COAST ARTILLERY

Claude L. Bryant, Cpt Eugene B. Bubbs, Pvt
Oreste DaTorre, PFC Donat G. Duquette, Jr., Pvt

C BATTERY 55TH COAST ARTILLERY

Edward F. Sullivan, Pvt

Fort Shafter

E BATTERY 64TH COAST ARTILLERY (AA)

Arthur A. Favreau, PFC

Fort Weaver

97TH COAST ARTILLERY (AA)

William G. Sylvester, 1st Lt

Killed in a car while driving through Hickam Field

Schofield Barracks

L COMPANY 21ST INFANTRY

Paul J. Fadon, Sgt

Killed in a truck accident 10 miles north of Schofield Barracks

HQ BTY 63RD FIELD ARTILLERY

Theodore J. Lewis, Cpt

89TH FIELD ARTILLERY

Walter R. French, Pvt

A BATTERY 98TH FIELD ARTILLERY

Conrad Kujawa, PFC

Killed in an accidental electrocution

D COMPANY 298TH INFANTRY

Torao Migita, Pvt

Killed in downtown Honolulu by "friendly fire"

To view the entire list of casualties
on December 7, 1941, go to the
“Archives” Section at
www.pearlharborday1941.com
and look under “2019.”

Source: Official website of the National Parks Service / Arizona memorial (Pearl Harbor casualties)



Van Service transports veterans to Mountain Home Veterans Center in Johnson City, TN.
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DAV's Mission Statement

We are dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. We accomplish this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

This mission is carried forward by:

- Providing free, professional assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service and provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies of government.
- Providing outreach concerning its program services to the American people generally, and to disabled veterans and their families specifically.
- Representing the interests of disabled veterans, their families, their widowed spouses and their orphans before Congress, the White House and the Judicial Branch, as well as state and local government.
- Extending DAV's mission of hope into the communities where these veterans and their families live through a network of state-level Departments and local Chapters.
- Providing a structure through which disabled veterans can express their compassion for their fellow veterans through a variety of volunteer programs.



Knoxville's DAV Chapter #24 exists to assist disabled veterans and their dependents. The chapter participates in a National Transportation Network, which consists of a formal contract entered into by the National DAV and the VA to serve disabled veterans in Knox County TN. Transportation, wheelchairs, etc. are furnished. We also help with other needs a disabled vet might need, i.e. utility payments and groceries. Our goal is to help needy veterans and their families in any way we can.

DAV Chapter 24 | 2600 Holbrook Drive | Knoxville, TN 37918 | 865-689-7789



Gerald D. Clark, Sr.

A “most unforgettable character”

*By Buzz Buswell,
-Director of Veterans & Senior Services for Knox Co, TN*

Do you remember “My Most Unforgettable Character”? It was a regular feature in *The Reader’s Digest*. Beautifully written reflections profiled a wide variety of people. My life as a kid was enriched by these stories. I could picture meeting someone “unforgettable” someday.

My most unforgettable character did not win a world series, receive the Nobel Prize or perform at Carnegie Hall. We met at a meeting of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 356 in Knoxville, Tennessee. He was smiling. He introduced himself as the Chapter Treasurer. Later that month, I met him again – this time at the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 24 meeting. He was smiling. He was the Chapter Treasurer. He had served in this office for a couple of decades. This time, we began a conversation that did not end until his death many years later. In installments, Gerald D. Clark, Sr., became my most unforgettable character.

In most cases, obituaries are not very revealing regarding the deceased. Occasionally, a wordsmith pens one that captures the essence of the recently departed. What follows here is one of the best records I have ever read. It is a word picture capturing my friend. I will follow this obituary with my recollections.

Gerald D. Clark, Sr.

Knoxville - Gerald D. Clark, Sr., age 95, husband, father, patriot, and Christian minister of the gospel, born August 15, 1925, passed away on Sunday, April 18, 2021, surrounded by his loving family and friends. Gerald was a leader in the veteran’s affairs programs of Knoxville, TN, and as a life member and lay pastor of the Church of God (Anderson, IN).

Gerald was preceded in death by his wife of 72 years “Bea” (nee Green); his father, Homer Allen Clark and mother, Emma Clark (nee Rowland), and stepmother, Wilma Clark (nee Wampler); his daughter Emma Mae Piscitelli; his brothers Jimmy, Jack, Bill, and Stanley Clark, and sisters Thelma and Opal.

He is survived by his sons Gerald D. Clark, Jr. (Margaret E. Clark), Alan Clifford Clark; daughters Karen Sue Orr (Thomas S. Orr) and Marcia Ann Lloyd; sisters Evelyn Smith, Virginia Firth, (Wayne Firth);



brother Ron Clark (Kathy Clark); his grandchildren Kelly Spilbor and Kim Nagy, Emily Clark, Jean Marie Johnson, Daniel, Jacob and Steven Clark, Billy Lloyd, Michelle Morales, and nine great-grandchildren.

Gerald was a veteran of WWII and was a recipient of the Purple Heart for injuries suffered during the Battle of the Bulge in 1944. He fought with the 75th Infantry Division, which famously helped halt a major German offensive in 1945.

During his lifetime Gerald became an advocate for veterans and was recognized for his efforts by Knox County which declared August 26, 2016, as “Gerald Clark Day”. A tribute was read into the Congressional Record in the US House of Representatives by Representative Tim Burchett (2nd District) on April 22, 2021, which recognized his work on behalf of veterans in leading the effort to build a health facility, Ben Atchley Tennessee State Veterans Home, in Knoxville. The campus was named in his honor as the Gerald Clark Memorial Campus.

He was instrumental, along with his wife, Beatrice, in the leadership of the Knoxville Chapter 24 of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). Gerald was also a member of the American Legion, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the American Veterans Association (AMVETS).

A native of Cocke County (Newport), TN, he was born at home on August 15, 1925. Returning from the war, he married Beatrice Green in 1946 and, following a short time working in his father’s sawmill, moved to Knoxville where he enrolled in and graduated from Coopers Business Institute. Shortly after graduation, he was employed by Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) where he worked for 32 years retiring as a Field Auditor. He was a CPA and attended night school at the University of Tennessee. In retirement, he served briefly as an Interim CFO for Knoxville College.

He was a lifelong and beloved member of the First Church of God in Knoxville and served in many of its offices and briefly as its Interim Pastor. He was an active participant in the Tennessee Church of God State and National Ministerial Associations. He was the liaison for the national Church of God radio program in the fifties, “The Christian Brotherhood Hour”, aired on a local Knoxville radio station.

Gerald’s family will miss their father, granddad, and brother and his wisdom, advice, and care for them. His friends will miss his loyalty and friendship and we will all miss his stories of life, hardship and love told with humor and affection.

First impression: Gerald smiled. He was an amputee. Right leg. Above the knee. We both served in the U.S Army. Infantry. We both earned the Purple Heart Medal and Bronze Star medal. There was one significant difference - he received his honorable discharge before I was born.

I met his bride, Bea. They were married in June 1946 – again before I was born. She was a warm and gracious lady who put up with the visits of this baby boomer. Gerald and I benefitted tremendously because of our strong supportive life partners. Bea and my wife, Donna, picked up post war lives and optimistically headed into the future.

Fortunately for all concerned, Gerald quit trying to drive. This provided us opportunities to spend more time together coming from and going to meetings. Occasionally we added a trip to the dentist or doctor. We always talked and I listened carefully. Invariably we would part after Gerald offered to pay me for gasoline and I declined to accept his offer. He would smile and say, “Well back home in Del Rio we would say, thanks until you are better paid.” It was a subtle reminder that his father was a Methodist minister, and Gerald was an ordained minister in the First Church of God.

I asked him about serving in the ministry. He told me he never felt called to do more than serve whenever there was a need for someone to fill in here or there. He marshaled those skills to serve as Chaplain in



Mayor Tim Burchett presents Gerald Clark certificate

the Veteran Service Organization to which he belonged.

Often Gerald started our conversations with a question that led him to whatever topic he had on his mind.

“Ever pull K.P.?” That question was accompanied by a big grin! He was disappointed to learn that “Kitchen Police” was a relic of a bygone era. He wondered how the Army disciplined the headstrong guys, such as himself, who found regimented life less than appealing?

He recounted hours of potato peeling and pot walloping as sergeants helped him accept the discipline he came to recognize, once he reached the combat zone, as essential. “I was headstrong when I first got to Camp Blanding.” He often reminded me that “discipline” was undoubtedly something that he got out of his service in the Army that always helped him in life.

In 1943 the Florida base took on a new role as an infantry replacement training center, soon becoming the largest such training facility in the country. With the fighting going on in the Pacific, North Africa and Italy, it became clear that replacements were needed to fill the ranks depleted by casualties, so bases like Camp Blanding became vital to the war effort. Gerald was quick to point out that after he left there



the War Department decided it was also a good place to hold German P.O.W.s.

“Was it cold in Vietnam?” I could only relate my experience in the rice paddies of the Mekong River Delta and jungles of Cambodia. Being wet in the jungle at night could feel very cold. No, not uncomfortable, Gerald was talking freezing! During the Battle of the Bulge in the forested Ardennes region between Belgium and Luxembourg, the frigid weather was as much an enemy as the German army. Gerald recalled that most had frostbite: some lost fingers, toes, even hands and feet. Half-million Americans fought in the Battle of the Bulge. In jest, Gerald would claim that his arrival broke the back of the German resistance; however, he acknowledged that the clearing skies on Christmas Day 1944 and the solidly frozen ground made it possible for allied forces to restore the front and declare victory of that battle a month later.

He asked, “Did you sandbag your jeeps in Vietnam?” I assured him we did. Then he recounted that April day in Germany 1945 when he, his sergeant and two others were assigned to clear antitank mines from a road to permit an armor column to advance to the next town. An armor officer detailed two of his men to accompany Clark’s team so that they could notify the tanks the minute it was safe to move out. Those two soldiers walked ahead of Gerald and his detail in the jeep. They looked for disturbed snow on the paved road. Typically, troops were positioned to oversee the road and engage anyone attempting to clear mines.

The Germans had withdrawn. As Gerald was dismounting the still rolling jeep, the right front tire hit and detonated a mine killing the two dismounted soldiers from the armor unit. Gerald and his team were protected from the shrapnel by the sandbagged jeep but his right leg, hanging outside the jeep, shredded below the knee. The soldier seated in front of him lost an eye and arm. Fortunately, a buddy was able to place a tourniquet on Gerald’s leg and more personnel came and evac-

uated him to the rear. “Almost made it,” he would say, pointing to the German surrender on May 8, 1945, five weeks after his wounding.

“Do you remember being awarded the Purple Heart Medal?” Gerald asked us at a MOPH meeting. We were all aware of the presentation. Gerald told us they came through his hospital ward and tossed a little blue box on each bed. The box contained a medal and a ribbon. As inauspicious as that moment was, Gerald placed an extremely high value on this medal. He earned the Bronze Star medal too, but was quick to point out that someone had to “write him up” for that recognition and views might differ on his worthiness. There was no question that he earned the Purple Heart.

He marveled at today’s troops and the medical attention they receive. Members of our MOPH chapter suffered grave wounds in Iraq and Afghanistan, wounds he was sure they would not have survived had they been in the Second World War. The military of that war and Vietnam included volunteers and drafted personnel. He was always quick to point out that our current forces are all volunteers. Our membership also includes combat Veterans of Vietnam. In the European Theater of Operations, the enemy wore uniforms. There were battle lines and he knew they were winning because they were liberating town after town and heading to Berlin. How, he often asked, did we find the enemy hiding in plain sight posing as civilians? We did not take and hold real estate. There were no metrics identifying failure or success. He usually concluded that “...war is a terrible, terrible thing”.

One of our more emotional topics of conversation had to do with being a patient in hospital care. His leg wound was to the lower leg, below the knee. Gerald tried to argue his case with a Major who had indicated that his damaged and gangrenous leg would have to be amputated, a lifesaving necessity. As they prepared for surgery in England, the doctor uncovered the wounded appendage, revealing what Gerald called a “black mess.” He told the doctor to do what was necessary. He and I both came to the realization we owed our lives to the highly skilled medical professionals it was our good fortune to encounter following being wounded – he in 1945 and I twenty-five years later.

Gerald’s eyes lit up when he described the cruise on the hospital ship across the Atlantic. Good weather and calm seas permitted ambulatory patients an opportunity to be outside on the deck. It was from this vantage point that he was greeted by Lady Liberty when his ship entered New York harbor. He described her as a heartwarming sight.

Gerald was transported by train to Lawson General Hospital outside of Atlanta. The hospital was known for treating amputees and training them to use prosthetics. There, Gerald underwent a re-amputation. Amputations that kept the organic knee intact (so-called BK) permitted better mobility than did one above the knee (AK). Additional surgery followed to establish a stump above the knee to support his prosthetic leg. We both saw the severely wounded and thought how fortunate we were. From our perspective, there was always someone dealing with a much more serious condition.

Often our exchanges took place driving to or from meetings. We would talk before or after a Veteran event. I visited Gerald and Bea during the time they lived in Sherrills Hills. Some of these visits included a meal in the dining room. He delighted in explaining that their chef could erase all his bad memories of “C” and “K” rations.

Gerald played bean bag baseball at Sherrill Hills. Think of a corn hole board with multiple holes instead of just one. Each hole represents possible outcomes of being at bat, everything from strike out to home run. Instead of running, the player at bat moves from first chair to second chair to third chair, each chair representing a base. The game makes it possible for people in their eighties and nineties to play baseball without picking up a bat or glove.

Gerald was on the Veterans team. He sported the team tee shirt bearing the image of a dog tag. One night, he told me that former Lady Vols basketball coach Pat Summitt had visited the matinee game conducted in one of the common hallways. She was a resident there for a time before her untimely passing.

He confided that being the home team in beanbag baseball made all the difference. You got to bat last! Gerald and the Veterans were only down forty runs as I recall, and Pat watched as batter after batter tossed his beanbag into “extra base” holes thus racking up run after run. The Veterans won. Pat put her hand on Gerald’s shoulder and said “good.” It was a moment he never forgot.

“Some people say they are not joiners, but they should be.” Thus began a lesson regarding Veteran Service Organizations. He was a Charter member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 356, a Charter member of the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 24, and he maintained memberships in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Veterans (AMVETS). It was important, he told me, because each of those organizations actively lobbied in our state and national capitals. Politicians knew the size of the organizations represented. Size mattered. Without getting too political, he reminded me of the “Bonus Army” of World War One Veterans. Their disjointed pleas to the deaf federal government led to the creation of the Disabled American Veterans and organized lobbying efforts on behalf of Veterans, their survivors and families.

That got us to a discussion regarding the Tennessee State Veterans’ Home. It was, he quickly pointed out, his membership in all those organizations that helped he and his fellow Veterans successfully campaign to have the facility placed in Knox County. He created the United Veterans Council for the purpose of bringing a Veterans Home to Knoxville.

Tim Burchett was serving in the Tennessee State Senate at the time. He had seen Gerald and the United Veteran contingent in Nashville regularly. Gerald led delegations to the offices of three Governors before the Veterans Home in Knoxville became a reality.

When it was opened in October of 2006, U.S. Congressman Jimmy Duncan remarked now he could fly home to Knoxville and not have Gerald waiting for him in the terminal! For his efforts the Tennessee State Legislature enacted legislation naming the campus of the Senator Ben Atchley State Veterans Home in honor of Gerald D. Clark.

Ten years later, as Knox County Mayor, Tim Burchett set aside 26 August 2016 as “Gerald D. Clark” day in Knox County. During the presentation, Burchett recognized Gerald for being the driving force behind the Veterans Home and for his dedicated lifelong service to his fellow Veterans through 58 years as a Life Member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

The following year, I was part of a group of Veterans exploring service projects in East Tennessee. I asked Gerald if he would mind if we reprised the old organization’s name for this new initiative. He quickly agreed and The United Veterans Council of East Tennessee, Inc. chartered.

Its mission is to encourage collaboration between established veterans’ organizations, veteran support groups, and patriotic individuals who have the desire to support veterans’ causes. The purpose of this council is to promote organizations’ events, organize combined events for the community and educate the public on the sacrifices of American Veterans.

At Gerald’s request, the council encourages Veterans to join Veteran Service Organizations. He was quick to remind all that it was the combined voices of Veterans that brought a Veterans’ home to our community. We also acknowledged that his persistence had much to



do with it.

The United Veterans Council honors Gerald’s memory through supporting Wreaths Across America. The ‘Council loans out a traveling pictorial memorial to Tennesseans who were casualties in the Global War on Terrorism. A breakfast project sees Veterans and their guests of all ages enjoying FREE hot breakfasts on Saturday mornings at 13 locations across East Tennessee.

At a Veterans Breakfast last Saturday at the Kodak Church, I recounted Gerald’s story about being strong-willed when he was in basic training. I related how his sergeant had detailed him to K.P. to instill discipline and that Gerald identified discipline as a positive outcome of his service. The ability to control himself by following rules or orders, and to keep working on difficult tasks, which is what Gerald took from his time in the Army.

My fellow Veteran served as a chaplain in the Air Force. He lamented that many people today lack discipline in all aspects of life. Gerald modeled it daily! I smiled at the Chaplain and thought, about my friend and most unforgettable character – Gerald D. Clark.



A visit to Pearl Harbor

By Melissa Blaschke

Our 35th wedding anniversary trip to Hawaii started with the agreement that the only way I could get my husband to pony up the money for a trip to Hawaii and take the arduous 8 hour plane ride was the promise we must go to Pearl Harbor. My immediate response was of course! I would say anything to visit paradise, but laughs aside this is one battle site I definitely wanted to visit. As we all know many Americans take vacations to visit historical museums, major battle sites, and national parks. We visit to show respect to our fallen heroes, learn facts, and to actually smell the air and physically experience where the major events in our history have happened. Pearl Harbor is one of those ultimate bucket lists locations that has over a million visitors a year. But one thing I didn't expect on our visit was the impact Pearl Harbor would have on me. It was truly a wake up call visit as I perused the exhibits and realized the razor's edge that our planet teeters on. And how as humanity we hold it all in the balance. December 7, 1941 was an inflection point in our country and changed America's destiny to become a major superpower in the world and so much more.

Our day at the site started promptly with the first 8 am tour of the USS Arizona Memorial. While solemnly gazing down at the watery gravesite of all those young brave souls that lost their lives I spotted an ominous barracuda casually swimming over the wreckage surveying for prey. This menacing fish made my skin crawl, especially as I contemplated the irony of the location's history and how the deceased below were also prey to their attacker. As I reflected on the location I also thought about

how that one Sunday morning in 1941 will forever be linked to a momentous and horrific time in mankind's history. My eyes glazed over and my mind wandered about the fictitious line from the film "Tora, Tora, Tora" from 1970. The quote in the movie where Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto supposedly said "I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve". Of course, we know this quote was not true, and was created with poetic license by the film's writers to make a dramatic point. However, history does confirm that Admiral Yamamoto did believe that the Pearl Harbor attack was a strategic, moral, and political blunder. For his nation his fears were warranted, but little did he know what course that attack would help forge that would change the course of history forever for our planet. That menacing barracuda also reminded my "X Generation" mind of a song composed by one of my generation's iconic music artist's Billy Joel. Mr. Joel released a very poignant song in 1989 about the 20th century titled "We didn't start the Fire". I have listened and danced to this catchy song many times over the years just giving the lyrics nothing more than an afterthought. But as they say, with age comes soberness. At Pearl Harbor, I could see the weight of history and how that song outlined the tumultuous times that ensued after that attack. Questions bubbled up in my mind and contemplation set in. Is the human race destined to continue this madness I was reading about and Billy Joel sang about? Why does humanity crave such power? Why does humanity need war to build and innovate? Why does humanity need pain and destruction to wake up and change our path

only to forget and do it all over again? Why can humanity be so blind at times, but so insightful in others? Why do we hate people over their culture, race, or religion? Oh goodness, why?

