

GUARD
YOUR
HEALTH

The Camp

WITH
AIR AND
EXERCISE

EX-AIR FORCE PRISONER OF WAR ASSOCIATION

19 Donna Court, Willowdale, Ont. M2M 2C9

ARE SOME OF OUR GUYS IN THE GULAGS?

POW's in Perpetuity Yanks Tell Paper

Earlier this year something called the U.S. Veteran News and Report carried an article by John Brown and Thomas Ashworth whose "best estimate" is that 20,000 American POW's and perhaps 30,000 British and Commonwealth kriegies in WW II wound up in Russian custody to be "held in perpetual captivity." Brown was a U.S. Army soldier who wrote a book on the war in Vietnam. Ashworth, an ex-marine and political scientist, has gained his 15 minutes of TV fame testifying before U.S. Senate hearings on American POW's. Their article, modestly titled "A Secret That Shames Humanity," relates how Allied commander-in-chief Dwight Eisenhower was queried from London in June 1945 on how many British POW's remained in German or Soviet custody. Eisenhower reportedly replied that 8,551 including 1,400 from Canada and other Commonwealth countries were still not repatriated. That figure, say Brown and Ashworth "is likely only a small percentage of the Russian-held prisoners whose names were definitely known out of many thousands more missing British."

U.S. Veteran News publisher Ted Sampley says U.S. POW's were put to work in the cotton fields of the Tashkent area of the U.S.S.R. Indeed, say Brown and Ashworth, thousands of U.S. prisoners of war who fell into Soviet hands were known to the American Central Intelligence Agency. Brown and Ashworth asked for their names but the CIA wasn't talking. Toronto Sunday Star writer John Picton phoned Brown a couple of months ago to find out more about the kriegies enslaved in the U.S.S.R. Brown, "his voice trembling, said 'We have reason to believe that some of these people are still alive.'" Picton wrote with a straight pen.

Toronto Star mystery writer Picton quotes

Some of Us Did Get Back Home

Live long enough and you confound the myth-makers. Since most Toronto Sunday Star readers were not born when we were liberated they are fair game for sensational stories of enslaved Allied kriegies still in Russian hands. "POW's in Perpetuity" (col. 1) is an awesome story even if it never happened. "Connections" (col. 3) describes the International Red Cross tracing service that tracked every kriegie from capture to his return home. It refutes the enslaved POW's story as do the ex-Air Force POW's we asked to comment on the Sunday Star article. Here is the comment of kriegies liberated by Soviet troops who overran Lukenwalde and Mueblburg where thousands of British and Commonwealth Air Force and Army POW's spent the later stages of the war.

Kingsley Brown

"The Star's suggestion that Canadian POW's were snatched by wicked Russians and sent to Siberia is the stuff of malicious fantasy," says Kingsley Brown who was himself a Toronto Star reporter

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Red Cross Connections Refute Slave Story

Around the world generals, statesmen, churchmen and journalists were aghast that day in September 1939 when Hitler's armies began their march to Armageddon. But World War II came as no surprise to 30 Swiss humanitarians in Geneva. They had worked with the International Red Cross POW tracing agency in World War I and by January 1939 they had volunteered their services again. As a "commission for war works" they had re-established the Red Cross tracing agency and met 25 times before WW II began. Their reactivation was none too soon. That fall 600,000 Polish troops and airmen were captured by German and Soviet forces.

The Central Tracing Agency - as it is still known - evolved almost from the outset of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), an all-Swiss humanitarian organization whose neutrality has been almost universally recognized for more than 125 years. They were making connections between battlefield soldiers and

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Send Dough for Plymouth Hoe

Tight little island where they only pull together when the chips are down and Spain or Hitler's at their door. The Armada Memorial on Plymouth Hoe marks that earlier unpleasantness which obliged Francis Drake to terminate his bowling match and chase the Spanish fleet from the Channel. Now the Brits hope to erect a monument alongside the Armada Memorial to commemorate all men and women who served in the RAF, Allied and Commonwealth Air Forces in World War II. A wartime air gunner, former warrant officer James David campaigned for such a memorial for years. He enthused Pathfinder founder Air Vice Marshal Donald C. T. Bennett who enlisted other support be-

fore his death, notably that of Vern Lynn. British sculptress Pam Taylor has designed the monument - an airman dressed for ops, cast in bronze to stand atop a 16-foot granite column. The RAF & Allied Air Forces Monument would commemorate not only the Battle of Britain which repelled Goering's prelude to invasion but the air warfare which returned the conflict to the Third Reich three and a half centuries after the Spanish fleet was routed. All that is needed is 40,000 pounds sterling. You can send your contribution direct to Monument Project Treasurer C. Platt, c/o Lloyds Bank, Royal Parade, Plymouth PL1 1DS, England or c/o Al Wallace at The Camp.