In 2024, we are experiencing so many unknowns throughout our world. There is a major war going on in the Middle East with foreign nations contributing monetarily and supplying weapons to both sides. There is also a major war going on in Europe again (Ukraine) with foreign nations contributing monetarily and with weapons to both sides. There is also major unrest in America as well. Americans don't even trust each other. So while visiting the Pearl Harbor site and taking in the weight of history my thoughts kept seeing parallels with our time, but now with more dire consequences. I could see history could easily repeat itself. The Revolutionary War started for our country with "the shot heard around the world" and our right to begin our democratic experiment was won. Ironically, the deliberate attack perpetrated at Pearl Harbor that also was heard around the world is what spurred our nation to enter World War II. And with this horrible global war, America won the right to another milestone in our history to be known as a world power. America got to work and together built what President Dwight D. Eisenhower called the military industrial complex. This massive complex of public and private entities recruited the best and brightest minds that helped to create the most wondrous modern innovations and weaponry of our time. With those innovations our country and world has seen leaps in technology in aerospace, rocketry, computers, weapons, and yes even home appliances. But ultimately it's this complex that brought about the most deadliest weapon humanity had ever created. The nuclear bomb and later the more powerful thermonuclear bomb. My question is would this have happened if Pearl Harbor never took place?

Tom Brokaw coined the term "The Greatest Generation" that described this generation that ultimately won World War II that included the men and women that gave their lives at Pearl Harbor. The history of that generation is what we must learn from. A generation strong enough to come into this world during the first World War, endure the hunger and despair of the great depression, and experience the horrors of World War II. That generation ultimately forged ahead and built the nation we know today. The pinnacle question to me is will subsequent generations pick up the mantle and learn from that generation's values and strengths, but also learn from their horrific lessons and sacrifices. Humanity's future on this planet may depend on it!





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Tennessee's *Living* Pearl Harbor Memorial

By Deanne Charlton

Formal monuments and other memorials to the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor exist in every state. People fly the flag in their front yards and plant them at veterans cemeteries throughout the country on the anniversary of the assault. There are places on Oahu that bear witness to the attack in unofficial ways.

And the USS Arizona is hallowed ground. In 1968, the National Park Service added a monument at Pearl Harbor called Tree of Life sculpture, an abstract relief piece created by Alfred Preis, the USS Arizona Memorial architect. The stylized trunk, branches, and leaves are a symbol of renewal and, at 54 feet in height, the intent is to inspire contemplation.

But East Tennessee is the only place to see a living, growing shrine honoring the 2,403 military personnel and civilians who died on the fateful day. Tucked away in Cades Cove, an area within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, it stands as one man's vision that, in the face of tragedy, life should go on.

Golman Myers once lived in what is now GSMNP, working hard on his farm and raising a family. Upon hearing the awful news and realizing the war would include his sons of draft age, he took his younger sons into the nearby woods where they dug up a sweet gum sapling "no bigger than a limb." Carrying it back home, they planted it in the front yard, and Golman placed an old metal car wheel around it for protection. His message to the boys was, "We will remember this day forever."

Golman died in the spring of 1945 and did not see the end of the war. The next day, Japanese kamikaze attacks hit eight American destroyers off Okinawa, sinking two.

In the 1970s, Golman's youngest son, Bernard, attached an engraved metal sign sharing the meaning of the tree and "how it affected my daddy." Today, there is no indication that a house stood where the tree was planted, but the tree has grown tall and mighty, so much so that the tire rim broke to make room for its expansion. Visitors, many of whom bring small American flags to leave there, can find it through park officials and online.

Golman Myers was right. We will remember "this day" forever.

(Right) Tree of Life sculpture,
Pearl Harbor

(Below) Golman Myers' living shrine honoring those who died at Pearl Harbor. The tree is located in Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.



The Hidden Eagle Rises

By Deanne Charlton

Not a phoenix, but an eagle and three wise owls rose from the destruction in West Knox County after a tornado decimated Tate's School on August 7, 2023. Joe Tate described the darkening sky and the silence of birds as the storm approached. Then there was the widespread destruction of buildings, in one of which huddled staff and teachers. Fortunately, they all survived and were soon joined by parents with tools to put things right; the school, set to open just 5 days after the devastation, met its deadline.

Tate's School is a private school for K-8 students on a 54-acre campus filled with opportunities for mentally and physically challenging activities, providing all the traditional learning experiences and everything from animal husbandry to computer science. Open since 1968, starting in a local church, the school grew as it served area families. They also offer a summer day camp. Many former students still live nearby, volunteering at the school and sending more generations of students to grow there.

The tornado destroyed many of the old growth trees on the campus, including an ancient cedar that lost all but nine feet of its trunk. It had provided shade for many first graders during playtime, and to honor its long service, a decision was made to create a sculpture reflecting the spirit of the school. Jeff Banning, a Louisville chainsaw sculptor, took on the task, creating an eagle at the top with an American flag draped below. Near the bottom, three wise owls—a nod to the many horned owls in the area—stand in a hollow, representing learning and knowledge.

One can imagine the large owl standing for parents and teachers who protect, challenge, and celebrate the students. The middle owl seems to be there to help teach the youngest, a long tradition of the school.

The school website is
<https://www.tatesschool.com>.

A WATE story on the sculpture is at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iM0SYN6IKos>

Jeff Banning's work can be seen at
<https://www.facebook.com/WoodCarvedCreations> and
<https://woodcarvedcreations.com>.



Photos courtesy Jim Hackworth and Jeff Banning.





Dud Morris looks happy as he poses with the Victory Belles vocal trio in front of the gift shop at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana.



A Higgins boat displayed at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana. Dud Morris visited the museum in 2024.

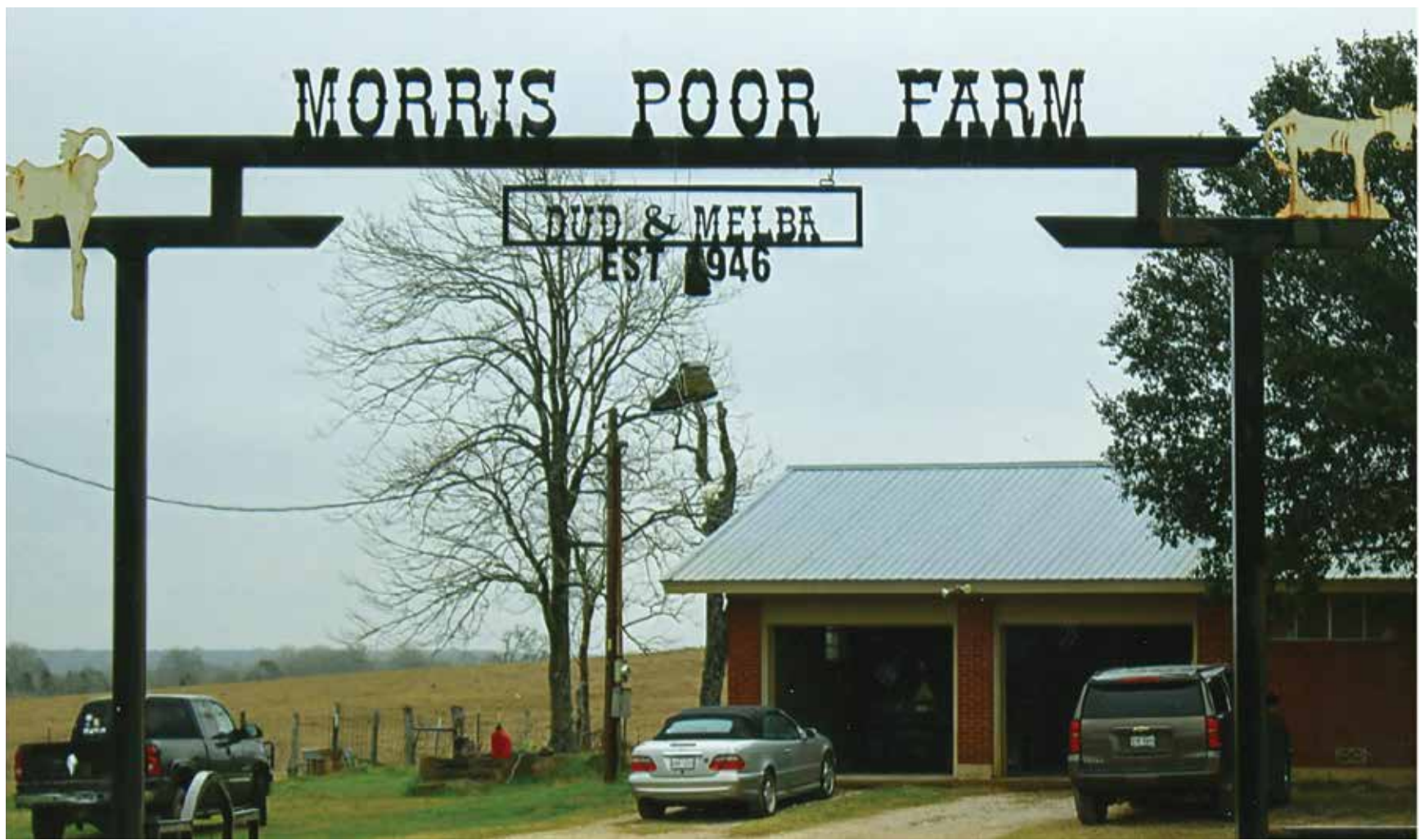
DUD RIDES AGAIN!

By Deanne Charlton

The 2022 issue of this publication included an article about James Dale "Dud" Morris (<https://pearlharborday1941.com/2022-2/>, pp 58-61), and we have an update.



Dud Morris in front of the open bow of a Higgins boat displayed at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana.



The 2022 issue of this publication included an article about James Dale “Dud” Morris (<https://pearlharborday1941.com/2022-2/>, pp 58-61), and we have an update. The Texan, born in 1925, enlisted in the US Navy at age 17, and spent several weeks at Pearl Harbor before heading to Iwo Jima, where he drove a Higgins boat during the battle that lasted from February 19 to March 26, 1945. After 14 months there, he returned to Texas, married his long-term sweetheart, Melba, and they went dancing every week.

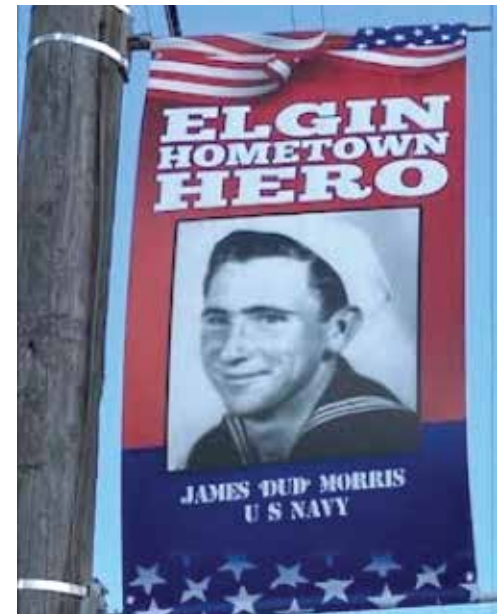
Dud had a 7th grade education before the war, so he was grateful for a special honor bestowed by the Elgin High School in 2003. He was among four WWII vets who had not graduated, and they wore caps and gowns and received diplomas with the rest of the graduating class. They received standing ovations from 5,000 people, which he claimed as part of why “I’ve had a good life.”

In the spring of 2024, Dud traveled from Texas to New Orleans for a tour of the National WWII Museum (<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/>) which strives to “tell the story of the American experience in the war that changed the world—why

it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today—so that all generations will understand the price of freedom and be inspired by what they learn.” There among the many exhibits, he was photographed in front of a Higgins boat and with the Victory Belles, a trio who sing patriotic songs of the 1940s in 3-part harmony.

Dud’s “trip of a lifetime” (Dud’s description) was provided courtesy of the Gary Sinise Foundation (<https://garysinisefoundation.org/relief-and-resiliency>). The foundation “honors veterans, our defenders, first responders, their families, and those in need” by “creating and supporting unique programs designed to entertain, educate, inspire, strengthen, and build communities.” Its R.I.S.E. program provides home modifications, mobility devices, adapted vehicles and specially adapted smart homes, while its Snowball Express supports children of the fallen. And the foundation especially enjoys providing experiences for the members of the greatest generation.

Three cheers for Dud, who aims to turn 99 years old on November 21, 2024!



A Hometown Heroes tribute to Dud Morris in his hometown of Elgin, Texas.



Students come back from trip to Normandy

By Ben Pounds

As the 80th anniversary of D-Day came, 23 Oak Ridge High School students were in France to remember.

Americans stormed the beach at Normandy, France starting June 6, 1944, and stayed with the operation, called OVERLORD until June 30 that year, delivering a victory to the United States over Germany which occupied France at the time. The Oak Ridge Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) cadets came to France, departing from the US June 3 and returning to the US June 11. They marched in a parade to mark the occasion.

“Without the actions of D-Day America may not be what it is today,” said NJROTC chief Ryan Nichols. “Even though it’s 80 years ago it’s important for the kids to understand that part of American history but also naval history.”

Oak Ridge High School teacher Todd Livesay traveled with them gathered sand to remember his father who arrived at Utah Beach serving under General George S. Patton after the initial US troops had already come.

In addition to the parade the cadets visited Utah and Omaha Beach and participated at a wreath-laying ceremony at the American cemetery in Brittany. They also went sight-seeing in Paris.

Nichols called D-Day the greatest display of naval and joint service warfare in history. He said standing at a gun turret at Omaha Beach stood out to him.

“The beach was just miles long,” he said. “Just think, 80 years ago the horizon was just filled with ships.” He said he had to imagine the “carnage” of that 1944 June in spite of how peaceful the area is now. He thought of how many men serving at Normandy weren’t that much older than the ORHS cadets.

“It was very humbling if you will,” he said.





Photo courtesy of US Maritime Commission

A Bird's-eye view of landing craft, barrage balloons and Allied troops landing in Normandy, France, on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Logistics of OPERATION OVERLORD

By BG Gilbert S. Harper (US Army - Ret)

"...G-2 [intelligence] existed to tell me what should be done ... G-4 [logistics] was to tell me what could be done ... Thus, a timid G-4 could directly limit the scope of operations ... a resourceful G-4 could expand it."

*~ General Omar Bradley
Commander of US Forces at D-Day*

General Dwight D Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, was blessed with resourceful logisticians who gave the combat forces everything they needed and much of what they wanted to accomplish the incredibly daunting invasion of France, code named OVERLORD but better known as D-Day.

Victory was achieved by young Allied soldiers who faced and defeated the enemy, but their success was made possible by the transporters, quartermasters, medics, engineers and others, many of whom also experienced the risks and hardships of combat.

Over 132,000 troops landed on June 6th with their equipment, vehicles, weapons, and essential supplies. They crossed a shore littered with debris, mines, and obstacles and were under fire from snipers, machine guns, and artillery.

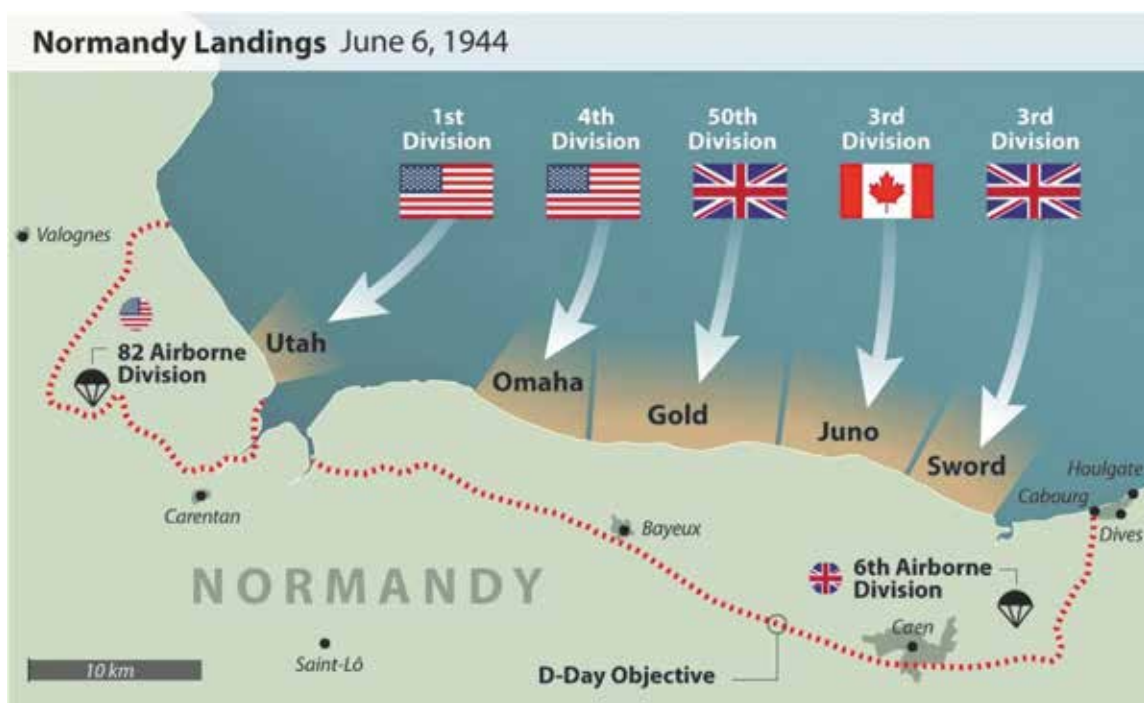
So how many is 132,000? I commanded a logistics unit in the redeployment phase of DESERT STORM. Each morning I would be briefed on the number of supplies we were managing. After several days of hearing numbers which meant nothing to me except that they were large, I asked the briefer to tell me something I could do with these supplies to help me visualize the amounts. I don't remember the numbers but I do remember that we had sufficient sandbags to build a wall three-feet high across the United States. The logistical challenge of D-Day was enormous and this article is intended to help you visualize the challenge and fully appreciate the accomplishment.

Landing 132,000 fully equipped soldiers is equivalent to moving the current population of Columbia, South Carolina with all their vehicles, tools of trade and life support. It is also greater than the current population of 25 other state capitals. By June 30th (D+24), over 850,000 men, 148,000 vehicles, and 570,000 tons of supplies had landed in Normandy. To visualize 850,000 soldiers, consider putting them in standard passenger buses bumper to bumper. The line would stretch 137 miles, approximately the distance from Los Angeles to San Diego, California. Arranged similarly, the 148,000 military vehicles would stretch 647 miles, or from New York City to Detroit, Michigan.

The Naval Operation, code named NEPTUNE, consisted of over 1,200 combat ships, over 5,000 landing ships, ancillary craft, and merchant ships. Combat ships ranged from battleships to destroyer escorts. Each ship was a floating city, requiring large quantities of fuel and other supplies. The merchant fleet included 326 cargo ships. Anchoring just the cargo ships, bow to stern, would stretch 28 miles, longer than the width of the English Channel at its narrowest point.

Over 13,000 aircraft supported OVERLORD. 5,000 bombers and over 4,000 fighters prepped the battlefield and provided close air support. 2,300 aircraft and 800 gliders delivered 18,000 paratroopers, crucially needed supplies, and evacuated the wounded. These aircraft also consumed significant quantities of fuel and ammunition as well as repair parts and teams of mechanics to keep them in the air. 13,000 is the number of aircraft in all branches of the US military today.

As usual, the number of troops in the logistical tail significantly outnumbered those in the



combat teeth.

Predecessors of OVERLORD

After the 1940 evacuation at Dunkirk, the British focused on defending England against a cross-Channel invasion rather than launching one. Operation BOLERO was the buildup of American Forces in the United Kingdom, initially to support this defense. By December 1942, the situation had sufficiently improved for the Allies to consider an offensive.

The Allies were fighting on many fronts and each campaign competed for limited resources. Two proposed invasions, SLEDGEHAMMER in 1942 and ROUNDUP in 1943, were both cancelled due to logistical shortages, specifically landing craft.

British General Bernard Montgomery (later Field Marshall), commander of the Allied Ground Forces, argued that an invasion force of three ground and one airborne division was

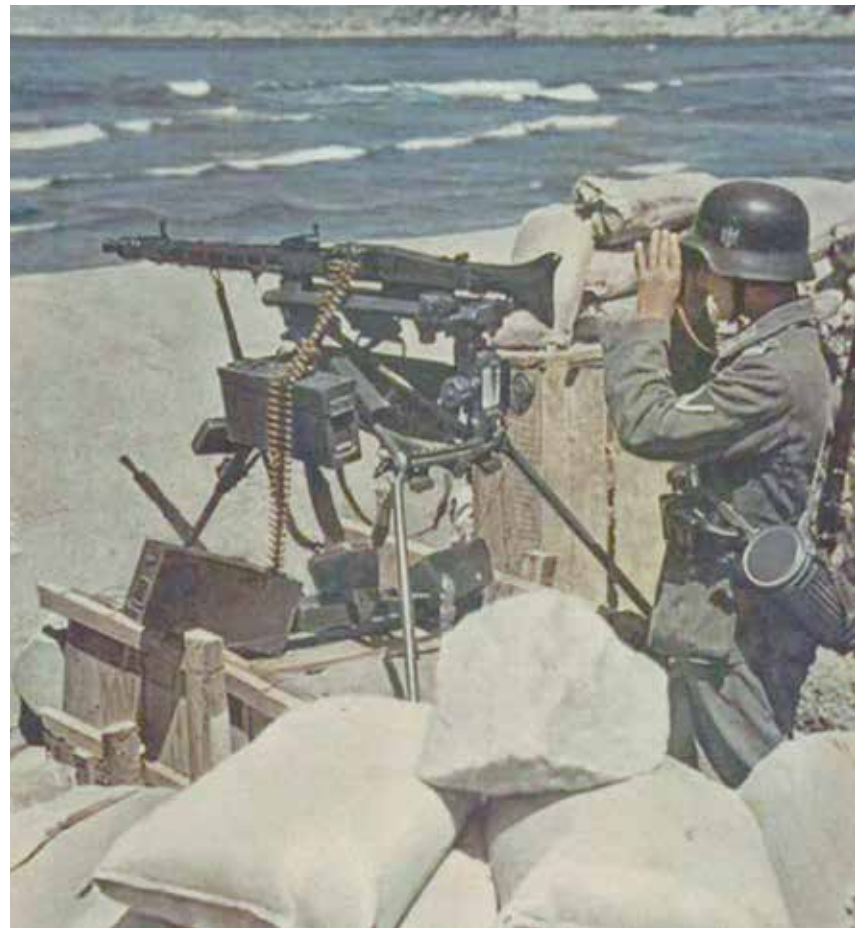


insufficient. General Eisenhower approved his recommendation; five ground divisions and two airborne divisions would land on D-Day. This increase required more shipping, landing craft and supplies as well as more logisticians. As a result, Operation ANVIL, the invasion of France from the Mediterranean, had to be postponed, another example of the logistical tail wagging the combat dog.

The Allies had learned much from the invasions in North Africa, Sicily, and the Pacific Theater. The delays permitted the Allies to garner the necessary supplies, shipping, and troops but it also gave the Germans time to strengthen "Fortress Europe."

The Plan

The Principle of War "Mass" dictates, "combat power should be concentrated at the decisive place and time." Success at Normandy depended on the Allies massing a sufficiently



German soldier watching the coast line

large and logistically supported force faster than the Germans could mass sufficient forces to destroy it – and the Germans didn't have to cross the Channel and a beach. Logistics is essential to combat power.

“A tank without fuel or ammunition is just a 60-ton radio.”
~ MG James Wright
45th US Army Quartermaster General

The initial goal was to defend the beachhead; the follow-on mission was to attack Germany. Each division would require approximately 700 tons of supplies each day. As the supply lines extended across France, more trucks, fuel, rations, repair parts and other supplies as well as more logisticians were required to operate them. General Bradley observed that turn-around time for resupply was five days, meaning five trucks with drivers and fuel were now needed to deliver one truck load.

Humanitarian assistance was also needed for liberated areas. General Bradley estimated that the liberation of Paris, alone, would require 4,000 tons of supplies daily, enough to support six divisions.

To meet the unprecedented logistical challenges of WWII, logistic organizations at all levels were created or modified as experience was gained. At OVERLORD, Engineer Special Brigades were created to operate the beachheads. These brigades consisted of engineer, transportation, quartermaster, military police, ordnance, medical, signal and chemical warfare units.

Build Up Control (BUCO) would manage the movement of men, equipment, and supplies onto Normandy. The BUCO had three subordinate

commands: Movement Control (MOVCO) would direct unit movements from England onto the Continent; Turnaround Control (TURCO) would liaise with the Special Engineer Brigades to return shipping to England for subsequent loads; and Embarkation Control (EMBARCO) would allocate space to units arriving in the crowded marshalling areas in Normandy.

The Equipment

Necessity is the mother of invention and war is a great motivator. Mechanical vehicles replaced horses, although the German Army used horses throughout the war. The submarine snorkel allowed submarines to recharge batteries without resurfacing. Penicillin, blood plasma, and vaccines saved lives. Synthetic rubber replaced natural rubber that was no longer available to the Allies. Radar, rockets, jet airplanes, computers and even the jeep were introduced during the war and of course the atom bomb.

There were also logistical inventions. The British invented the Mulberry Harbour, enabling ships to offload far from shore. Vehicles would then move to the beach over miles of flexible steel roadways.

[The Mulberry is] “one of the most inventive logistical undertakings of the war.”

~ General Omar Bradley

Two Mulberry Harbours were constructed in England and towed in segments with final assembly on Omaha Beach to support the American sector and Gold Beach to support the British sector. 200 tugs were



planned to support the invasion. Only 125 tugs were available. The construction of the Harbours was, therefore, delayed, but both were operational on June 18th (D+12).

Sunken caissons (Phoenixes), a line of scuttled ships (Gooseberries) and a line of floating breakwaters (Bombardons) sheltered each Mulberry. Construction of the Mulberry Harbours required enormous amounts of concrete and steel, both of which were in short supply and high demand. Ironically, some of the material was salvaged from the rubble from the German bombings of London. It is unlikely that this investment of materials, money, and manpower would have been made if it were not for the personal support of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

At full capacity, 7,000 tons of vehicles and supplies could move across a Mulberry each day. By July 2nd (D+26) there were 25 divisions ashore. 7,000 tons was sufficient to provide one day's support for just ten of them. Over-the-shore supply by landing craft made up the difference until French ports could be captured and refurbished.

OVERLORD relied on numerous types of landing craft, each with a specific purpose. One of the most versatile was the DUKW, a 2.5-ton amphibious truck which could not only swim from ship to shore but travel on its six wheels to deliver cargo inland.

Winston Churchill best described the value of landing craft in his diary. "The destinies of two great empires [are] seemingly tied up in some \$\$\$@# things called LSTs [Landing Ship Tank]."

In addition to the landing craft there were landing ships, which were sea-going and longer than 200 feet. As with the landing craft, there was a wide variety of landing ships to fit specific purposes. For example, the Landing Ship Dock (LSD) could be flooded at its stern to allow loaded landing craft to enter the water.

When there was no room to dock at the Mulberry, some LSTs would "dry out" by beaching at high tide to be unloaded at low tide. While hazardous, it was considered a necessary risk and proved successful.

To meet the increased demand for fuel as the Allies advanced across France, an under the channel pipeline was created, appropriately named Operation PLUTO (Pipe Line Under the Ocean). As with construction of the Mulberrys, PLUTO's facilities in England were camouflaged to reduce the risk of enemy air and rocket attacks. It became operational on August 12th. Overland pipelines were then constructed to move the fuel forward.

*"Second in daring only to the Mulberry Harbours, was PLUTO."
~ General Dwight Eisenhower*

Preparation

Computers were still in their infancy so calculations were done with slide rules. The planning was accomplished on yellow pads and with stubby pencils. General Montgomery's Battle Plan for D-Day was handwritten on one piece of paper.

Britain became a huge depot of equipment and supplies. The common joke was that if it were not for the air blimps used to defend against enemy aircraft, the Island would have sunk beneath the sea.

Ships are normally loaded to fully utilize capacity in terms of weight and volume as well as stability. Cargo and landing ships in OVERLORD were "combat loaded" so that units were discharged with their equipment and priority supplies could be unloaded first. Combat loading is a less efficient use of cargo space so more lifts were required to move the units and supply. Forecasting demand is equivalent to "best guessing." A resupply ship would wait in the Channel and break the queue if its load became critically needed.

Containers had not yet been invented. Boxes, barrels, bags, and crates of cargo would be manhandled onto a net. The net would then be lifted by a ship's crane and manually unloaded into a landing craft or ideally into a truck if the ship could be docked against the Mulberry. Loading or unloading a ship took several days.

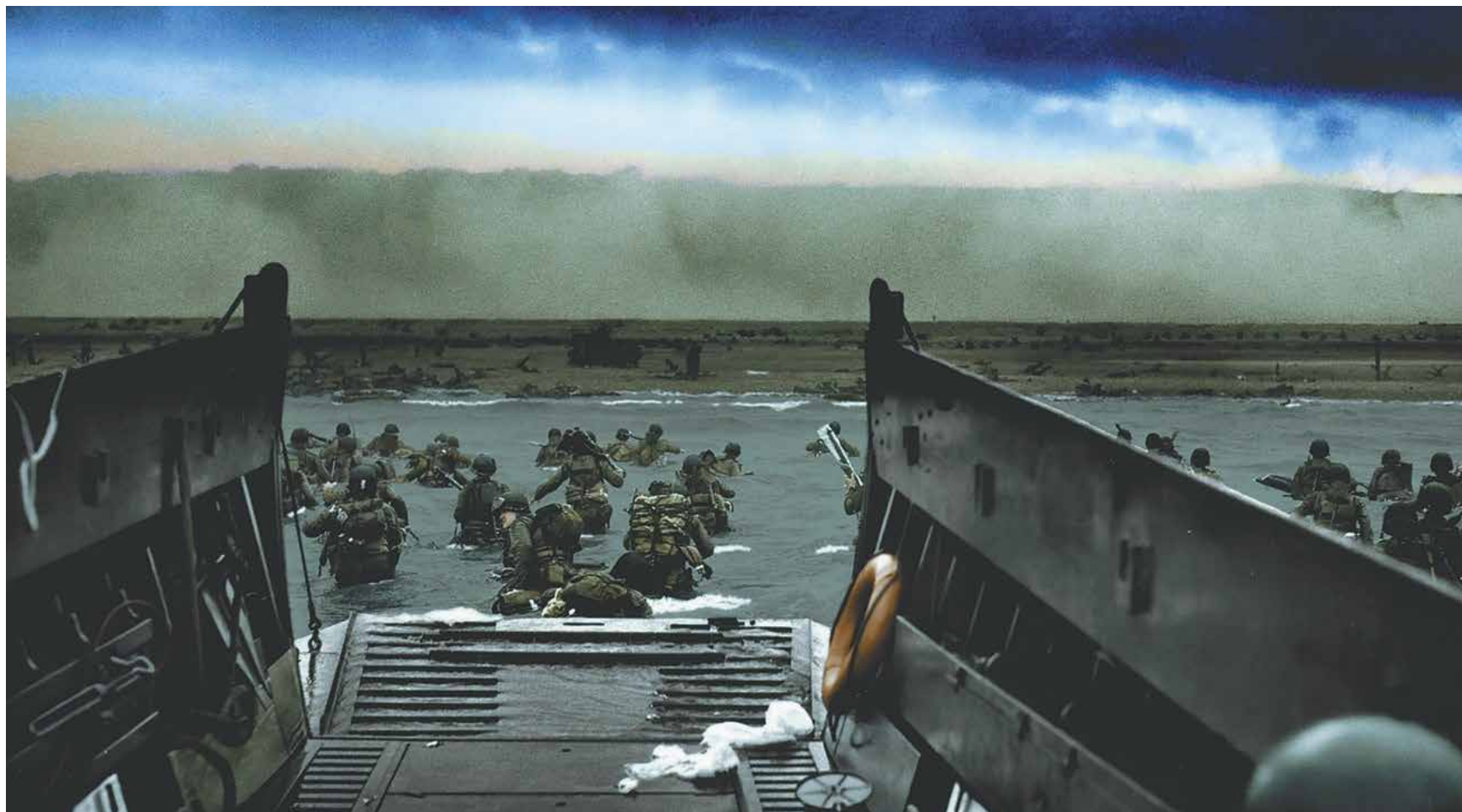
Riflemen would arrive on the beach carrying at least 68 lbs. of equipment – a heavy load when wading in the surf and under fire. Each soldier carried three combat meals and three survival meals. The units carried an additional three-days of meals for each man.

Initially fuel was packaged in 5-gallon jerricans, each weighing about 40 lbs. when full. Vehicles would carry additional jerricans in reserve. Jerricans were replaced with drums and fuel trucks as the beach was secured. Over 11.5 million jerricans were used in OVERLORD. If you placed the jerricans upright and side-by-side, they would cover 163 football fields.

Execution

*"No Plan Ever Survives Contact with the Enemy."
~ Helmuth von Moltke the Elder
Prussian Field Marshall*

General Eisenhower delayed the invasion for 24 hours due to weather.



One of WWII's iconic images shows GI's move ashore at Normandy from the ramp of a Higgins LCVD.

Subsequent waves of units were already enroute to the ports, adding to the congestion and confusion as the first wave still occupied the marshalling areas.

Severe weather was again experienced June 19-23. 8.5 ft waves and 30 knot winds were sufficient to destroy Mulberry A, which supported the American sector at Omaha Beach. Mulberry A was abandoned and salvaged parts were used to repair Mulberry B.

"In four days this Channel storm had threatened OVERLORD with greater danger than all the enemy's guns in 14 days ashore."

~ General Omar Bradley

Effective transportation requires delivery of cargo and information. There were no cell phones or satellites to aid communications. Manifests, huge documents which list the cargo on incoming ships, were supposed to have been delivered by air or watercraft but these methods proved ineffective. Without manifests, officers would have to go onboard each ship to find urgently needed supplies and equipment. Only partially unloading these ships further delayed resupply, as these ships could not return to England for reload as scheduled. The problem extended to troop movements as well. MG Gerow, the V Corps commander, personally flew back to England in search of a unit that had been reported to have deployed. It was still in its assembly area.

For the first two days, German artillery forced ships to stay out of range, some 12 miles offshore. This increased the turn-around time for

landing craft and, in some cases, critically needed DUKWs ran out of fuel and sank because they could not operate their bilge pumps.

Cherbourg on the Normandy Peninsula would significantly improve the Allies offload capabilities but it was not captured until June 29 (D+23). The Allies had gained great experience in clearing debris, booby traps, and mines in captured ports in Sicily and North Africa, but the first supplies could not be unloaded until July and the port was not fully operational until August. Until then the Allies relied on the remaining Mulberry, small, captured ports, and over-the-shore discharge.

Logistical shortages, especially ammunition, limited the Allies' ability to take advantage of a "target rich environment." As long as supplies had to cross the beach, artillery pieces were limited to just 25 rounds per day. Depending on the type of artillery, 25 rounds could be fired in less than ten minutes. Airlift provided emergency resupply.

End Result – Success

On June 6th, 1944, despite over 10,000 casualties, the Allies won the race to mass forces and had established a defensible foothold on Normandy. They had also amassed the necessary forces and supplies to breakout of the lodgment and begin a year-long campaign to Germany. Logistical challenges remained but the resourceful American and British logisticians in the tail made sure that teeth had what they needed.

Less than a year after D-Day, Germany unconditionally surrendered on May 7th, 1945.

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Walter Joseph (Joe) Marm from the Vietnam War and **Walter Ehlers** who was one of the greatest of the Greatest Generation.

Thanks for all of the suggestions for the next issue and also for ideas for other topics.

Ideas and suggestions are welcome. Send to: info@pearlharborday1941.com with "Ideas for You" in the subject line.



NAVY, MARINE CORPS & COAST GUARD

This medal is a five-pointed bronze star. It's tipped with trefoils and contains a crown of laurel and oak. In the middle of the medal is Minerva, symbolizing wisdom and war and personifying the United States.

Minerva stands with her left hand resting on the fasces, or a bundle of rods, and her right hand holding a shield that has the coat of arms of the United States blazoned on it. Minerva repulses Discord, which is represented by snakes, referencing the discord of the Civil War.

ARMY

This medal is a five-pointed bronze star. Each point is tipped with trefoils, and the entire star is surrounded by a green laurel wreath representing victory. The star and wreath are suspended from a gold bar with "VALOR" inscribed on it and held by an eagle symbolizing the United States.

The center of the star features the head of Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and war. Around Minerva's head are the words "United States of America," and each ray of the star has a green oak leaf, symbolizing strength.



AIR FORCE

Made of metal, bronze and gold plating, the current design includes a gold five-pointed star within a green laurel wreath. Each point of the star is tipped with trefoils and contains a crown of laurel and oak on a green background.

In the center of the star is an annulet of 34 stars circling the head of the Statue of Liberty to represent beauty, strength and wisdom. The word "VALOR" appears above an adaptation of the thunderbolt from the Air Force coat of arms.



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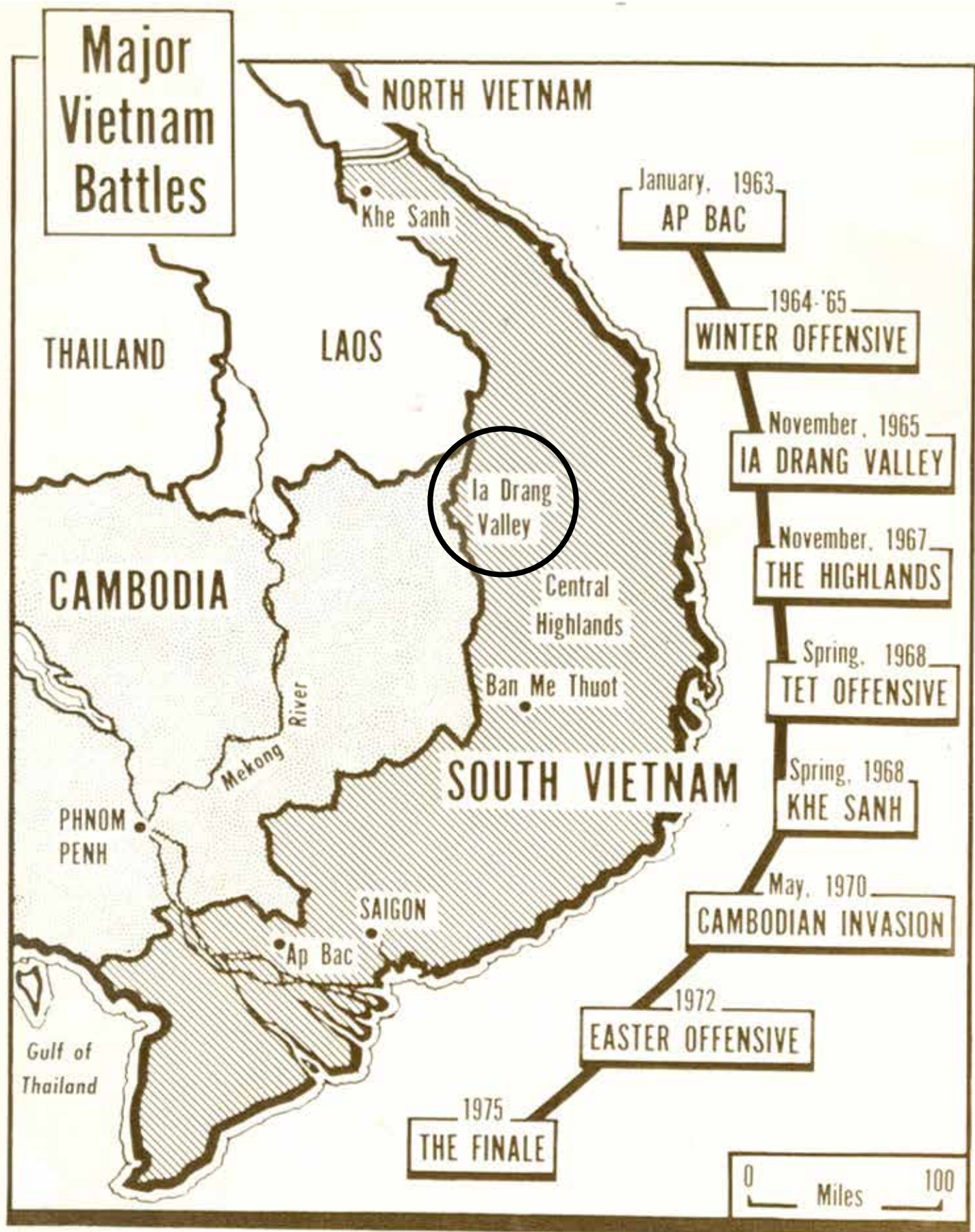
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Major Vietnam Battles





Retired Col. Marm wears the Medal of Honor in his home in Fremont, N.C.