The P.O.W. reunion in England in 1991 will be in (Warwick) instead of Cambridge, & that I was around there during the war. Do you remember Dies?

Some Did Get Home . . .



KINGSLEY BROWN IN HALIFAX

60 years ago when they told it like it was. "All Canadian POWs in Germany and the U.S. POW's who were with us were registered with the International Red Cross by name, rank, serial number and address of next-of-kin. To my knowledge there never were any claims that POW's in German hands were unaccounted for.

"Along with thousands of Canadian POW's I was liberated at Stalag 3A Luckenwalde by the Third Guards Tank Division of the Red Army. We were at once given access to food reserves in the German commissary at Fort Zinna; treated by the Russians in a straightforward, businesslike manner and eventually delivered in Russian trucks into the hands of U.S. forces across the Elbe River.

"It's my guess that the recent gruesome revelations about U.S. treatment of German POW's in 1945 touched a raw nerve with the CIA and Pentagon and this bit of hoopla is characteristic of the idiotic way they approach whatever bothers them."

H.K. (Bud) Ward

"Every ex-krigie I have spoken to regarding the Star report considers it a total, irresponsible work of fiction. Most say there is no way such a large number of personnel could be covered up for the past 44 years. Militarists, politicians and next-of-kin would have raised bloody hell long ago at their failure to reappear," says H.K. (Bud) Ward. Bud's credibility is well earned. His post-war career was with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police where his business was tracking down people.

He is an encyclopedic-minded World War II buff whose reference shelves bulge with authentic accounts of Air Force POW's then, now and in between. And Bud was among the thousands liberated from Stalag 4B at Muhlberg on the Elbe by Marshal Konev's First Ukrainian Army Group on April 23, 1945.

"Speaking of Stalag 4B I suggest that not one kriegie failed to return and that includes Serbian, Dutch, French and other nationals. I couldn't begin to list all the ex-krigies from 4B I have personally been in contact with over the years. When the Russians liberated us we were given total freedom of movement to forage for food but martial law prevailed during the hours of darkness. Most 4B POW's recall hearing rumours, the most common was that Stalin was forbidding the return of we Allied types unless he got his own back in return. This never seems to have taken place. The average Russian front-line soldier gave us pretty well total freedom to get to the American lines. Allied kriegies regularly lost wrist-watches enroute to the Russkies but this was no big deal. Most 4B airmen were back in England about three to five weeks after liberation. Many were back in plenty of time to be re-equipped and attend a garden party for Commonwealth airmen at Buckingham Palace on May 24."

Bud Ward spoke with James W. Horne, secretary-treasurer of the Alberta chapter, National POW Association. Horne was taken prisoner at Dieppe and remains in close contact with the Dieppe POW Association. "James Horne has never heard of any of the Dieppe boys not making it back and considers the story absurd. Most Dieppe POW's were at Stalag 8B, Lamisdorf. Lamisdorf also had many, many airmen but everyone made it home. Many of the Dieppe Army boys had been moved from Lamisdorf to Stettin area while the other Lamisdorf POW's were force-marched by the Germans ahead of the advancing Russian Army almost all the way to Austria."

Bud says there is a report that one Dieppe POW at Lamisdorf, a British command sergeant-major, did not get back to Britain.