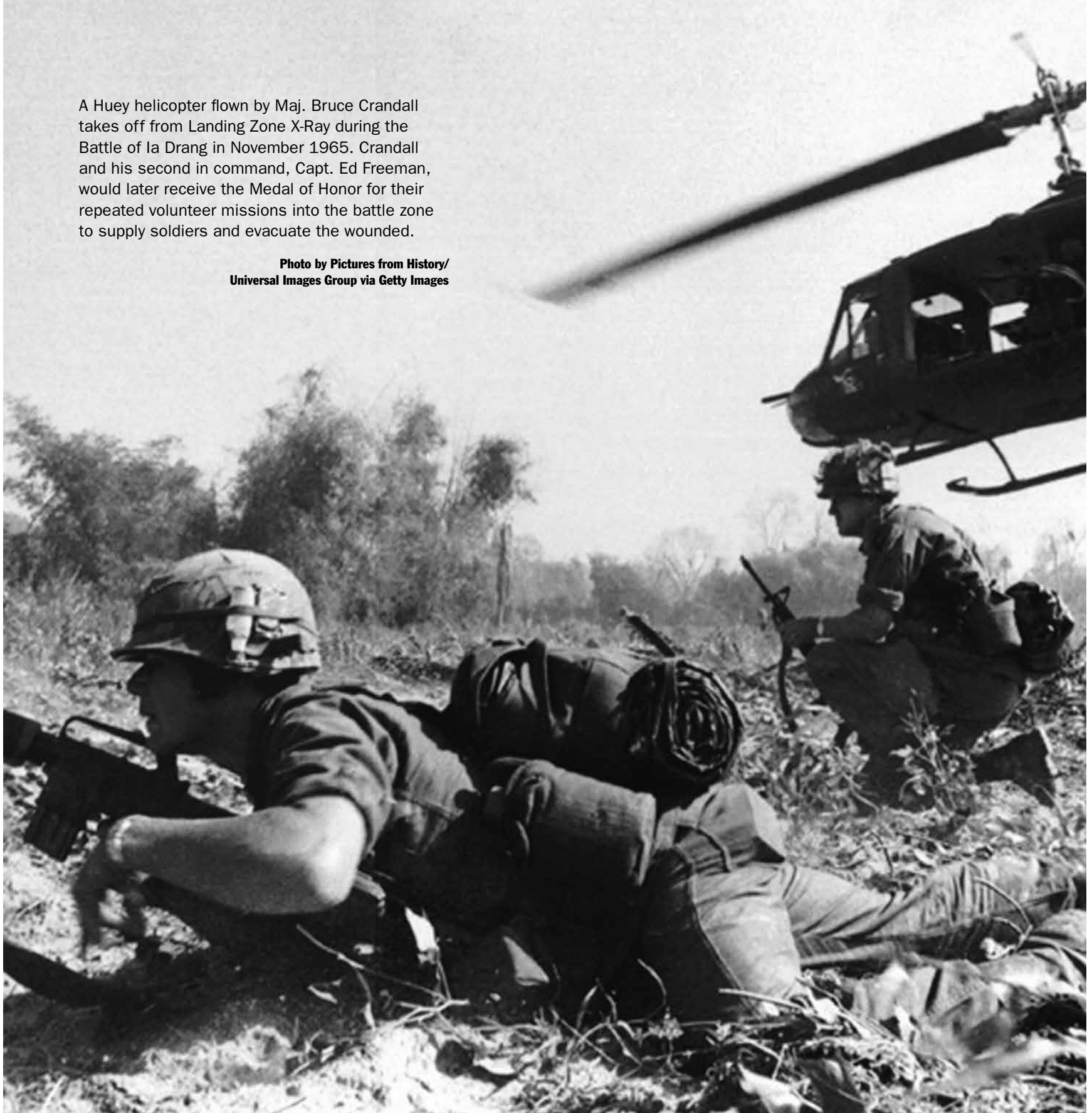
Courage *at* Ia Drang

Medal of Honor recipient
Walter Joseph Marm Jr. recalls the
1965 battle that changed the Vietnam War

Just months after 2nd Lt. Walter Joseph “Joe” Marm became an officer in the U.S. Army, he was disembarking from a helicopter in central Vietnam and leading a platoon into combat against the North Vietnamese Army. The ferocious fight in November 1965 became known as the Battle of Ia Drang, and it was the first major engagement of the Vietnam War - the Army’s first large-scale air assault by helicopter. Marm’s battalion commander, Lt. Col. Harold “Hal” Moore, and war correspondent Joseph Galloway told the story of Ia Drang in their 1992 book, *We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young*, calling it “the battle that changed the war in Vietnam.”

A Huey helicopter flown by Maj. Bruce Crandall takes off from Landing Zone X-Ray during the Battle of Ia Drang in November 1965. Crandall and his second in command, Capt. Ed Freeman, would later receive the Medal of Honor for their repeated volunteer missions into the battle zone to supply soldiers and evacuate the wounded.

**Photo by Pictures from History/
Universal Images Group via Getty Images**



Growing up in Washington, Pennsylvania, Marm had gone to Catholic school, served as an altar boy and excelled in Boy Scouts. He competed on the rifle team at Duquesne University, and it was his rifle coach who encouraged him to consider a military career. Days after graduation, he was on a train to basic training. Marm earned his commission in April 1965 and attended Army Ranger School before being deployed to Vietnam with the 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

A member of the Knights of Columbus since 1966, Marm spoke with Columbia earlier this year about the Battle of Ia Drang and the valiant actions that earned him the U.S. military's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor. The following account is adapted from that interview.

BUILDUP TO BATTLE

We were in the last phase of Ranger School in Florida when they called out 50 names and said, "Your orders are now changed. You aren't going to Fort Jackson; you're going to this unit up at Fort Benning." Rumor had it that the unit was going to Vietnam. And that's what happened - we signed into the 7th Cavalry Regiment, whose lineage goes back to Gen. George Custer. And a month later we were heading to Vietnam on a World War II merchant marine ship.

I didn't know much about Vietnam. I started going to the library and checking out books about Vietnam to see what

it was like. There's always a tension and fear of the unknown, but these troops had been training and working together and testing the helicopters in war games for over a year. It turned out to be a very, very good unit. They were excellent soldiers, and I was blessed to have skilled leaders too. It was a long 30 days on the ship. We were having classes and shooting off the rear of the ship with our new weapon, the M16 rifle.

The 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) arrived in South Vietnam in mid-September and established a base camp in the central highlands. At the same time, North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldiers began making attacks on South Vietnamese, American forces and their local allies. In response, U.S. Army leaders launched an air assault, landing the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, by helicopter in the Ia Drang Valley on Nov. 14, 1965.

We were looking for the enemy. Their heavy mortars and aircraft units had not arrived yet, which was good for us. But they were looking for the enemy, too - they were looking for us. We captured a few once we landed, and they said they wanted to kill Americans.

One of the platoons became trapped on the side of Chu Pong Mountain. They were surrounded by the North Vietnamese and needed help; they couldn't get out on their own. So our mission for the rest of that day was to try to get up there and get them out.

LEADING THE CHARGE

We made two attempts to get up there on Nov. 14. On the first attempt, we were taking too many casualties, so we had to pull back. Our battalion commander, Lt. Col. Hal Moore, said, "We're gonna go get them out with the entire unit." So we made a second attempt later in the afternoon. We prepped our positions as we were moving forward with artillery and mortar fire to try to silence the enemy. But the enemy was still there.

Ia Drang Valley isn't heavy jungle like some areas of Vietnam;

it's trees and shrubs and elephant grass, about neck high. Right in front of my position was a solidified anthill about 7 or 8 feet in height, with trees and shrubs around it. The NVA were using it as a machine gun bunker. I told one of my men to shoot a bazooka into it; it's a one-shot disposable tank-killing weapon. He opened it up and put it on his shoulder, but it didn't go off because of all the humidity and moisture. I took the weapon from him, closed and opened it up again, and it went off for me. It made a big boom and cloud of dust, and I thought we had destroyed the position. We started moving forward again, but we were still taking fire.

So I told one of my men to throw a grenade over the top of it. With all the battle noise, I used sign language, and he thought I meant to throw it from where we were at. He did, and it deflected and landed in front. It didn't do any damage.

So rather than waste any more time, I told my men, "Don't shoot me up," and I ran across about 30 meters of open terrain to the bunker. I threw a grenade over the top and ran around to the left side. There were still some bad guys who were trying to shoot me, but I was able to silence them. I told my men, "Come on, let's go; we gotta get to the platoon that's trapped."

And that's when I was wounded. I stood up and got shot in the jaw; it went in my left jaw and deflected downward and underneath my right jaw and out. I had to feel my mouth to see if it was still in place. My sergeant, Sgt. Tolliver - who was a medic in Korea and carried our aid bag - he patched me up, and a couple of my soldiers helped me back to the command post. I was evacuated later that day by helicopter.

NO MAN LEFT BEHIND

Two helicopter pilots - Bruce Crandall and Eddie "Too Tall to Fly" Freeman - were bringing all of our ammunition and resupplies to keep the battle going. Bruce and Ed also received the Medal of Honor for their heroic actions in that battle. It's one of the few battles in Vietnam where there were three Medal of Honor recipients.

The leader of the stranded platoon was killed, and his whole chain of command were killed or wounded. A young E5, a buck sergeant named Ernie Savage, took over. He called in artillery and mortar all around his position. He put a ring of steel around his position and was able to hold off three attacks from the enemy that night. In the morning on the 15th, two companies went up there, and we were able to get all the soldiers out, wounded and killed. Ernie Savage was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, which is the second-highest award for valor in combat, along with his medic, Doc Lose, who was in charge of keeping all the wounded alive. After three days of intense fighting, we lost 79 soldiers killed in action and 121 wounded in action.

"It turned out to be a very, very good unit. They were excellent soldiers, and I was blessed to have skilled leaders too."

~ Walter Joseph Marm Jr.



Above Photo by John Trice

(Above) Retired Army Col. Walter Marm holds his Medal of Honor, received for valor at the Battle of Ia Drang.

(Right) Then-1st Lt. Marm smiles with his father, Walter Marm Sr., a past grand knight of Washington (Pa.) Council 1083, after receiving the Medal of Honor on Dec. 19, 1966.



“You may have heard the expression ‘There are no atheists in foxholes.’ ... I believe I’ve never been as close to God as I was in combat.”

~ Walter Joseph Marm Jr.

outside ceremony, I was presented the medal by the secretary of the Army, Stanley Resor.

I was evacuated to a medical unit and then all the way back to an Army hospital in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. You know, God works in strange and mysterious ways. Another inch and the bullet would have hit my jugular vein, and I would have bled to death. I spent three months recuperating; my mouth was wired shut while the bone healed, and I was on a baby food diet.

A few months later, a reporter told me I was going to receive the Medal of Honor. And that was the first I heard of it. On a very cold December day - Dec. 19, 1966 - in an

Recipients of the Medal of Honor don’t have to go back into combat, but I felt I should pull my share of the hardship. I hated war, but I love being with soldiers. So I volunteered to go back in ’69, to the 1st Cavalry Division again, and I made it through the whole year without getting wounded.

You may have heard the expression “There are no atheists in foxholes.” You’re out there in a very tough area, and you’re sleeping on the ground or in a poncho liner, looking up at the stars. I would say the St. Michael prayer every day, and other prayers too. If I had the time, I would say the rosary. I believe I’ve never been as close to God as I was in combat.

Walter Joseph Marm Jr. joined the Knights of Columbus in December 1966, following the example of his father, Walter Marm Sr., a past grand knight of Washington (Pa.) Council 1083. “It’s a very special organization,” he said. “They do great things to help the Church and to help their fellow man.”

He went on to serve 29 more years in the Army, including three years as an instructor at the U.S. Military Academy, and retired as a colonel in 1995. Marm and his wife, Deborah have four children and nine grandchildren. They now live in eastern North Carolina, where he is a member of Msgr. Arthur R. Freeman Council 5487 in Goldsboro.

This article appeared in the November 2023 issue of Columbia magazine and is reprinted with permission of the Knights of Columbus, New Haven, Conn.

HONORING OUR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Front Row – left to right:
James McCloughan
Kyle Carpenter
Donald Ballard
Al Rascon
Bruce Crandall
Thomas Kelley
Harvey Barnum
James Taylor
Thomas Norris
Sammy Davis

Row 2: Left to right
Florent Groberg
Matthew Williams
Patrick Brady
Brian Thacker
Walter Marm
John Duffy
Gary Littrell
Britt Slabinski

Row 3: Left to right
Leroy Petry
William Swenson
Jay Vargas
Robert Ingram
Robert Patterson
Michael Fitzmaurice

Photo courtesy
of Congressional
Medal of Honor Society

PEARL HARBOR DAY OF REMEMBRANCE



Walter Ehlers

One of the greatest of the Greatest Generation

Written by Kris Cotariu Harper, EdD

With a promise and a pact, Walt Ehlers embarked on a journey which left him a revered national hero, considered by many as one of the greatest of the Greatest Generation.

Walter David Ehlers was born in the spring of 1921 to migrant farmers in a small farming community in Riley County, Kansas, the third of six children. He was raised with strong Christian values: faith in God, love of family, and loyalty to his country.

For the first eight years, Walt attended school in a one-room school house and worked farm chores for his father before and after his lessons. Having heard the instruction for all the levels for eight years, Walter did very well on the county exams and was able to continue on to high school. With his sister, Leona, he lived with his grandfather in Junction City in order to attend school there but left after three years when his parents moved to a new farming area. He graduated from a much smaller country high school in 1939.

The following year, with war looming on the horizon and the passage of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, Walt's eldest

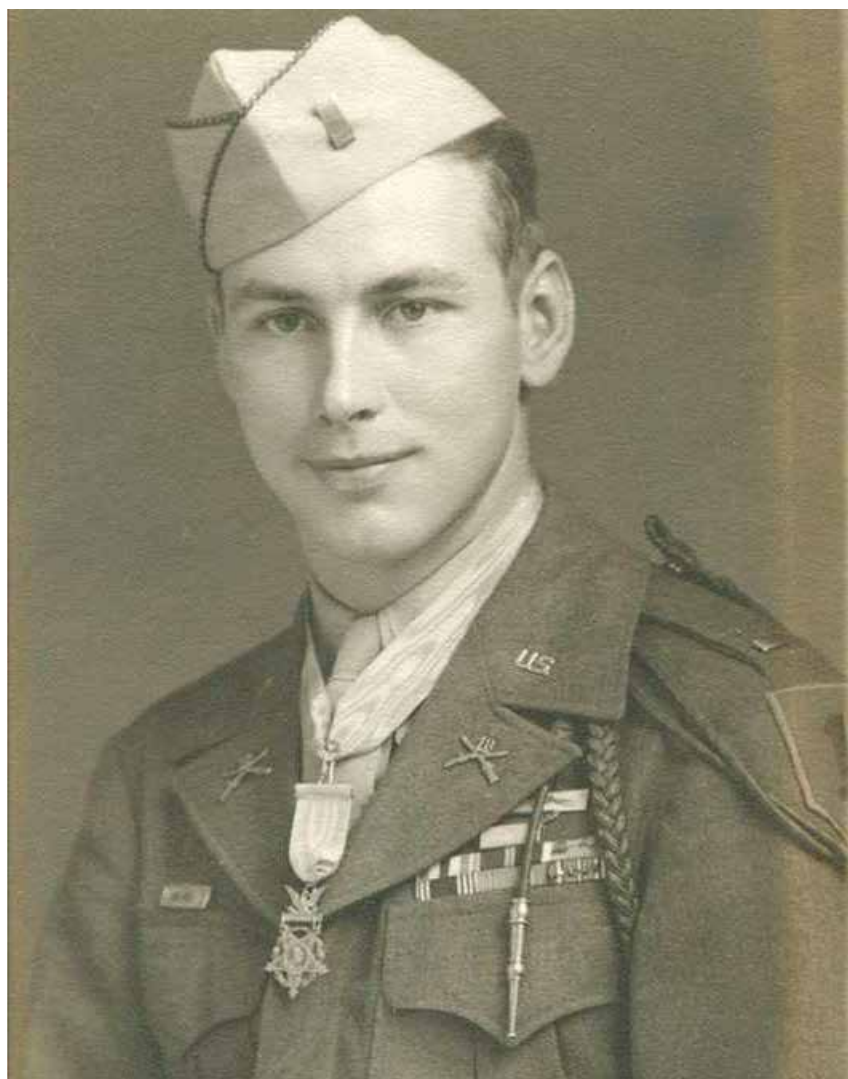


Photo from Nat'l WWII Museum

SSG [LT] Walter D. Ehlers

brother, Roland, four years older than he, announced he was going to enlist in the U.S. Army; Walt wanted to go with him, but needed parental permission as he was only 19 years old and still under-age. His father had no reservations about signing the papers but his mother extracted a promise from Walt before she would sign. In his oral history, Ehlers related, "[she] looked me square in the eyes and she said, 'Son,' she says, 'I'll only sign on one condition: you promise to be a Christian soldier.' So I told her ... 'I'll do my very best.'" (WDE Collection, n.d.). Before he left, his mother gave him a small bible that Walt carried through most of the war.

With their initial training complete, Walter and Roland were transferred to Camp Lewis. While skiing on Mt Rainier in Washington State, the Ehlers brothers learned of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. From a radio in the ski shack, the attack was announced; all military personnel were ordered to return to their duty stations immediately. Their first wartime assignment was to guard the airfield at Bellingham, Washington. After additional training, which included amphibious landings, the brothers were assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division (ID) and participated in the assault at Fedala, a small fishing village 15 miles northeast of Casablanca in French Morocco.

During this time, perhaps on the transport ship across the Atlantic, or perhaps after the assault at Fedala, the brothers recognized the possibility that one of them may be killed in combat. They made a pact that if one fell, he would forgive the other for not stopping to help. They recognized they had a job to do and the mission depended on every soldier doing his job.

The third Ehlers brother, Claus, older than Walter by 18 months, did not enlist with the other two but was drafted in 1942. He trained with the U.S. Army Rangers and served in the 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division (ID) in the Philippines. Claus survived the war, returned home and died in 2013.

Walter and Roland's company was selected as the honor guard for President Roosevelt at the Casablanca Conference and shortly thereafter was transferred to the 18th Infantry Regiment, 1st ID in Tunisia to serve as replacements for the large number of casualties in the Battle of Kasserine Pass. In July 1943, they participated in the next major offensive in the European Theater - Operation Husky, the landing on Sicily. During the assault, however, Roland was wounded from a mortar attack. He was evacuated to the medic station and from there to the field hospital across the Mediterranean in Bizerte, Tunisia. This was the first time since the brothers enlisted that they were separated.

Towards the end of that year, the 1st ID left Italy for the United Kingdom, to begin preparations for the next major offensive, the invasion of Normandy, Operation Overlord. The time in England was primarily focused on training, but the men were allowed furlough, that most used for a visit to London. Years later, Walt shared a story of an air raid during that time. The American GIs joined the British civilians in the underground light rail stations and were surprised at the calm that pervaded. The Brits continued their regular conversations while waiting for the all clear signal at which point they departed the underground and casually resumed their daily activities. Ehlers observed that, apparently, the GIs were a bit more shaken by the air raid than the civilians (WDE Collection, n.d.).

As preparations were made for the invasion, there was a command briefing, attended by both Ehlers brothers. As a result of the loss of the five Sullivan brothers on the USS Juneau two years earlier, the military attempted to keep siblings from going into combat together, particularly when high casualties were expected. As a result, Roland and Walter were separated; Roland stayed in Company K while Walter was transferred to Company L. Fifty years later, while standing on Omaha Beach at the anniversary commemoration, Walt recalled giving Roland a farewell wave as they left the briefing.

Walter Ehlers was one month past his 23rd birthday on June 6th, 1944 when he stormed Omaha Beach as part of the largest amphibious assault in the history of warfare. One of the events of the day of which Ehlers indicated he was most proud was the fact that he led all 12 of his men through the withering fire across, and off, the beach without a casualty among them.

The following night, Ehlers was assigned to lead the patrol following a German patrol that had entered their perimeter. The night was so dark, Ehlers' group could not see the enemy in front of them; they followed by sound and after some distance, they stumbled upon a bloody briefcase, apparently dropped by a wounded enemy soldier. Ehlers col-

**"Roland had
always been, &
would remain,
Walter's hero."**



Photo from Peace Memorial 101

Roland (left) and Walter Ehlers

lected the briefcase and, realizing it was pointless to continue, returned to company headquarters where he relinquished the portfolio to his commander. Upon opening it, they discovered maps delineating the planned lines of defense if the Germans were forced to retreat.

The morning of June 9th, Ehlers was leading his squad through the hedgerows indicated on the found map when he heard the sound of machine gun fire in the distance. As he had been trained, he led his men at a run towards the sound of the gunfire. The most combat-experienced in his group, Ehlers sensed the presence of the enemy before he saw them. He followed small rustling noises in the hedgerow until he came face-to-face with a patrol of four enemy soldiers and, unhesitatingly, shot them before they had the chance to kill him or his men. Having fixed bayonets, the squad continued up the hedgerow, Ehlers in the lead. He spotted another machinegun nest, ran forward and knocked the gunner out. When encouraged by his men to stab him, Ehlers, instead, chose to shoot him dead. Years later, he said, "I shot him, but I wasn't going to stab anyone with my bayonet if I didn't have to" (Martin, 2021). Ahead, Ehlers discerned two mortar emplacements which were prepared to fire. Ehlers called to the enemy stationed there to halt but, when the enemy saw the rest of the men coming up behind him, they turned and ran. Ehlers explained, "... we had to shoot them all in order to stop them ... or else [we] were going to have to fight them again" (Martin, 2021).

The following day, Ehlers was, again, leading his squad through the hedgerows when his commander determined they needed to approach from a different direction; Ehlers and his automatic rifleman voluntarily remained to cover the company retreat. As the two turned to rejoin their unit, Ehlers was shot in the back; fortunately, the bullet hit a rib, made a U-turn and exited his body. The automatic rifleman was also wounded and was down. In spite of his own wounds, Ehlers picked him up and carried him to the company assembly point. Under withering fire, he then returned for the other man's weapon. After the wounded rifleman was loaded into an ambulance, Ehlers asked for a medic to look at his back. At first, it appeared he had been shot through, but

upon examination, it was clear what happened – after being deflected by his rib the bullet had gone through his backpack and trench shovel. By any standards, Walter Ehlers should have died that day. Instead, he refused to be medevacked and continued leading his squad.

For his courage, leadership and these selfless actions in protecting the men in his squad, and in his company, over these two days, Walter Ehlers would be awarded the Medal of Honor.

On July 14th, Ehlers received a visit from his former company commander. Roland had died on D-Day when direct mortar fire hit the landing ramp of the Higgins boat from which Roland was disembarking. Walt acknowledged the message, excused himself, and went to his bunk to grieve for his brother in privacy. Roland had always been, and would remain, Walter's hero.

Ehlers remained with the 1st ID as they fought their way across northern France and into Belgium. In the fall, he was again wounded in the Hürtgen Forest and was sent to the rear for treatment. While riding the train to re-join his unit, Ehlers read an article in the American newspaper, The Stars and Stripes, that he was to be awarded the Medal of Honor. As Ehlers was reading, the soldier sitting across from him was also reading and, not knowing first names, told Walt that his brother was to be awarded the Medal of Honor. This was the first notice Walt received that he would be awarded this nation's highest recognition for valor in combat. Walter Ehlers received a battlefield promotion on December 9, 1944 and traveled to Paris later that month where he was presented the MOH by General John C. H. Lee on behalf of President Roosevelt.

Ehlers was given a 30-day leave that winter, which he used to visit his mother in Kansas, after which, he returned to Germany to join Company C in the Rhine River Valley. Ehlers survived the remaining months of the war with minor combat injuries and separated from the Army in the fall of 1945.

Walter Ehlers returned to Junction City, Kansas, and started college,

using the GI Bill but quickly realized it was not the right time for him to go to college. He became a benefits counselor for the Veterans Administration (VA), a position President Truman opened to all Medal of Honor recipients, and eventually transferred to the office in Southern California.

Once in California, Ehlers took acting classes in his spare time and met movie producer John Ford at a social gathering. Ford offered him a role in the movie he was producing, The Long Gray Line (1955), about the West Point class of 1915 and Ehlers offered his Medal to be used in the movie in one of the scenes.

Ehlers worked for the VA for more than 30 years. After retiring, he took a job with the DAV (Disabled American Veterans), from which he retired again, eight years later. While working for the VA and the DAV, Ehlers counseled veterans from every 20th century war, as well as the Spanish American War (1898). As a final job, he worked as a security guard for Disneyland, alongside two of his children. He was knighted by the Belgian government in 1996.

Years after the war, Ehlers' mother received a small package from Germany which contained the bible she had given Ehlers when he enlisted in the Army. Included in the package was a note telling her it had been found by children playing in the woods and that the author hoped her son had survived the war. The note, from a German man named Otto, is displayed in the National WWII Museum in New Orleans

Walter Ehlers died at the age of 92 on February 20, 2014 and is buried at Riverside National Cemetery, Riverside, CA

Years before he died, Walter Ehlers left a message for the generations that followed. In 1994, Ehler was the keynote speaker at the 50th anniversary commemoration of D-Day at Omaha Beach. He finished his speech with a final thought: "That wave [to Roland] in Southampton, England, was the last time I saw my brother. He died here, on Omaha Beach. That we can be here today proves that it was not in vain" (Ehlers, 1994).

"[She] looked me square in the eyes and she said, 'Son,' she says, 'I'll only sign on one condition: you promise to be a Christian soldier.' So I told her ... 'I'll do my very best.'"

~ Walter Ehlers
in reference to his mother

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Walter David Ehlers [WDE] Collection (AFC/2001/001/89674), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress (n.d.).

Kris Cotariu Harper, EdD is an Army wife and the daughter of two WWII Navy veterans. She is an educator and trainer who often writes and speaks on values demonstrated by Medal of Honor recipients. She is a graduate of Santa Clara University, University of Massachusetts, Lowell and NorthCentral University. Kris is the wife of BG Gil Harper [USA-Ret] and mother of three grown children.

FREEDOM

IS NOT FREE

A **Bronze Eagle**
with the ribbons
and *Medals of Honor* clasped in
his talons sits atop a
granite monument
in The Medal of
Honor Host City Park
in Gainesville, Texas.



PEARL HARBOR Medal of Honor Recipients

BENNION, Capt. Mervin S, *U.S. NAVY*

CANNON, First Lt. George H, *U.S. MARINE CORPS*

FINN, Chief Aviation Ordnanceman John W, *U.S. NAVY*

FLAHERTY, Ensign Frank C, *U.S. NAVY*

FUQUA, Lt. Cmdr. Samuel Glenn, *U.S. NAVY*

HILL, Chief Boatswain Edwin J, *U.S. NAVY*

JONES, Ensign Herbert C, *U.S. NAVAL RESERVE*

KIDD, Rear Admiral Isaac C, *U.S. NAVY*

PHARRIS, Gunner Jackson Charles, *U.S. NAVY*

REEVES, Chief Radioman Thomas J, *U.S. NAVY*

ROSS, Machinist Mate Donald K, *U.S. NAVY*

SCOTT, Machinist Mate Robert R, *U.S. NAVY*

TOMICH, Chief Watertender Peter, *U.S. NAVY*

VAN VALKENBURG, Capt. Franklin, *U.S. NAVY*

WARD, Seaman 1st Class James R, *U.S. NAVY*

YOUNG, Cmdr Cassin, *U.S. NAVY*

For more information on the above Medal of Honor recipients, go to Wikipedia for a detailed list with photos and explanation of actions which resulted in each person receiving the Medal of Honor.





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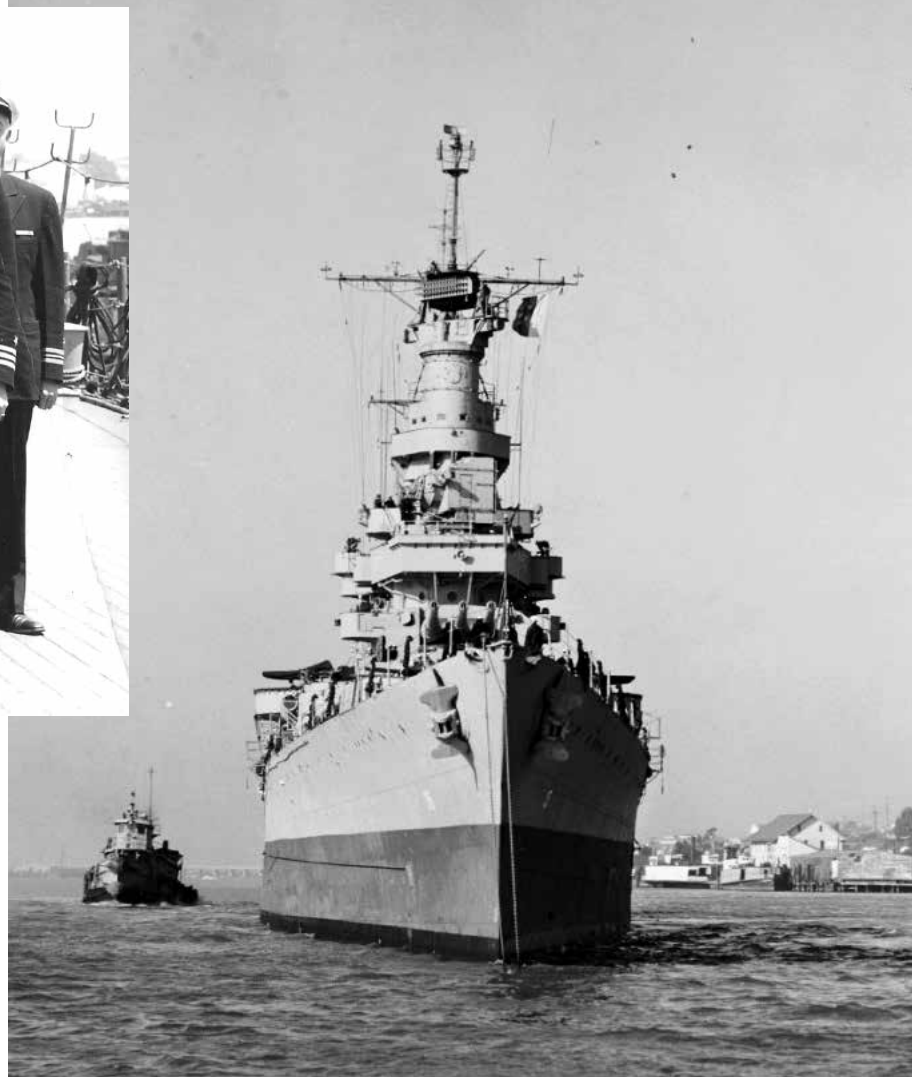
Jerry Headrick
 Realtor



(Above) Last photo of officers of the USS Indianapolis before leaving California with the A bomb.

Left to right front: Commander Johns Hopkins Janney, Captain Charles McVay, Commander Joe Flynn, Commander Glen F. DeGrave.

Back: Lieutenant Commander C. M. Christiansen, Lieutenant Commander Kasey Moore, Lieutenant Commander Dr. L. Haynes, Lieutenant Commander Earl Henry, Lieutenant Commander Charles Hayes



USS Indianapolis

Written by Matt Hollingsworth

In July, 1945, the USS Indianapolis delivered the most powerful weapon that had ever been created—the atomic bomb that would be dropped on Hiroshima. Four days later, the Indianapolis was sunk by a Japanese submarine, killing 879 of the ship's 1,195 crewmen, the greatest loss of life from a single ship in US history. Several of these crewmen were from East Tennessee, including Lt. Commander Kasey Moore and Lt. Commander Earl Henry from Knoxville. This is their story.

It is unknown if Moore and Henry were close friends, but they did know each other before their assignment on the Indianapolis. Twelve years earlier, Moore had written an article about Henry in the Knoxville Sunday Journal, discussing Henry's interest in taxidermy. The article notes that Henry planned on becoming a dentist and feared he would have to give up this hobby as, "People don't want a dentist who has been handling birds working on their teeth." Instead, Henry planned to take up bird painting, a hobby he would continue for the rest of his life. While the relationship between Moore and Henry is unknown, given that they were both officers of the same rank and were from the same town, it's easy to imagine they may have been friends. Earl Henry joined the Naval reserve in 1940 before the United States entered the war. In late October of 1941, he married his wife, Jane. On December 7th, the "date which



Left to Right: LCDR. K. C. Moore, damage control officer in special-made life jacket. The picture Earl Henry received of his wife and new-born son. Earl Henry. Earl and Jane Henry at dinner, Jane is pregnant in this picture.

will live in infamy,” his parents threw a party to celebrate the marriage. The last person to arrive at the party announced that he’d just heard on the radio that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor.

Two months later, Earl Henry went on active duty. He would spend much of the war at Parris Island, South Carolina, and later at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, but after about 15 months at the academy, Earl Henry volunteered for sea duty, believing that he should take his turn. On July 25, 1944, he joined the USS Indianapolis as the ship’s dentist, a year and a day before the ship’s fateful delivery of the atomic bomb. Meanwhile, Kasey Moore entered the Navy reserve the day after Pearl Harbor. At the time, he was planning marriage with his long-time girlfriend, Katherine. However, those plans were put on hold by the war. Originally, he was given a safe assignment as a Navy Public Relations Officer in Nashville, but just days before he was supposed to leave, he announced to Katherine that he had applied for sea duty. She was stunned. “You are thirty-three years old!” she said. “You don’t have to do that!”

Katherine’s book, *Good-bye Indy Maru*, records his response: “I don’t want my grandchildren to ask some day, ‘What did you do in the great war, Grandfather?’ I don’t want to say ‘I fought the war with a typewriter in Nashville, Tennessee.’” In the end, Kasey and Katherine would marry on July 23rd, 1942, just a week before Kasey left to join the crew of the Indianapolis. Over the course of the war, Kasey would enjoy precious little time during shore leaves with his wife and his daughter, Mary, from his previous marriage. Each moment with them was priceless.

Kasey Moore loved his family very much, but soon he fell in love with the Indianapolis as well. Katherine had even begun referring to it as the “other woman.” “When I’m with her,” Kasey told Katherine once, referring to the Indianapolis, “the pain of my separation from you is bearable. When I’m with you, my heart is filled with joy and I wonder how I can ever leave you; but when I’m with her, she fills my mind. She is always there. You do understand, don’t you?” Katherine later wrote, “I did understand, but I was always wary of her.” Earl Henry was still painting birds at this time, but he’d slowed down after boarding the Indianapolis. Only two of Earl’s paintings from this time survive. One piece he mailed to his wife, Jane, as a birthday gift. A message scribbled on the back reads: “Happy Birthday, Jane- baby—I love you! Your sassy husband, Earl.” Sassy was one of his favorite words, and it is sprinkled throughout his many letters to her. The other painting, dubbed “American Eagle in the Pacific” depicts a bald eagle clutching a bleeding serpent, an American flag waving in the background.

During one shore leave, Jane became pregnant with their son, who they would name Earl Henry, Jr. Earl Jr., never met his father who died just over a month after his birth, but he knows more about him than many people who grew up with their dads. Earl Jr. has countless letters



and postcards from his dad’s time in the war. He described what he’d put together about his father’s personality: “He was very obviously serious about birding, about dentistry, about family, but I don’t think he took himself overly-seriously. I think he had a lighthearted personality.”

In place of his bird paintings, Earl, Sr. began working on a painstakingly detailed model of the Indianapolis as a gift for his son. During one shore leave, Lt. Kasey Moore showed the model to his wife, Katherine, when she got to come aboard the ship. In her book, Katherine recalled, “The model of the INDY was the most beautiful thing I ever saw. It was about six feet long and perfect in every detail—rivets—‘life lines’ along the rails of dental silver, a tiny bell, the copper screen in the spud-locker door, gun turrets—everything that was top-side. The ship had been made of dental plastic and was as hard as tooth fillings. A peg in the bottom attached it to a base of polished teak.”

Since they both were from Knoxville, Katherine Moore offered to take the model home to Henry’s parents, but “Earl only smiled and shook his head,” saying that he’d take it himself when it was complete. In the end, the model would sink with the real Indianapolis. Perhaps it’s still within the wreckage, 18,000 feet beneath the ocean surface. Years later, Earl Jr. would look through the many surviving pictures taken aboard the Indianapolis for any photographs of the model, but he has never found one.

Around February, 1945, Kasey began having strange, foreboding feelings. In a letter to his wife, he wrote, “Several times of late I have seen you in the moonpath. You are always dressed in black and crying uncontrollably. You hold out your arms to me—and then disappear—” On March 31, 1945, the Indianapolis was struck by a Japanese plane in a kamikaze attack. In their book, “Indianapolis”, authors Lynn Vincent and Sara Vladic describe the scene: “The blast shook Indy with seismic force... All over the ship, men fell against bulkheads or to their knees,



USS
Indianapolis
Memorial

doused in showers of grime and dust. Gear tore loose and clattered to the deck. The force of the blast ruptured portions of the deck, jacked others up at angles, buckled framing, and wrinkled Indy's skin like the corrugated roof on a shed." Nine men died in the explosion, and Earl Henry had to identify them by their dental records. Meanwhile, Kasey Moore, as the ship's damage control officer in charge of hull integrity, examined the gaping wound the kamikaze strike had left in their hull. The ship limped back to Mare Island, California, for repairs, and the crew were given well-deserved shore leave.

Earl Henry traveled home while Kasey sent word to Katherine and his daughter Mary who quickly booked passage by train to join him. During this time, Kasey worked night and day repairing the Indianapolis, trying to fix it as quickly as possible, although there didn't seem to be any particular rush. In the end, he would finish repairs just in time for the ship to be chosen to carry the atomic bomb, forever securing a place in history for the ship he loved. If he hadn't finished in time, a different, slower ship might have been chosen, and perhaps the bomb would have never made it past the armies of lurking Japanese submarines and warships.

That day, Earl Henry received a letter from his wife with pictures of his newborn son. She had given birth prematurely, just five days after shore leave ended and Earl had had to return to the ship. Earl showed the pictures to everyone he could, and he sent a response beginning, "Baby angel, those two wonderful pictures came today, and I am delighted as can be over them!"

In that letter, on the back of his officer calling card, he wrote a note to his newborn son: "To Earl Jr.—if I make as good a Dad as your mother does a mother, you'll be O.K. Love, Earl." These pictures were the only time he ever saw his son in this life. Four days later, the Indianapolis was struck by a torpedo from a Japanese submarine. So dire was the situation that even Lt. Commander Moore, for whom the Indianapolis was "the other woman," asked the captain if he wanted to abandon ship. The Indianapolis sank in just 12 minutes, and due to the secrecy of their mission, it took four days for the survivors to be rescued. Many would die in the water, but Earl Henry Sr. and Kasey Moore likely didn't even make it that far. While their fates aren't known with certainty, one fellow crewman believed Henry died in the initial explosion while reclining in his bunk. Moore was last seen in the mess hall, unwinding a fire hose in an attempt to save his beloved ship.