Geoff Taylor

Author of a dozen non-fiction books post-war, Geoff Taylor was an Australian pilot with a RAF bomber squadron. His bomber was none other than Cecil R. Smith of Kitchener who until recently was president of the Canadian POW Association. Taylor and Smith escaped from Stalag 4B in the summer of 1944 and evaded capture long enough to attempt to steal an aircraft from a Luftwaffe base. "Climbing into the JU-188 and settling into the pilot's seat was an exquisite moment of truth. From the moment the motors started we would be less than 20 minutes from the Russian lines and less than an hour from neutral Sweden. I was still trying to start the motors when a Luftwaffe guard put his helmeted head up through the floor hatch and ordered us out," Taylor recounts in *Return Ticket* (Peter Davies, London 1972).

A generation after he and Smitty had tried to fly home a bit prematurely, Geoff Taylor went back on a nostalgic odyssey. At Torgau on the Elbe he recalled the historic meeting of the U.S. 69th Division and the 58th Russian Guards Division on April 25,



DON BROWN IN DIXIE

1945. "Torgau was a place of special significance to prisoners freed from Stalag 4B because, broken bridge or no broken bridge, it was possible to cross the Elbe there," Taylor recalled. "Not that it was necessarily as easy as it sounded. Predictably unpredictable, the Russians at Torgau let some ex-prisoners cross the river but drove others away. Busy with the construction of a pontoon bridge to speed the transit of Russian tanks, guns and troops across the Elbe, the Russians at

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Reunion in 1992 on West Coast

The next Ex-Air Force POW Reunion will be August 5 to 10, 1992 and it will be held on the University of British Columbia campus 20 minutes from downtown Vancouver. Art Deacon, president of the kriegles' B.C. Branch and Ivan Quinn, man-of-confidence on the West Coast shifting sands, are co-chairmen. They have already reserved 480 single rooms and 60 double-occupancy suites in the Gage Complex of UBC Conference Centre. Tentative plans include a day in Victoria and another at the Abbotsford Air Show.

"The UBC has an excellent Conference Centre arrangement in a beautiful location. Everything to do with the accommodation is handy. The cafeteria is two minutes walk from the residence and has excellent food; one of their specialties is a salmon barbecue." Quinn reported in the awe-struck tone that Vancouverites usu-



Art Deacon

Ivan Quinn

ally reserve for the sight of rain. "They can accommodate 3,000 on the campus, feed over 1,000 people at a given time, seat about a thousand in a very nice ballroom."

"In the Gage towers they cluster six single rooms around a corner living room and a bathroom so you can have three couples in one quad of six bedrooms - six buddies and their wives in cozy arrangements," said Art Deacon. Pressed for details he explained, "Each living room has a fridge and stove should anyone want to make a cup of coffee or store beer. And the central core contains two elevators." Kinky!

The Ivory-tower keepers haven't firmed up 1992 prices yet. But if present Gage residence rates are any guide it might be worthwhile to enrol for a four-year course there. Currently a single room rents for \$28 a day; a suite (single or double occupancy) for \$60. Art Deacon and Ivan Quinn will keep us posted.



Jim Finnie, a member of the Ottawa host committee last summer, is flanked by brothers King and Frank on left, Don right at Ottawa Remembrance Day celebration. Jim, King and Frank were Air Force; Don in Royal Canadian Artillery. - Ottawa Citizen photo.

WRITE IF YOU GET WORK, SEND MONEY NOW

Association members number 845 as *The Camp* goes to press. This includes 657 lifetime members, 42 who pay annual dues and 136 honorary members, says secretary-treasurer Al Wallace.

Additional to payment of dues, Al reports with thanks the receipt of cash donations towards Association expenses from John Elliott of Agincourt, Ont., May Kerr of Kelowna, B.C., Norman Bain of Toronto, Ted White of Kingston, Robert Kift of Peterborough, Dorothy Grigg of Strathroy, Ont., Norm and Marg Scott of Alliston, Bert Dowty of Lincoln, U.K. and Doug Wraith of Lynnwood, Washington.