On August 15, Jane Henry received a telegram informing her that her husband was missing in action. As she wept, the church bells began to



ring followed by shouts of joy, because right at that moment, news had arrived of Japan's surrender. Their wedding celebration had occurred the day Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, and now Jane had learned of her husband's death on the exact day Japan surrendered. Their marriage history had traced the timeline of the war. For Katherine and Mary, the news was equally bitter. Mary's biological mother, Kasey's first wife, had abandoned her years ago, and now she'd lost her father too. Katherine's marriage had been cut tragically short, and her husband was now buried within the ship he so loved. But their loss was not without purpose. Kasey Moore and Earl Henry are heroes who helped hasten the end of one of the bloodiest wars ever fought. Without the bomb, America would have been forced to stage a land invasion of Japan that would have cost hundreds of thousands of American lives. The author of this article is the grandson of a man who fought in the Pacific Theater, who could have easily died in such an invasion. I may never have been born without the bravery of Knoxvilleians Kasey Moore and Earl Henry. For that, I am forever grateful.

At the north end of Canal Walk in Indianapolis, IN, you'll find the national memorial for the USS Indianapolis, which was torpedoed and sunk by Imperial Japanese Navy submarine I-58 on July 30, 1945. The memorial was formally dedicated in 1995, 50 years after the sinking. The memorial commemorates the 1,195 crewmen, of which only 316 survived the sinking, dehydration, exposure, and shark attacks. The death toll of 879 was the largest single disaster at sea in U.S. Navy history.

Mare Island and the Bombs

On 14 February 1945 The USS Indianapolis had just rejoined Adm. Marc A. Mitscher's fast carrier task force which was planning an attack on Tokyo to cover the invasion of Iwo Jima.

After participating in that raid and another on Kyushu, Indianapolis was sent to Okinawa where she spent seven days pouring 8 inch shells onto the beach defenses. American ships were constantly being bombarded and the Indianapolis shot down six planes and damaged two others. But on 31 March her luck ran out and the ship's lookouts spotted a Japanese fighter headed toward the bridge. The ship immediately began firing, but it was too late.

The enemy pilot, before crashing into the water on the port side of the ship, was able to launch his 500 lb. bomb from a height of 25 feet and it went through the deck, into the mess hall, down into the berthing compartment and through the fuel tanks before crashing through the keel and exploding in the water underneath the ship. Two huge holes were torn in the keel and flooded nearby compartments. Nine crewmen lost their lives and 29 were injured. Listing to port she headed to a salvage ship for emergency repairs, but it was discovered that her propeller



The Plutonium Bomb - "Fat Man"

shafts were damaged, her fuel tanks were leaking and her water distilling equipment was inoperative. She was sent across the Pacific under her own power to Mare Island for more extensive repairs than could be accomplished at a forward operating base. She arrived at Mare Island on 1 May 1945. Expecting to be here about four months, Capt. Charles B. McVay, a third-generation Navy man, had his new wife join him and many of the other men got leave and went home to see their families.

While at Mare Island there was a major turnover in personnel, many of them new sailors and some "90 Day Wonders" (officers) were also assigned to the ship. McVay was more than a little concerned about the inexperience of this crew. Would they be ready when the ship was scheduled to sail? Work on the ship commenced and while here she received a new port quarter, new radio and radar equipment and new fire control mechanisms. When the repairs were completed, she was to be sent out for a week of sea trials to make sure she was ready to return to duty. Meanwhile in another corner of Mare Island Naval Shipyard in an inconspicuous building labeled 627A, another mission was taking place. Mare Island had been chosen by the scientists at Alamogordo to pack the parts for the A-bombs for shipment to Tinian Island. MINSY was selected because of its success in packing cargo for the South Pacific without it being damaged in shipment, but more importantly, without damage from humidity.



USS Indianapolis preparing to leave Tinian after delivering atomic bomb components.



The A-bomb components had been flown from New Mexico to Hamilton Field in Novato, CA, just across San Pablo Bay from MINSY. For that voyage, an irreplaceable part of the shipment was packed in a 15 foot crate and kept under the watchful eyes of two Army officers, Major Robert Furman, an engineer, and Capt. James Nolan, a radiologist, both of whom were identified as “artillery officers.” After off-loading the components were brought to Bldg. 627A. Project Alberta was the code name for the transporting of the materiel to Tinian Island and it is believed that Mare Island was involved in two parts of this project.

One was the Bronx Shipments which were the irreplaceable parts of the bombs and were sent on the Indianapolis. These included a uranium projectile which would be shot from the “gun” at a “target” piece of uranium (flown to Tinian from Wendover Field in Utah) which would create the critical mass and cause the explosion, as well as the fifteen foot crate previously alluded to. The other part of the project was the Bowery Shipments and these were the replaceable parts of the bombs such as special lenses and the “pumpkins.” Pumpkins were high explosive bombs in the exact shape of the Fat Man bombs which were to be used to train the crews and get them used to the ballistics of dropping these bombs.

The pumpkins had been designed by the Manhattan Project as non-nuclear replications of Fat Man bombs. (Only one uranium bomb was built because of the difficulty and time required to manufacture enough of the fissile uranium for Little Boy type bombs.) A total of 486 pumpkins were built, some live and some inert. They were used by the crews and bombardiers training at Wendover, as well as the crews flying from Tinian Island who were using live, high explosives versions. 49 were dropped on Japanese cities, one went into the ocean and two were on aborted missions. The Tinian crews had the restriction that they could not drop the high explosive pumpkins on Hiroshima, Nagasaki or any of the other cities which were determined to be possible targets for the actual A-bomb.

There is speculation that they were called pumpkins because they were painted a pumpkin orange. However, all existing photos show them painted with the same primer as all other bombs. Items packed as part of the Bowery Shipment were likely shipped out of Port Chicago, a support unit of Mare Island, after they had been lightered there from MINSY. Eventually Mare Island packed five shipments which went to Tinian by water. The first two batches were critiqued upon arrival at Tinian. A lieutenant was flown 5500 miles from Tinian to San Francisco in order to directly inform the supervisors at Mare Island of the condition of the shipments upon arrival on Tinian. Batches three, four and five were most important, in fact so important, that those first two had been for practice only. Meanwhile the work on the Indianapolis was accelerated by around –the-clock work by shipyard workers.

Four months of work were completed in two and half. Capt McVay was told he had one day to complete his shakedown cruise, not a week. For some unknown reason 2500 life jackets were put aboard during re-supply, more than twice the number required. It would

later turn out to be a blessing. She sailed out on 14 July and returned on 15 July. On her return McVay was told to report to San Francisco and meet with two officers – Admiral William Purnell and Captain William (Deak) Parsons, the associate director of the Manhattan Project and the man who super-vised the shipments from Project Alberta at Mare Island.

Parsons briefed McVay that he was carrying a secret cargo and it would have a major impact on the war effort. He said to McVay, “ You will sail at high speed to Tinian where your cargo will be taken off by others. You will not be told what the cargo is, but it is to be guarded even after the life of your vessel. If the ship goes down, save the cargo at all costs, in a lifeboat if necessary. And every day you save on your voyage will cut the length of the war by just that much.” McVay was then sent back to Mare Island to bring his ship to Hunter’s Point Shipyard in San Francisco where the cargo would be loaded. Once again Maj. Furman and Capt. Nolan accompanied the cargo. They

thought the ship looked magnificent, but had not been told that it had long been speculated that her center of gravity was too high and she would capsize almost immediately if she took a clean torpedo hit.

Their accommodations were like being on a luxury cruise as they were berthed in the flag lieutenant’s cabin where the bucket, with half the fissile uranium in the US worth \$300 million, had been bolted to the floor. The 15 foot long crate, with all the screws countersunk and sealed carefully with red wax so no one could attempt to open it, was lashed to the deck and guarded by a Marine guard at each corner 24 hours a day. Speculation among the crew was rampant – some thought it was a secret rocket, others that it was Rita Hayworth’s underwear and still others were betting it was gold bullion to bribe the Japanese to end the war. It actually carried the integral components of Little Boy. Eventually McVay sent for Nolan, who explained to the captain that he was not an artillery officer but a medical officer, and he could assure the captain that cargo did not contain any-

thing that would be dangerous to the crew or the ship. (The “target” uranium was being flown to Tinian and without it there could be no “explosion.”)

The Indianapolis set sail the morning of 16 July at 0830 with an intermediate stop at Pearl Harbor for refueling. Averaging over 29 knots for the first stage (a record) she got to Hawaii on 19 July. Five hours after arriving she set sail for Tinian 3300 miles away and arrived there on 26 July where her cargo was offloaded. Indianapolis was then ordered to Guam. She arrived on 27 July and received orders to head to Leyte in the Philippines for two weeks of training prior to joining Task Force 95 which would be a major element in the invasion of Japan scheduled for 1 November. Before leaving Guam on 28 July, McVay requested an escort. The request was denied.

On 30 July the Indianapolis was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. In less than twelve minutes she capsized and sank. Many of those extra lifejackets ended up floating and were used by men in the water. Many men were horribly burned or had broken bones and died within hours of sinking. But the worst was yet to come – within hours sharks appeared and their numbers would increase over the

The Marines were told it was “live ammunition duty” which mean each of their guns had a live round in it to shoot anyone who tried to tamper with the crate.



USS Indianapolis (CA35)

next five days. It is believed that sharks killed at least 200 sailors.

At Leyte on 1 August, no one noticed that the Indianapolis had not arrived. Had someone noticed – searches would have occurred within a day of the sinking, but no one went looking. On the fourth day, 2 August, just by chance, a Navy pilot on a routine anti-submarine patrol noticed the men in the water. He radioed their position and soon planes arrived. The crews threw out their own life-saving gear to the men in the water and then watched in horror as more sharks arrived and attacked the men. Eventually a PBY Catalina flying boat made an unauthorized landing in the open sea and while receiving information from planes flying overhead was able to pluck 56 sailors, some near death, from the water.

They had to wait for surface ships to arrive for medical care and the PBY was eventually sunk as she was unable to fly again. By 3 August, 321 men had been plucked from an area of several hundred miles. Capt. McVay and his group were among the last to be rescued. Four of the men died; there were 317 survivors from a crew of 1196. To add insult to injury, Capt McVay was court-martialed and found guilty for hazarding his ship by failing to zig-zag, though the Japanese submarine commander testified it would have made no difference if he had.

His punishment was to lose 100 places in grade, making promotion impossible. He remained in the Navy until 1949, but never again served aboard a ship. Burdened by the death of his wife, the death of his favorite grandson and hate letters from families of crew members

who had died, he committed suicide in November 1968 by shooting himself on the front steps of his home in Connecticut. At the first crew reunion his former crewmen told him they wanted to clear his name. His response was “I got what the regulations called for – I got what I deserved.” However, they continued to fight for years to have his record cleared. Finally, in 2000, Congress passed a joint resolution acknowledging the wrongful conviction of Capt McVay. Though the resolution was signed by President Clinton, only the Navy could exonerate him. On 13 July 2001, the Secretary of the Navy, Gordon R. England, took that action. The Navy also awarded a citation to the Indianapolis and her crew for having successfully delivered the A-bomb components to Tinian.

On July 30, 2020, the United States Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal—its highest civilian honor—to the Final Crew of the USS Indianapolis CA 35 during a ceremony at the Indiana War Memorial. The virtual ceremony was held on the 75th anniversary of the loss of the vessel. USS Indianapolis preparing to leave Tinian after delivering atomic bomb components.

After the sinking, the crew “fought to stay alert, to look after each other — literally to hold on for dear life,” “Those who perished in the water gave our nation the ultimate sacrifice ... but the true legacy of the Indianapolis was secured before those torpedoes struck,” Senator Mitch McConnell said. “Her crew turned the tide of the war. So to her crew members who are still standing watch: Your Congress and your nation say thank you.”

This article was written by former Mare Island Museum Librarian Barbara Davis and it first appeared in the museum's newsletter in 2013.

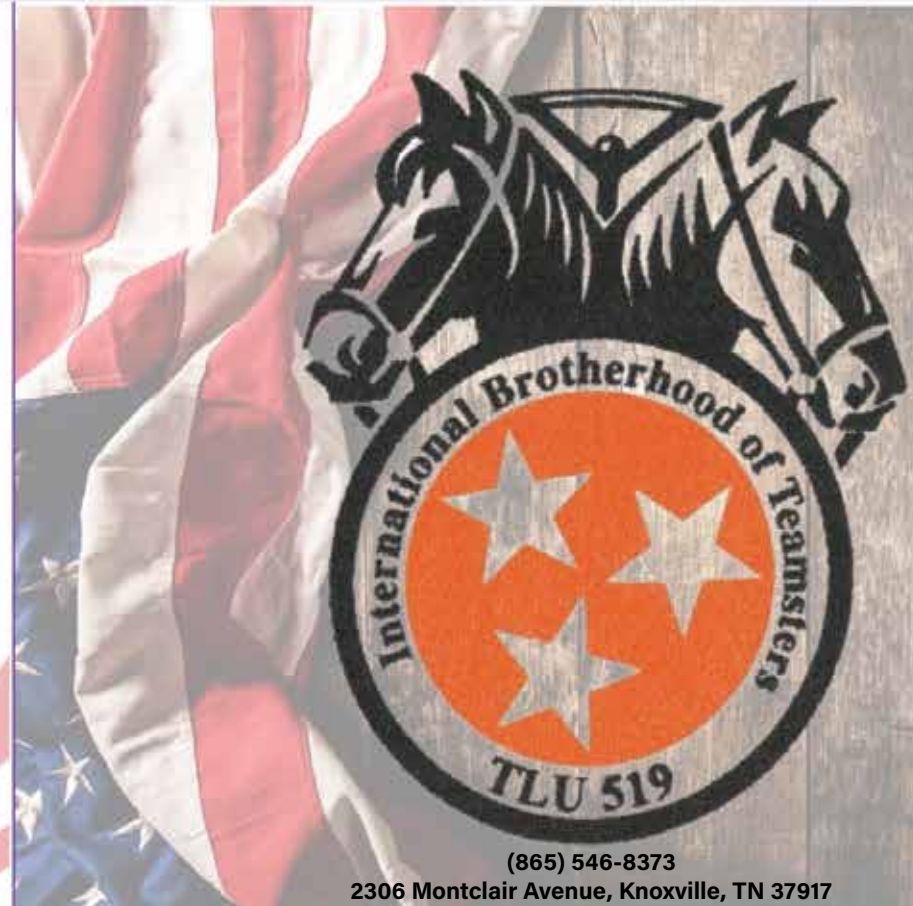


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Gordon and long-time friend & companion

A.G. HEINS COMPANY HISTORY

A. G. Heins Company was incorporated in the State of Tennessee in December 1920 by its founder; Albert G. Heins, Sr. A.G. Heins Sr., began his sales career on horseback for the Philip Carey Manufacturing Company and decided to open his business at the beginning of the "Roaring Twenties." Through Mr. Heins' leadership, the company survived the Great Depression of 1929 and was able to pay off all debts to the Hamilton National Bank of Knoxville. When the country entered World War II, Albert G. Heins, Jr., son of the founder, proudly served in the U.S. Army. At the end of the war, A.G. Heins, Jr. returned to work at the company. Along with long time loyal employee, Ruth L. Love, the company prospered during the Baby Boomer years of the 50s, 60s, and 70s. At the beginning of the 80s, A.G. Heins, Jr.'s son Albert Gordon Heins III, a registered architect in the State of Tennessee, joined the family business. At one time in the early 80s, all three generations of the Heins family were involved in the operation of the business. Upon the passing of A.G. Heins, Sr. in 1984, A.G. Heins, Jr. served as president until his son, Gordon was promoted to president in 1991. Jon B. Williams guided the company into the 21st century.

In the mid 2000s, both of Gordon's sons, Jacob and Alex, joined the business to extend the legacy of the company into its fourth generation. As in the early 80s, at one time in the 2000s, three generations of the Heins family worked in the business. Joining the company in 2012, Anna, daughter of Gordon and Becky Heins, continues the family legacy with four generations of family involvement.

After 100 years of earning the East Tennessee construction industry's trust, A.G. Heins Company has undoubtedly earned its business motto –

"Building materials since anyone can remember."





A Hero to Remember

By Matt Hollingsworth

The crash had been deafening. Fire leapt from the open elevator shafts. Black smoke filled the air, so thick that the woman could hardly see. She was afraid to even move. Then suddenly, a young man appeared, a red bandana covering his mouth and nose to protect him from the smoke.

“I’ve found a stair,” the man said. “Follow me.” The woman wouldn’t learn the name of her rescuer until much later—Welles Remy Crowther. And on September 11, 2001, he led as many as 18 people out of the inferno of the upper floors of the South Tower of the World Trade Center and to the safety of the streets below.

In the years after his death, Crowther’s story would become famous. He was a 24-year-old equities trader working on the South Tower’s 104th floor. When the plane hit the tower between floors 77 and 85, it created a barrier; most of those below the impact escaped, while most of those above were trapped. Only 18 people escaped from above the impact zone, most of whom owe their lives to Crowther who found the one remaining staircase that had been left open by the crash. When the tower fell, he was on the first floor, so close to safety. He could have fled, but instead, he stayed with the firefighters, planning another rescue mission to save those still trapped above.

Perhaps you’ve heard his story. I’m sad to say that I had not heard of him before I was assigned to write about Aspire park’s Service and Sacrifice Memorial in Clinton, Tennessee. The memorial honors all those who, like Crowther, gave their lives for others. Perhaps it’s not too surprising that I’d never heard of Crowther, as I was only four years old when the towers fell. I’ve grown up in a post-9/11 world. The attack was something I learned in school, a distant tragedy like Pearl Harbor.

It wasn’t until I watched a documentary on Crowther as research for my assignment that the attack truly came alive. Perhaps that’s the power of a story like his, to put a face on those facts that seem so distant. He was a man who, in the middle of a crisis, while everyone else panicked, leapt into action, saving others at the cost of his own life. As a Christian, it’s hard to imagine anything more heroic, more like Jesus Christ himself.

That’s why I’m so proud to have contributed in small ways to Aspire park. The memorial is not just for Crowther. It is for all who have sacrificed for others, especially the men and women who have served in the military or as first responders. Praise God for those willing to sacrifice for others. May we all aspire to be like them, and may we never forget their names.

*Aspire Park is now open.
777 Aspire Drive, Clinton, TN 37716
alwaysaspire.com*

An Aspiration Fulfilled

By Matt Hollingsworth

“Wow.”

That’s about all I can say surveying the 355 acres of Aspire in Clinton, Tennessee, the largest privately-owned, free-to-the-public park in the Southeast.

There are multiple buildings, tons of activities, and perhaps most important of all, the Service & Sacrifice Memorial, which honors men and women who have sacrificed for others, especially members of the military.

This park has been a passion project for my uncle, Joe Hollingsworth Jr., who has been working on it tirelessly for the past five years. I’ve heard updates at every family gathering, but I’ve not had an opportunity to actually look through the full park since the early days. Today, the park is having a soft opening ceremony with Joe’s friends and family.

I knew Aspire was going to be epic, but seeing it in person... Joe is an awesome man who never does things small, but he has truly out Joe-ed himself this time. We hop aboard a van to tour the Exchange (an open-air pavilion), the Launch (a facility on the Clinch River where people can fish, kayak, or just relax), the Onward and Upward Center, the Pearl restaurant, a playground, a dog park, an incredible bike course, and so much more. And when we’re done, Joe informs us that all that we’ve seen so far is only 1/5 of the total area of the park. There are also miles of carefully crafted hiking and biking trails in the hills beyond.

I ask Joe what made him want to build Aspire, and he explains how he wants to inspire people, especially kids, to achieve their full potential. He wants every kid to understand what makes him or her unique and to value that. He says, “We need to celebrate the differences because they will make you who you are... We hope that anybody who drives into Aspire feels better about themselves and their goals.”

For many people, however, the most important part of the park is the memorial, mentioned above. At the center are 13 spires representing the 13 original colonies. Together they form a staircase representing the stairs of the South Tower of the World Trade Center where the heroic Welles Remy Crowther led others to safety, ultimately giving his own life. A statue of Crowther stands nearby opposite a replica of the liberty bell, partially made with actual metal from the World Trade Center. Around the central spires stand plaques honoring every branch of the United States military, and beyond that is a walking loop with the names of the fifty states.

I couldn’t be prouder of my uncle’s accomplishment. If you are in Clinton, Tennessee, I highly recommend a trip to Aspire.

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Clinton, TN 37716*



Memorial for unclaimed veterans

Dignity Memorial Homeless/Unclaimed Veteran Burial Program, East Tennessee Regional Forensic Center and East Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery held a memorial service for eight unclaimed veterans at the East Tennessee Veterans Cemetery, 2200 E. Governor John Sevier Hwy., Knoxville, TN 37920 on March 22, 2023.

Full Military Honors were provided for:

Sergeant First Class Jerry Alan Palmer (1950-2022),
US Army, Retired (1968-1988), Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

Specialist 5 David Brent Bledsoe (1952-2021),
US Army (1972-1978,) US Army Medical Research Institute-Infectious Diseases,
Fort Detrick, Maryland.

Specialist 4 Robert Daniel Edwards (1954-2023),
US Army (1974-1976), 122nd Maintenance BN/770th Maintenance Company,
Army National Guard, Knoxville.

Private First Class Terrell Wayne Biggerstaff, Jr. (1960-2022),
US Army (1980-1982), Company C. 1st Battalion, 58th Infantry.

Aviation Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Charles Robert McMeans (1956-2022),
US Navy (1974-1978), USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63).

Private Joseph Norman McGoldrick (1944-2021),
US Army (1961-1962), US Army Armor School, Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Private Fredrick Joseph Chase (1956-2021),
US Army (1976-1977), Company C., 4th Battalion, 3rd Basic Combat Training ,
Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Private Paul Deen Alexander (1957-2022),
US Army (1975), Company C., 11th Battalion, 5th Basic Combat Training,
Fort Knox, Kentucky.



Remembering those who serve.

As we honor the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, we thank those who bravely defended our freedoms during this important moment in our nation's history.

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Our mission statement

The Veterans' Appreciation Program of Tennessee is a business born on Veterans Day 2015 by a disabled Veteran from the Vietnam era. The organization aspires to enlist and promote concerned businesses committed to providing discounts on products or services to Veterans and the Military that has given so much to us.

The website, veteransappreciationprogram.com lists businesses in East Tennessee that give discounts to Veterans and Military. The Veterans and Military benefit because of the businesses gratitude and appreciation as a contributor in thanking them for their service.

In addition to helping them, you will be supporting your own business as members of Veterans and Military organizations become aware of your discount and visit your business.

Also the organization offers a decal to post on your door or window of your business identifying you as a member of the Veterans Appreciation Program.

They contribute to Veterans organizations such as The Ben Atchley State Veterans Home. Further they assist to provide a bridge to Veterans to fulfill their needs by being a source of information for Veterans services and providing help, especially to rural placed Veterans, that may have been ignored, forgotten or have given up looking for help out of frustration.



Larry Sharp (left) with the Veterans Appreciation Program presents a check to Doug Ottinger (right). Administrator of the Ben Atchley State Veterans Home

If you are interested in becoming a part of this worthy organization,
Please send an email to veteransappreciationprogram@gmail.com or call Larry Sharp at 865-603-1974

Charles R. Burchett

Congressman Tim Burchett
shares his father's story

By Jack Coker

There is an art to being a father figure. It's a balancing act of sorts. We expect for a father to possess the emotional range that enables him to care for his child's first scraped knee, and the strength to guard against any threat to his family. These basic paternalistic functions are pertinent to many sought after stations in our society. Some men are a father figure to a few, while some may adopt an entire community. Such a father was Charles R. Burchett.

"My parents were awesome." There is no misunderstanding Tim Burchett's feelings towards his parents. His mother, Joyce, flew an airplane in the civilian air corp while Charles fought in the Pacific during WWII. "He was tough; he was the best. I miss my momma and daddy every day. They were wonderful people." Now serving Tennessee's Second District in the United States House of Representatives, Tim Burchett took some time to talk with me about his father. "I can't tell yah just how fortunate I was to have someone like that. Neighbor's house would get broken into, and they didn't call the cops. They called Dad first."

Charles Burchett was born on June 11th, 1923, in Clarksville, Tennessee, now home to Fort Campbell. His father was a banker and his mother was kept busy at home with two boys and their sister, of which Charles was the oldest. On December 7th, 1941, his mother ran into the backyard to tell Charles, that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. He only recently was made aware of Pearl Harbor after seeing it featured in an edition of National Geographic. From that moment onward the desire to fight back against the aggressor consumed his thoughts.

Pictured from left to right are wartime buddies
Charlie Burchett, Louis Thomas and Willard Welch



After enlisting, the army sent him to Georgia Tech's officer training school. "He was afraid he would miss the dadgum war and wanted to fight," Tim Burchett recalled. "So Daddy just didn't take his midterm exam, failing himself out. Momma told me, if Daddy had missed the war it would have killed him." He was placed in the United States Marine Corps to serve in the South Pacific and China, where some of the most brutal fighting occurred.

The Battle of Peleliu, codenamed Operation Stalemate II by the U.S. military, was fought during the Mariana and Palau Islands campaign of World War II, from September 15th to November 27th, 1944, on the island of Peleliu. This battle, known as the "forgotten hell," was extraordinarily vicious, with U.S. casualties numbering 1,544 killed in action and 6,843 wounded. Charles Burchett took part in this battle, and remembered his time on this tiny island in the Pacific vividly throughout his life.

At 08:32 the U.S. Marines began their landing on the Peleliu. Their advance was quickly met by the dreaded Type 98 20 mm AA machine cannon. "They rolled this thing out and started sniping at the marines on the beach." Tim Burchett explained. "Daddy said there were 90 to 100 in his group huddled down on the shore. They asked for volunteers to make a path, which was kind of a joke because Daddy was the only one with a Thompson submachine gun. Daddy was the volunteer, and he knew it. He walked up there and lit them up. He saved those guys lives.

Those 100 men came back. He risked his life for theirs."

The conditions on the island were grim. The air was hot and very humid, with thermometers breaking 120 degrees. Charles recounted that you could smell the clothes rotting off of the Japanese soldiers before you even saw them. Slowly, they crept over the island, clearing it of enemies. In order to clear the many caves, a lone translator was sent inside to investigate. At one cave, after being shot at, the translator distinctly heard someone shouting "Get me out of here! I want out!" in perfect English with an American accent. "They thought they must have captured a marine," Tim Burchett shared, recounting his father's story. "They started going in the cave which is crazy, going from lit to dark. They started getting shot at, so finally they just had to blow the cave. There were 90 Japanese in there and not one American." The Japanese were trying to lure the soldiers to their death.

Access to basic needs like clean drinking water were hard to come by on Peleliu. For a time, the only water that Charles had access to came in partially washed out oil barrels. This gave the water a foul smell and taste, making many Marines sick. Shortly after, a MECO desalination plant was delivered to process the available water. However, Charles' Sargent could not get the machine to run. Tim Burchett explained, "Daddy asked him 'Sarge are you having trouble getting that thing started?' The guy replied with 'Yeah you blankedy blankedy SOB, you think you're so smart? Why don't you fix it?' Dad said 'Alright, you got a screwdriver and a match?'" Charles had lots of experience working on Farmall tractors, and quickly reset the points in the distributor using a match as a measure to set the gaps. The machine quickly sprang back to life. "He picked up his machine gun and started to head back when the Sargent asked 'Where do you think you're going? You're more valuable here!' To that Dad replied, 'You don't know what it took to get here. I'm going back to the war.'"

Prayer was very important to Charles Burchett. "He said there were no atheists in the foxhole," Tim Burchett remarked. He recalled one story his dad would tell to demonstrate the importance of the divine. "One time they were trapped and the Japanese were mortaring them. They had nowhere to go. If you got up you would get shot or get shrapnel in you." At one point the Japanese started dropping more mortars, "and Dad heard two explosions. He was praying 'Lord, get me out of this mess.' The mortar that landed right beside him was a dud. The one be-



Invasion of Japan with Thompson SMG

hind him blew, and the next one blew. Statistically that's not good odds, but if you're a praying man, that's pretty good."

Even as the fighting wound down Charles could not escape the grim reminders of death surrounding him. The dead Japanese were so numerous that coming into contact with them was almost unavoidable. While helping guard a bulldozer clearing a hillside, Charles remembered the dead Japanese's heads popping like watermelons as they were run over. These more gruesome memories filtered through his mind over time. "The last story Daddy told shortly before he died was a memory that just broke loose. We were watching television at the nursing home, and they were comparing the fire resistance between an asbestos suit and a cotton suit with a flame blower. He remarked, 'I remember one time on Peleliu, we were flame throwing a cave when a jap ran out and I shot him. He was on fire, and I kicked him in the head, and his head crumbled.'"

After the war, things regained a sense of normalcy. Charles went back to school, earning a master's at George Peabody College in Nashville and a bachelor's degree at Austin Peay State College. While at Austin Peay, Charles played football and was a guard on the basketball team. Most importantly, he met and married Joyce Hicks, a native of



Uncle's 48 Star Flag from his casket

Cheatham County. "He raised hell when he got home," said Tim Burchett, "he bought an Indian motorcycle, and later sold it to buy my mom her wedding ring. I gave my wife that wedding ring."

Charles taught for two years in Montgomery County, Tennessee, before deciding with his wife to move to Knoxville in 1953 to pursue a doctorate in mathematics and biology. This remained his goal until he attended a seminar that didn't interest him. "Shoot, that research stuff is not for me," he told the Knoxville News-Sentinel in 1970. He switched to curriculum and instruction with a minor in educational administration and supervision. This path led him to the roll of Dean of Student Conduct at the University of Tennessee, which he held for 46 years. He also served as a member of the Knox County Library Board, president of the West Knoxville Republican Club, and was elected to the Knoxville Board of Education in 1965, during the racial tensions of desegregation.

"Baby turn the channel. Don't let your Daddy see that." This was a common saying in the Burchett household. While his memories of war did not trouble him as much as they do some veterans, they still would disturb him. "He would get so upset and mad because the Japanese were so dadgum brutal," Tim Burchett remembered. "You would never wake my dad up over the top of him, because he might be on one of those islands. He might pin your ass up against that wall. You always woke him up with his big toe, 'til the day he died." Small things rekindled old memories, like the smell of diesel fuel from a Knoxville city bus. "My dad said 'That reminds me of the best Easter Sunday I ever had.' I asked 'What was that Daddy?' He said 'April 1st, 1945.' This was when they hit the beach at Okinawa. There was just small arms fire when they landed and Daddy said it was the best Easter Sunday he ever had because there was hardly any shooting." It was on the island of Okinawa that Charles almost ran out of ammo, leading him to carry three guns on him for the rest of his life.

During his civilian life, Charles Burchett further proved to be a man of great courage and moral character. Time and time again Charles thrust himself forward into danger when everyone else was running the other way. While serving as the Dean of Student Conduct at UT, a woman's car caught on fire on campus. Tim Burchett recalled that she "was screaming 'My baby's in there!'" Everybody was running from the car, except for one man in a powder blue leisure suit running by with a fire extin-



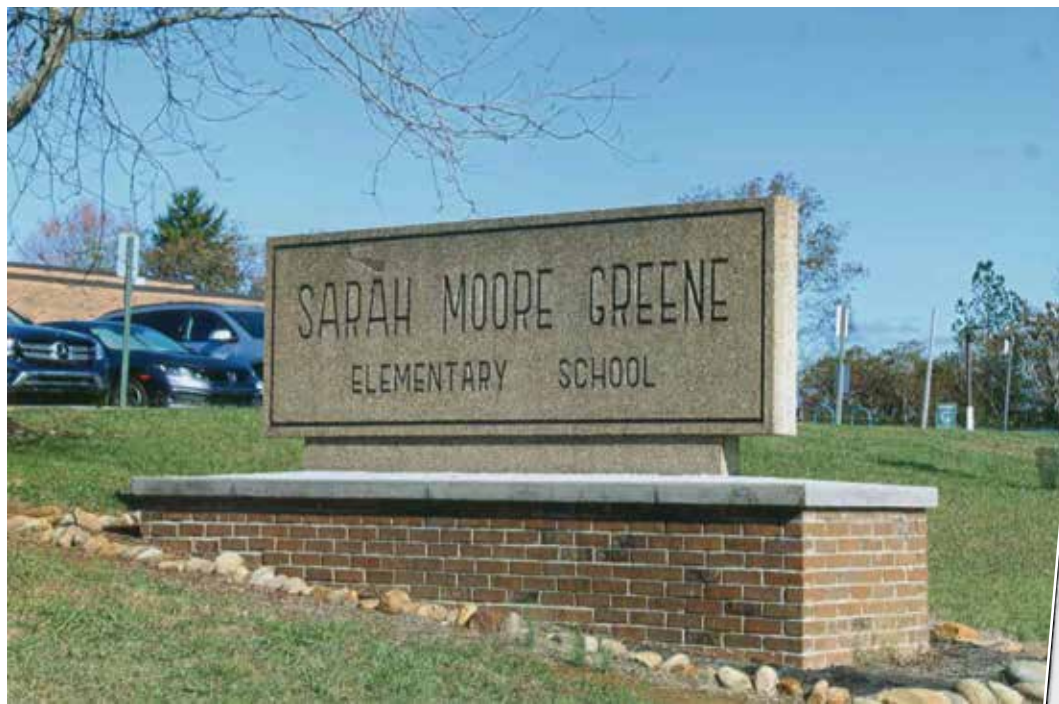
Charlie's picture in Tim Burchett's office

guisher." Even though it turned out that only the woman's purse was in danger, Charles saved it nonetheless. Tim Burchett painted a picture for me, of a man who always actively moved to fix things, to save lives. A man who calmly chased off the bears in the Smoky Mountains, while all of the other picnickers panicked. He even saved a man from ending his own life.

The September 11th, 1974, edition of the Knoxville News-Sentinel details the events that unfolded on the James Karns Bridge, which carries Alcoa Highway over the Tennessee River, and is named after one of six Tennesseans to earn the Medal of Honor during World War 1.

Mr. Burchett said he had been driving on Neyland Drive when he heard a radio bulletin about the suicide attempt and made his way to the scene to offer his help. "I got permission from the police and talked to the boy twice. The first time he got really belligerent and one of the officers thought it would be best to leave him alone for awhile." The second talk failed too and finally Mr. Burchett, city policeman Billy Brakebill and UT Officers John Shipe and Archie Hicks made a desperation lunge for Mr. Webber, grabbing him by his arms, legs, and hair and hauling him to safety."

Further illustrating his strong character was his support for an, at the time, controversial name for an elementary school. Sarah Moore Greene was the first Black member of the Knoxville Board of Education. She also was a Tennessee delegate to the Republican National Convention



Sarah Moore Greene Elementary School in East Knoxville

and served as former state and local president of the NAACP. Over the years, she fought for desegregation and civil rights in schools and in the wider community. The June 15th, 1971, evening edition of the Knoxville News-Sentinel announced that the Knoxville Board of Education voted to name a new elementary school in East Knoxville after Sarah Moore Green. "He received a lot of grief because of it," Tim Burchett remembered.

I came home one day and Daddy was sitting on the front porch with the shotgun across his lap. We used to hunt and fish, so I thought, 'Oh boy we're going hunting!' We didn't do it on the weekdays, just the weekends, so I was wondering, 'What's Momma gonna say about this?' I was just in second grade. Daddy said, 'Go into the house and play.' I noticed there was a city police cruiser parked in the driveway. We had gotten death threats. My Daddy took care of business.

Charles Burchett had used some unorthodox tactics to promote the honorary naming. He collaborated with the leaders in the Black community to start a rumor that "radicals on campus were starting to rally to name the school after Malcolm X." Tim Burchett recalled, "They couldn't name it after Sarah Moore Greene faster after that." Sarah and Charles remained good friends up until his death. Greene was 100 years old when she attended Charles' funeral.

As you can imagine, Charles Burchett had a profound impact on his son, Tim. "I always think back to him when I've got somebody that wants to kill me, or if I've got someone cussing me or spitting on me on the sidewalk," Tim Burchett mused. "I'll think, 'It's not that bad. It's not 120 degrees. I'm not getting shot at. I'm not holding my nose to drink contaminated water."

Buddies of mine aren't dying all around me." It is this attitude that allowed him to have a unique response to the threats made on the U.S. Capitol on January 6th, 2021.

I was the last member of the House of Representatives to leave the floor. I stayed to help. I took off my Carhartt because I thought we were



Newspaper article about Charlie

going to get into a fight. I had the thought, "Am I going to die here? Am I going to get shot in the back running, or stay here and fight?" I decided to stay there and fight. I thought about my dad who always said, "When you get into a spot buddy, don't panic, figure out where you gotta go, and how you gotta get through, and who is on your side and who isn't." It was clear to me what Daddy had told me about those situations. His was life or death, and mine could have been life or death. I decided to stay there and fight.

Charles R. Burchet Sr. passed away on November 9th, 2008. Shortly after, the Tennessee State Senate passed a joint resolution to honor his memory. In which, and with 14 "whereas" statements, they attempted to explain the life work and impact of this man. This task cannot be done. Charles Burchett lived an incredible life serving others. He fought tirelessly for the rights of others against any and all external attacks. His family was his fellow citizen, being a strong father to all. His impact reaches from the small tender moments at home, all the way to the House Floor in Washington D.C. We cannot know the measure of this man, because his weight would break any scale. While no amount of words can adequately summarize the life of Charles Burchett, I truly believe that the scripture on his tombstone does it best. On his simple stone is inscribed "2 Timothy 4:7," which reads, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." May we all live lives worthy of this holy epitaph.

SERVICE & SACRIFICE

“ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL.”

By Jack Coker



SGT. NATHAN CHAPMAN
GEORGETOWN, TX
JANUARY 4, 2002

THE FIRST & THE LAST



SSGT. RYAN C. KNAUSS
KNOXVILLE, TN
AUGUST 26, 2021

This article is dedicated to all veterans and was sponsored and paid for by
Mr. Bill Weigel, USAF Veteran and President of Weigels Convenience Store Chain.

Beginnings and endings are crucial to the telling of any narrative. Without a proper introduction, one has no context for the story that follows. Similarly, without a proper conclusion, there is no resolution. The same applies to the narratives of our lives as we look for the stories behind events, helping us understand our complex world.

As America grapples with the end of the 20 year conflict in Afghanistan, we must find a narrative that helps us tell its story. We can know for a fact that about 2,500 American soldiers lost their lives defending our nation against the threat of terror, but it takes much longer to fully realize what losing those men means. Today, we will start telling that story through the first and the last U.S. Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice in Afghanistan.