When *The Camp* was mailed out last July the following members were no longer at the addresses listed in the Association roster: Stuart Brackenbury, Oliver St., Williams Lake, B.C.; James Bryce, Lakebreeze Dr., Mississauga; Ron Chamberlain, Kathleen St., Toronto; Leslie Chapman, Cranley Dr., Whitebrook, B.C.; Thomas Coustineau, Carling Ave., Ottawa; Frank Ditchburn, Lilac Ave., Dorval; Helen Flynn, West Mall, Etobicoke; George Gardiner, Fiddlers Green, London, Ont.; Lorraine Harvey, Terri Court, Kelowna, B.C.; Dr. Harry Inder, Bison Lane, Stratford, Conn.; Tom E. Jackson, King George Highway, Surrey, B.C.; Stanley Keirle, Hillcrest Dr., Whitby, Ont.; Gordon Law, Yeta Terrace, Victoria, B.C.; Margaretha Matthews, Bowness Rd., Calgary; Don J. McCrimmon, Sidney, B.C.; Norma McKinley, Colbus Lake, B.C.;

Rex Newman, Mt. Pleasant Rd., Toronto; Dorothy Saunders, Maybelle Ave., Islington; Dr. Colin Sorenson, Bath Rd., Kingston; Lt. Col. Joe St. Arnaud, Valwood Cres., Ottawa; Al E. Studholme, Anna Russell Way, Unionville, Ont.; David E. Watson, Eden Ave., London, Ont.

If you have any idea where any of these members are now located would you let Al Wallace know about it before February 28. That is the deadline for updating the Association roster and computer mailing list from which the new 1990 Ex-Air Force POW Association Directory will be compiled. If you want any changes in your own listing from what appeared in the 1987-88 Directory let Al have it by then as well.

If you attended the Reunion in Ottawa you received a small silver pin with wings encircled by barbed wire. These pins were supplied to the reunion committee at Association expense. Al Wallace has a limited number of these pins on hand which he will mail out on receipt of your cheque for \$5 payable to the Ex-Air Force POW Association.

Each half-year mailing of *The Camp* now costs in excess of \$4,000 when printing, postage, federal and provincial taxes are added up. Donations to beef up the Association's declining treasury balance will be welcomed by the secretary-treasurer who will acknowledge your gift with an appropriate gratuitous response.

Those Who Got Back . . .

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Torgau had wanted nothing to do with drifting, scavenging bands of liberated prisoners-of-war. For the Russians the war was not yet finished."

Chester McClure

Shot down near Frankfurt-on-Main in December 1943, Chester McClure evaded capture until the S.S. caught up with him at Koblenz. Osteomyelitis is a memento of a Gestapo man's blow to his jaw during interrogation. Such a reception heightened Chester's desire to leave the Third Reich. In the summer of 1944 he escaped through the wire from Camp 11B at Muhlburg. He was free a week, recaptured and subsequently escaped from a transit camp at Hamburg and from Muhlburg again about six weeks before the Red Army swept through.

"With the aid of some Frenchmen in charge of a cemetery I made it at night to the Russian lines," Chester says. "I had been with front line Russian troops for about a week and a half when they met up with Americans at Torgau. The Russians built a pontoon bridge over the Elbe and the following morning I was one of the first non-Russians to cross it. Four of us — two RAF, a British army type and myself — got back to the Americans. The attitude of the front line Red Army troops was good but as you got back a bit further as they passed you ran into the political people who were stricter. On one occasion I thought I was going to be shot because I couldn't speak Russian and I wouldn't show them my German POW dog tags because I figured they would take one look at them and shoot me as a Kraut. However, I had a letter from Canada and the interrogation officer wanted the stamp from the envelope. Once I convinced him I was a Canadian I was well treated."

"I saw absolutely no sign that the Russians were trying to take British or Canadian prisoners back to the Soviet Union," Chester says emphatically.

Joe Makarewicz

Two weeks after the Soviet Army liberated the Allied POW's at Muhlburg they moved them to better quarters near Dresden. "This had been a German military camp but a couple of days after we got there the Russians kicked us out because they

wanted the quarters themselves," Joe Makarewicz recounts. "So a day later three of us and two young Polish boys who had been in the camp with us headed towards Leipzig and met the Americans. That was about a month after we had been liberated. The Russians had wanted to make a formal exchange of the liberated briefs but most of our guys left long before."