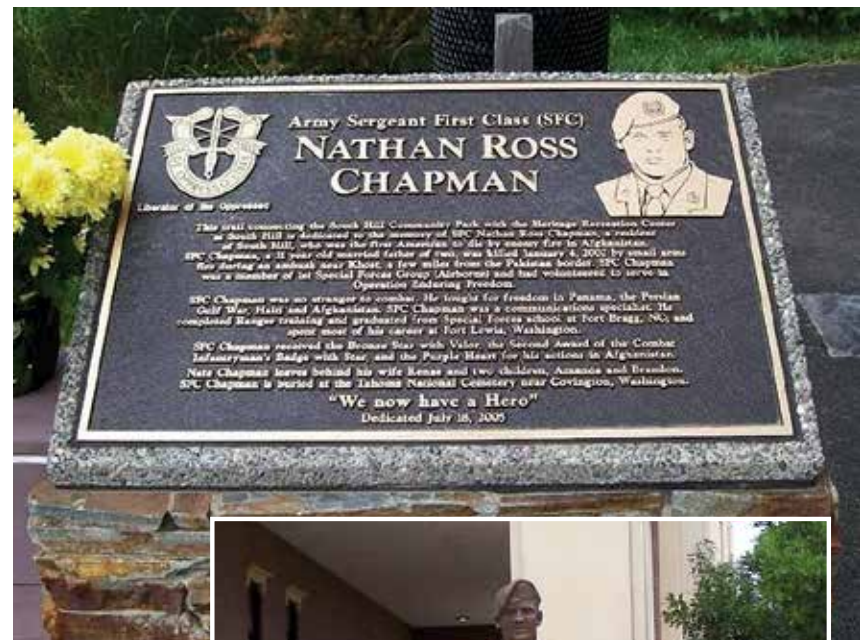
Nathan Ross Chapman was born on April 23, 1970, at the Andrews Air Force base in Maryland, roughly 14 miles from the Pentagon; the attack on which would take him on his final mission. Nathan was an outgoing and charismatic child, according to his brother Keith Chapman. Besides focusing on his academic responsibilities, Nathan was also on his school's wrestling team, and graduated from Centerville High School in Ohio in 1988.

Being a part of a military family, Nathan was a citizen of the entire U.S., moving around many times while growing up. At the age of 18 and right out of high school, Nathan Ross Chapman enlisted in the military. He marked San Antonio, Texas, as his hometown, where his father's family was located. Chapman completed Ranger training and graduated from Special Forces school at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Most of his career was spent at Fort Lewis in Washington. SFC Chapman was no stranger to combat. He fought for freedom in Panama (Operation Just Cause), the Persian Gulf War (Operation Desert Storm), and Haiti (Operation Uphold Democracy). It was Chapman's communications expertise that would call him to his last mission.

While in the service, Chapman met and married Renae Chapman, with whom he had two children, Amanda and Brandon. Even though he was busy balancing his career and family, Chapman answered the call of duty after the devastating attacks on September 11th, 2001. In November of 2001, SFC Nathan Ross Chapman volunteered for a special mission named "Operation Enduring Freedom" on the new front lines of Afghanistan. Chapman worked closely with CIA operatives on this mission to coordinate actions with local tribal leaders.

On January 4, 2002, just 115 days after the September 11th attacks, Chapman and his convoy were ambushed in the town of Khost, a few miles from the Pakistan border. During the intense skirmish, Chapman was struck with a mortal wound, but continued to fight back amidst heavy fire, covering the escape of his comrades until he lost consciousness. His heroic actions saved their lives, and secured his place in history as the first U.S. Soldier to perish in Afghanistan. A statue of Chapman stands tall in Georgetown, Texas. At its dedication Nathan Chapman's father, Will Chapman remarked that "This memorial, while it embodies our son, is in honor of the sons and daughters who have given their lives in this fight. It's not a matter of being for or against a war. It's a matter of honoring and loving those who have been touched in some way by this battle."

Ryan Knauss was born on April 7, 1998, in Corryton, Tennessee, under the shadow of the Great Smoky Mountains. Ryan took an interest in the military early on in his childhood, playing with green plastic army men on the playground of Freedom Christian Academy. His close childhood



Nathan Ross
Chapman
statue &
plaque

Georgetown,
Texas



friend Britton Jackson said that they "would dress up in camouflage and face paint and run around in the woods climbing over everything." Ryan even wrote in a classmate's second grade yearbook that he wanted to be a marine.

While attending Gibbs High School, Ryan joined the ROTC. One of his teachers, Angela Hoffman, kept an essay assignment from Ryan, where he wrote about his dream to join the military. "People should stop to enjoy the little things," he wrote as a 14 year old. Hoffman remembers him writing that "a role model is anyone who stands up against power to help other people."

After graduating from Gibbs, Ryan Knauss married Alena Knauss and enlisted in the U.S. Army. He was based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where SFC Nathan Ross Chapman had completed his initial training almost 30 years before. In the service, Knauss completed a nine month tour in Afghanistan from 2017 to 2018 as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, during which he saw combat while working hard to mentor Afghan troops. Knauss' wife Alena said that "he became close with a local Afghan farmer there who thanked him for his help. He gave him a hat that he wore in a photo he sent me, and that meant a lot to him." His final

deployment would take him back to Afghanistan.

1st Sgt. Mike Dean brought the mission to Knauss. “This was his dream job, and he took it and ran with it. He was the best at everything and it didn’t matter what you asked him to do. He wanted to be the very best.” The mission was a deployment to the Hamid Karzai International Airport, to help American Civilians and Afghan refugees evacuate. After hearing the specifics, Dean recalled Knauss’ enthusiasm saying, “I will never forget. He just looked at me and adamantly volunteered to go on the mission. He begged to go. It was what he wanted to do.” Knauss felt great compassion for the Afghan people. Alena Knauss remarked that “all he saw there were people that needed help; people of a different culture who deserved to be ok.”

On September 26th, 2021, a suicide bomber from the terrorist group ISIS-K detonated near the Abbey Gate at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, where Knauss and his colleagues were working to guide the crowd. At the age of 23, 20 years after the start of the war, Sgt. Ryan Knauss became the last U.S. Soldier to die in Afghanistan. The last U.S. troops left the country four days later. His unit, Detachment 10, issued a statement saying, “Ryan knew the dangerous situation he was going to, but protecting innocent civilians is one of the values that drove him. It has been said that life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives, and Ryan had an incredible impact on his family and friends. Thanks to his actions, thousands of children will have the joy of knowing a childhood free from danger and oppression.”

Sgt. Ryan Knauss was brought home for a packed reception at Gibbs High School, before he was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. Since then, many memorials have been dedicated in his honor, such as two segments of Tazewell Pike in the Gibbs community, a pedestrian bridge, and a plaque at a Weigel’s convenience store.

“Hey I love you. I know you are busy but just wanted to check on you to make sure everything’s OK.” Those were the last words sent to Sgt. Ryan Knauss from his wife Alena, before two soldiers told her that she was a widow. SFC Nathan Chapman’s beloved, Renae, is still grieving her husband, with their two children Amanda and Brandon. “I wish I could say it gets better, but it doesn’t.” Alena Knauss was busy tiling their initials, “R+A 2021” into their laundry room, a personal toucher his return, when the soldiers arrived. After they left, she continued to work on the floor through clouded eyes, late into the dark and lonely night. There is some solidarity found with knowing there are other men like her husband out there, Renae Chapman mused. “It makes me feel not so alone knowing there were other men out there that are volunteering to do this.” “He was helping people” Alena Knauss said, “and if he was last, I would be grateful that no one else would ever feel what I’m feeling. I’m in shambles and am hurting, but to know that no mother, father, wife, brother or sister ever has to feel such emptiness, makes grateful to know he was the last.” These two widows are united by the heavy string of fate. Each of them bound by being of one flesh with great men who fought to protect each and every family back home.

While this conflict overseas has drawn to a close, we must not forget our duty to love and support the families of our veterans. Sgt. Ryan Knauss’ mother, Paula Knauss Selph, remarked on the importance of supporting those left behind, saying “It’s not just about one community that cares. It’s about a nation that cares. Ryan is just one man who was doing his job well. There are more men and women out there that need our support.”

U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson recently awarded Sgt. Knauss the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest award given by Congress. There, under the Capitol dome, he remarked that “Their names are etched into our hearts, and now into the history of our nation. To you and the family members who are not here, I can promise you this: You are not alone in shouldering the burdens from that day. Although we can never fully measure your loss, we can and we must memorialize the ultimate sacrifice



that was paid.”

The stories of the men who lost their lives defending the great American experiment have their beginning and ending. We must never cease to tell their stories to our sons and daughters. We must never fail to honor their sacrifice, and thank them for every unhindered breath of free air we take in to our chests. Without these men sacrificing all, and their families bearing the burden of loss, our own stories would read very differently.

Here for every **why.**



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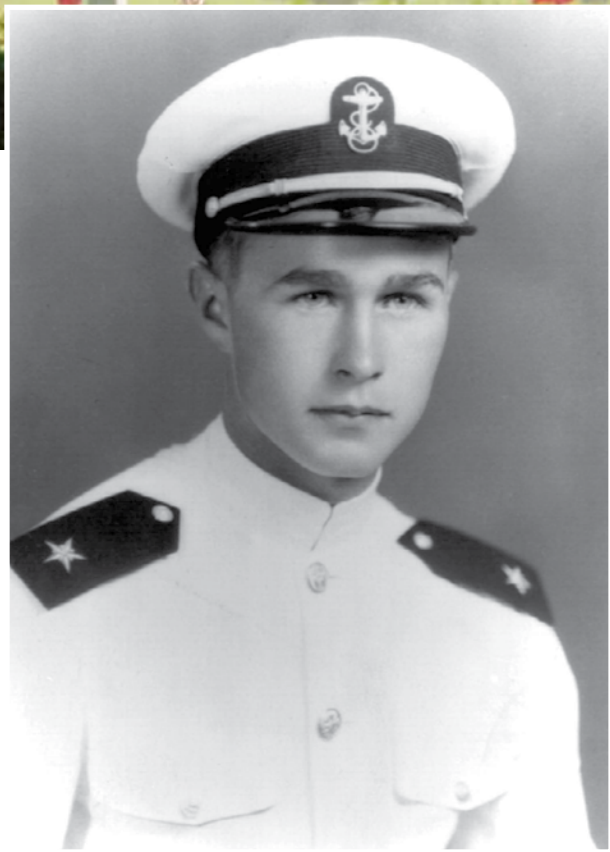
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Character Matters



George H.W. Bush

A man who took his life lessons and turned them into a great American story

Written by Jean Becker

During the 25 years I was privileged to be chief of staff to George H.W. Bush, I do not think a day went by that I didn't learn something from him – lessons both big and small, from how to hold a fishing pole to how to be a better person.

(I failed at the former and am still working hard on the latter.)

My editor encouraged me to write a book about the life lessons we all can learn from President Bush, making the point that President Bush left us a blueprint on how to live a life well-lived.

He would tell you that his life lessons came from a variety of sources, beginning with his parents, Prescott and Dorothy Bush.

I also know he would tell you that his biggest life lesson came from his years spent as a bomber pilot during World War II, especially the day he was shot down while bombing the island ChiChi Jima in the South Pacific.

President Bush, like many members of the greatest generation, was hesitant to talk much about being shot down at age 20. But in his eulogy of President Bush, historian and biographer Jon Meacham was most eloquent in describing the consequences of what happened that day:

“The story was almost over even before it had fully begun. Shortly after dawn on Saturday, September 2, 1944, Lt. j.g. George Herbert Walker Bush, joined by two crewmates, took off from the USS San Jacinto to attack a radio tower on Chichi Jima. As they approached the target, the air was heavy with flak. The plane was hit. Smoke filled the cockpit. Flames raced along the wings. My God, Lt. Bush thought, this thing’s gonna go down.”

“Yet he kept the plane in its 35-degree dive, dropped his bombs, and then roared off, out to sea, telling his crewmates to “Hit the silk!” Following protocol, Lt. Bush turned the plane so they could bail out. Only then did Bush parachute from the cockpit. The wind propelled him backward, and he gashed his head on the tail as he flew through the sky.”

“Lt. Bush plunged deep into the ocean, bobbed to surface, and flopped onto a tiny raft. His head bleeding, his eyes burning, his mouth and throat raw from salt water, the future 41st president was alone. Sensing that his men had not made it, he was overcome. He felt the weight of responsibility as a nearly physical burden, and he wept. Then, at four minutes shy of noon, a submarine emerged to rescue the downed pilot. George Herbert Walker Bush was safe.”

“The story—his story, and ours—would go on, by God’s grace. Through the decades President Bush would ask himself: “Why me? Why was I spared?” In a sense, the rest of his life was a perennial effort to prove himself worthy of his salvation on that distant morning. To him, his life was no longer wholly his own. There were always more missions to undertake, more lives to touch, more love to give.”

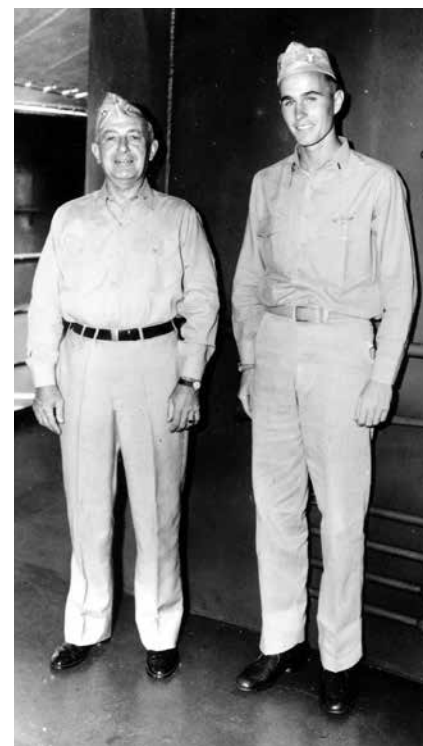
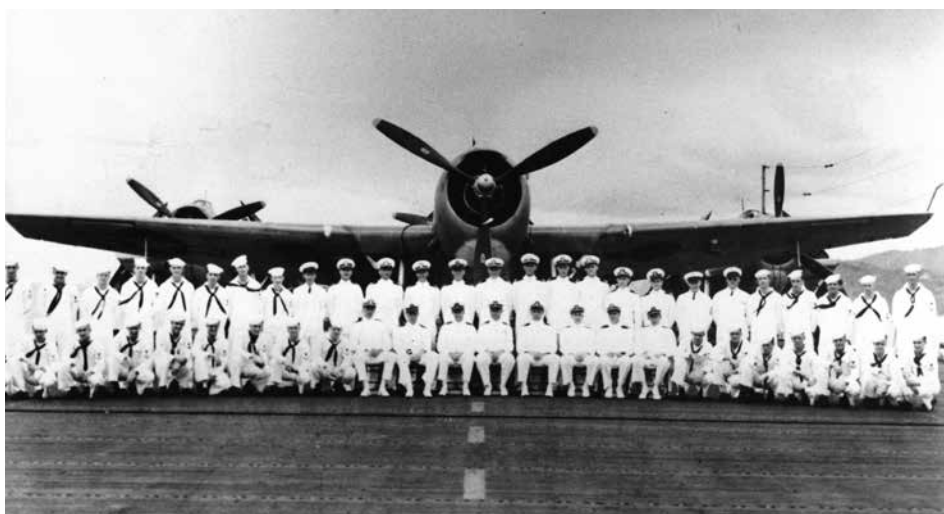
Certainly President Bush took all of his life lessons and turned them into a great American story. To help me tell those stories, I reached out to the people who knew him best: colleagues, friends, family, staffers. I received essays from people as diverse as two former prime ministers; John Major of the United Kingdom and Brian Mulroney of Canada; Bob Gates, Condi Rice, Bill Clinton, and Nancy Pelosi; Reba McEntire and Dana Carvey; and the young man who mowed the lawn at Walker’s Point in Kennebunkport, Maine.

As I read their stories, a clear picture emerged: A man who was courageous, decisive, humble, kind, and wise.

A man who taught us that character really does matter.

Time and time again in his lifetime of service, President Bush made decisions he knew would not necessarily be popular and might even cost him his political career.

In 1968, much to the dismay of his constituents, Congressman George Bush voted for the Fair Housing Act, designed to end discrimination in the housing market. Hate mail, including some death threats, piled up in his congressional office, so he went back to Houston to hold a town hall meeting. He was greeted with boos and cat calls, but it didn’t stop him from speaking his truth:





Dorothy; George; Barbara; Columba; Laura; George Marvin and Noelle; Jeb and Georgie; Neil

We're thankful for our friends and family.
George and Barbara Bush

"I voted ... not out of intimidation or fear, not stampeded by riots – but because of a feeling deep down in my heart that this was the right thing for me to do. That this was the right thing for America."

When he was done speaking, he received a standing ovation.

"Right for America." It's a phrase he would repeat often, including 22 years later, when as President of the United States, he negotiated a budget deal with the Democratically held Congress to balance the budget. In exchange for raising taxes – which meant he would break his "no new taxes" pledge from the 1988 campaign -- the Democrats agreed to cut spending. President Bush wrote in his diary during the negotiations: "I think some of these [proposals] could mean a one-term Presidency, but it's that important for the country."

He was not afraid of the word compromise, a trait he shared with, among others, his good friend Senator Howard Baker, with whom he often teamed to find a way forward on controversial and difficult issues. And often they were proved right. The 1990 budget deal, which did contribute to President Bush losing to Bill Clinton in 1992, was later credited for making the economic boom times of the 1990s possible.

In the essay he wrote for *Character Matters*, former Secretary of Defense and Vice President Dick Cheney called serving with President Bush one of the greatest honors of his lifetime. He said of his former boss:

"During his time in the White House, he was tested repeatedly. No one could have predicted the magnitude of historic events that would occur

on his watch – the liberation of Panama, the disintegration of the Soviet empire, the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the defense of Saudi Arabia and the liberation of Kuwait in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. President Bush was more than equal to the challenges, managing these unprecedented global events with calmness and clear thinking, and emerging as one of the most respected statesmen of his era."

"The nation was fortunate that George H.W. Bush was our President when we faced our first major crisis of the post-Cold War era – the invasion of Kuwait. From the earliest days of the crisis, he refused to ignore or pander to aggression. His clarity of purpose focused the world on the need for action. He was a tremendous leader. His wisdom had seen us through changes more significant than any of us could have imagined."

Chaney continued, "If you were to go out and design a president to be commander-in-chief in a crisis like Desert Storm, you would have designed someone like George H.W. Bush. His ability to match that historic moment was developed from his years of experience as a combat pilot in World II, a member of Congress, ambassador to the United Nations, U.S. liaison to China, director of the CIA, and as vice president. His knowledge and judgment gave him the foresight to know early on that facing this challenge was going to be a combined political, diplomatic, and military operation."

In his Epilogue for *Character Matters*, former Vice President Dan Quayle wrote:

"Throughout history, societies have revered those leaders who demon-



strate a strong sense of character. In today's world, where instability and dysfunction seem everywhere the norm, it is even more crucial that we recognize and appreciate the principled virtues of George H. W. Bush."

"President Bush -- always putting the needs of the country before his own -- embodied the values of integrity, loyalty and selflessness. I remember our discussion, back in 1990, about the politics involved in his agreeing to the tax increase Democrats were demanding before they would pass a budget. He said to me in the Oval Office: "Dan, I have to put politics aside and do what's in the best interest of the country."

"Love of country always came first. He was a man who believed in the power of service, whether as a young pilot during World War II or as the head of a giant global alliance thwarting tyranny in the Persian Gulf. In the White House he fostered an environment of trust, respect, and humility, which not only inspired those around him but also paved the way toward a more cooperative political landscape at home and an extraordinary degree of unity across much of the globe.

"... To reflect on the life and legacy of President Bush is to remember that true leadership is rooted in character, in the strength of one's convictions, and in the courage to make difficult decisions for the betterment of all ... It's more important than ever that we remember who he was, so that we can be inspired by his example," Quayle concluded.

We will end where we began ... asking the question that President Bush often asked himself: Why was his life spared on that fateful day in September 1944. Jon Meacham gave the answer at the end of his eulogy:

"And so, as we commend his soul to God, we ask, as he so often did: Why him? Why was he spared? The workings of Providence are mysterious, but this much is clear: the George Herbert Walker Bush who survived that fiery fall into the waters of the Pacific made our lives, and the lives of nations, freer, better, warmer, nobler."

"That was his mission. That was his heartbeat. And if we listen closely enough, we can hear that heartbeat even now, for it's the heartbeat of a lion—a lion who not only led us, but who loved us."

"That's why him. That's why he was spared."

For more details on President Bush's service in the US Navy and the Chi Chi Jima bomb run in particular, see our 2022 edition, pages 66-70.

Find it in the archives at www.pearlharborday1941.com

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