Nick Carter

"We were liberated by the Russians from Camp 3A at Luckenwalde on April 20, 1945. They held on to us for a month and we moved out May 20th," William (Nick) Carter remembers. "I believe that officially we were supposed to go out through Odessa but the war was just about over and they decided that instead of taking us all that way we would wait and then go west. Accordingly they trucked us across the Elbe into Allied hands. The Russians didn't have any food with them. They lived off the country and expected us to as well. There was no suggestion that I know of that the Russians planned to take us back to the Soviet Union. As far as I know there were several compounds and they all just went. In the month's interim while we waited the Russians gave us passes so we could go out foraging for food. We were told that it was dangerous to go too far afield and we actually guarded ourselves and a lot of liberated foreign workers who moved into the camp with us."

Jack Rice

Shot down in the summer of 1943 Jack Rice was among some 20,000 prisoners "including Russians, French, Dutch, Serbians, Poles, Indian Gurkhas and eventually the Germans former allies, the Italians" who were liberated from Stalag 4B at Muhlburg by Red Army troops. There were approximately 2,000 British and Commonwealth Air Force POW's in the camp. "For several days after the Russian Army rolled through and liberated us we would go outside the camp foraging for food. Finally a group of us decided to walk west towards the American Army," Jack Rice says.

"We crossed the pontoon bridge the Rus-

sians had erected over the Elbe and at a small village named Oschatz we met an American army officer who advised us to return in his staff car to the safety of Stalag 4B. We had travelled just a few miles when we were stopped by a group of Hitler Youth armed with revolvers and machine guns," he notes. "We were ordered out of the car and told to march down the road. We thought our time had come but they were more interested in taking the staff car in which they disappeared. We spent the night with a group of Free French at Oschatz and the next day met the spearhead of the American First Division. We spent VE-Day back behind the wire under American Army supervision and a few days later flew back to England in RAF Halifax and Lancaster aircraft."

Don Brown

Still fighting a rearguard British action against American revolutionary elements in Montgomery Alabama, *The Camp's* indefatigable correspondent Don Brown has provided his dramatic diary entries for their last 10 days at Muhlburg. Just past noon April 17 "Some silly bastard of a Mustang pilot strafed our camp. Two B-51's came over at around 200 feet, took a look, made a turn and gave the front area of the camp a couple of jerries. Casualties were two Yanks, one Jerry sentry and one Russian." By April 20 they had used white lime to mark the four corners of the camp with "POW" signs. "Hope those fighter boys know what 'POW' means." By 7 p.m. that day he wrote: "Torgau pranged very heavily. Damn bad part is we're right in the middle of the advancing Russians and Americans. So why not write about it to fill in the time rather than think about it and be a nervous wreck."

On April 21, Don Brown records, "German hauptmann called a meeting with all nationalities represented. Gave us option of being evacuated or staying here. All agreed to stay except Poles who numbered some 200. They elected to leave tonight and endeavour to reach the American lines some 30 miles distant." Two days later the "Russian Cossacks arrived in camp this morning after an all night battle in the vicinity of the lager. They are really rough and look like damn good fighters. The entire camp went mad. We were told by the Russians that American

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High in the Sunlit Silence . . .

KENNETH ANTHONY, of Belleville, died in a Toronto hospital last August after a short illness. He is survived by his wife Ruth.

WILLIAM EVERETT BRODRICK, long-time member of the Ex-Air Force POW Association, died December 20 at Rotary-Laughlin Lodge, Toronto. Ev had been in poor health for some time.

STANLEY W. BRYANT, died at Charles Cammell Hospital, Edmonton, on August 18. Born at Clondonald and educated in Edmonton, Stan returned there postwar and was an inspector with the provincial department of agriculture. Flight engineer on a 427 Squadron Halifax he was downed over Belgium on his first operation in the summer of 1943. He evaded capture and travelled both Belgian and French escape routes before his underground escort was betrayed at Bordeaux. He spent a less than felicitous three months in the Gestapo prison at Fresnes before shipment to a POW camp. Stan was twice married and lost both wives to cancer. Son Stanley Jr., daughter Beth and their families survive.

JOHN D. (MIKE) CARMICHAEL, died at Edmonton November 18. He was 73. Mike was tail-gunner in a Whitley on submarine patrol out of St. Evit, Cornwall when they were brought down by ground fire in the Bay of Biscay off St. Nazaire. Trapped in his turret as the aircraft sank, he spent awesome moments fighting to free himself, then swam into captivity on October 13, 1942. Mike was a jeweler in Hinton, Alberta where he is survived by his wife Pearl.

HARRY CREASE, died at Cobourg, Ont. January 11 after a short illness. He was age 75. Surviving are his wife Marie and son Harry (Skip) Crease of Orangeville. Harry was a founding member of the Ex-Air Force POW Association. A POW for three and a half years, he wrote a book "Through the Gates" based on his experiences in camp.

WILLIAM C. HOWELL, died at Bestview Retirement Home, Oakville, December 26. He was 72. Bill had suffered a stroke a

year earlier but seemed to have regained his health. He attended the Toronto krieg's pre-Christmas bash less than a month before his death. His wife Lillian predeceased him in 1987. He is survived by daughters Susan Apter, Barbara Godsoe and son Peter and six grandchildren.

KENNETH THOMPSON HYDE, died last May 21, at age 75 in Calgary. Born at Charleston he had a photography studio in Calgary prior to enlistment in the RCA in

1939. He was a warrant officer navigator when shot down in 1942. Post-war he established Hyde Aerial Industrial Photography and was active in both aviation and photographic work until four years ago.

STEVEN MACNUTT, died suddenly in Ottawa on January 14. He was 72. Montreal-born, Steve returned there after the war. He was product manager for Johnson & Johnson until his retirement 10 years ago when he and wife Barbara moved to Ottawa. Steve was a member of Wimpy crew that included Stu Saunders. They were shot down over Berlin in September 1941 and wound up at Stalag 4B Lamsdorf.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Another great reunion - this time in Ottawa - has come and gone. Like the others it was successful because a tremendous amount of effort was put into it by Tony Little and his hard-working committee. Those who were there had a great time. Those who weren't missed a good deal. There were many moments that won't be readily forgotten. The Lancaster fly-past, for example, or the spirited maneuvers of the Ottawa police as they escorted our busses knowing that Soggy Norton - one of their own and one of ours - was aboard. To top it off the Ottawa reunion committee was able to make a \$5000 donation to the Canadian Red Cross from net receipts on behalf of our association.

Our next reunion is to be held in 1991 on Cambridge university campus. The location will be familiar to many who flew from RAF bases in that corner of Britain. The British kriegies are making good progress in planning a program they hope will rival that at Oxford and Southampton in recent years. In Vancouver, Art Deacon and Ivan Quinn have already booked first-class accommodation on the University of British Columbia campus for 600 people to attend the next reunion of our Association on August 5 to 10, 1992.

Next fall a number of us chaps who flew aircraft without spare engines during the late unpleasantness will be in London to mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. As has been so often recorded, those seven weeks of air warfare denied Goering's Luftwaffe the sky control essential to invasion of Britain. Another turning point worth commemoration occurred in the spring of 1942 when massive bombing raids, starting with the 1000-bomber assault on Cologne the night of May 30-31, dramatically and effectively struck back on German targets. This was the start of the Battle for Germany.

Join joins in wishing you and yours health and happiness in this last decade of the twentieth century. Cheers.

Don Morrison

Don't Buy Slave Labour Story

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officers would be here today but as it turned out that was a lot of crap."

Don's diary entry 10 days later reports that a group of them "crossed the Elbe about four or five miles down river from the lager. A few words to the lone Russian officer did the trick. Stopped overnight after hiking 12 kilometres. Should hit the American jeep patrols today. Thank God we're over that damn Elbe." A day later a member of the jeep patrol hit them - almost. A shot from his revolver shattered the glass of German beer Don Brown was holding close to his lips. It took three weeks for him to convince his American liberators that he really was a Yank in the RAF. On May 25 they flew him from LeHavre to Britain.

"The Poles who elected to try and reach the Americans before the Russians arrived are the only ones I recall being abducted by the Red hordes," says Don Brown.

Henry Pankratz

Kenneth Slack, a fellow-krigey at Lukanwalde, tried to make it to the American lines on his own and could have been shot by Russian or American soldiers who were not inclined to query individuals they encountered in unidentifiable uniforms in the last days of the war, says Hank Pankratz of Port Hope. All Hank knows for certain is that Slack and another RCAF krigy got tired of waiting for the Soviet troops to release them and took off never to be heard of again.

Hank doesn't buy the U.S. researchers' story of 50,000 Allied POW's being enslaved by the Russians. But neither does he think much of the treatment Lukanwalde kriegies received after their "liberation" by Soviet forces. He says it took six weeks before their liberators trucked them to American positions across the Elbe. Prior to that the Soviets had road-blocked American Army trucks which approached the liberated camp to remove the Allied POW's. "We stood in line for three or four days while the Soviets compiled a dossier on each man," he says.

When the Soviet troops first arrived the kriegies raided the camp headquarters and recovered personal articles such as watches which their Luftwaffe captors



HENRY PANKRATZ

had seized. No sooner had the Allied POW's strapped on their watches than Soviet soldiers removed them at gunpoint. When the senior British officer protested to the Soviet commander the watches were returned. Two Russian soldiers identified with the watch-taking were shot on the spot, he says.

Associate Defence Minister

In the Canadian House of Commons last November 3, Associate Defence Minister Mary Collins was asked "to call on these so-called researchers and investigative reporters to appear before a (parliamentary) committee and to put up or shut up." The associate minister said her department was checking World War II records "to see if there was any evidence in that regard." She noted that "some of the allegations may have been based on misinformation. Messages sent at the end of the war implied that perhaps some Americans and British were being held in the Soviet Union. This was at the end of May 1945. That message was then counteracted within a week to say that was not the case; that, in fact, the message referred to Soviet personnel who were perhaps being held in some western countries."

Associate defence minister Collins promised to investigate further. On November 10 we queried her for The Camp but have received no answer. However, the lady minister is busy defending Canada. In the previous three months she had logged \$146,000 worth of travel in government Challenger aircraft visiting such strategic locations as Victoria, Calgary, London, Ontario and Sept Iles, Quebec.

POW'S IN PERPETUITY

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yet another American writing a book about unrepatriated kriegies. He is James Sanders who claims Stalin seized liberated Commonwealth and British POW's to force the Brits to turn over anti-Communist forces in their hands. "Convoys of trucks were sent behind Soviet lines to pick up Commonwealth and U.S. prisoners-of-war," Picton wrote. He quotes Sanders as saying "in every case uncovered the Soviets refused to release the POW's."

Picton did locate one Canadian ex-POW who managed to get out of Russian clutches. Alex Masterton of Vancouver told the Sunday Star he was with a British regiment and was captured at Dunkirk in 1940. Four years later he escaped from a German POW camp and joined the Polish underground. Then he and two other Canadian soldiers in the British Army were "sort of liberated but the Russians didn't know where to tell us to go." Masterton says they got within 30 kilometres of Moscow then headed for Odessa where they were jailed along with several B-17 crews who had been shot up raiding Romanian air fields. A British naval captain arranged the release of the three Canadians but Masterton says "I don't think the B-17 crews ever got out." He would have recounted his experience long before Picton interviewed him. Masterton said, but MI-6 British Intelligence had sworn him to secrecy.

Day at Track

Toronto kriegies will spend a day at the races at Greenwood Race Track from noon till they run out of money Friday April 20. The tariff is \$19 per person. Al Wallace has reservations pending for 60 people and is filling requests on a first-come basis.

The association's Annual Red Gordon Memorial golf tournament and barbecue will be held as usual at Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston, Ontario. The date is June 22.

The Camp

with Air and Exercise is published irregularly but with feeling by the Ex-Air Force POW Association. Ray Silver is editor. Write if you get work but send money to Secretary Al Wallace at 19 Donna Court, Willowdale, Ont. M2M 2C9

JOE (Red) NOBLE, a remembrance

By Ken (Shag) Reese

Joe Noble was a great friend of mine. I got to know him over many months at Stalag Luft III from the perspective of a lower bunk. Every morning I would awaken to the sight of two red hairy legs hanging in front of me.

Joe, or "Red" as we knew him, enlisted in the RCAF at the beginning of the war and joined 40 Squadron RAF at Alconbury as a navigator in June 1941. His captain was Ken Jennings, a New Zealand sergeant pilot. Early in their tour while returning from an operation they ran out of gas and crash landed. Joe pulled Jennings from the wrecked Wellington before it was swept by flames.

After completing a 30-op tour Joe did an instructional spell at an Operational Training Unit. Teaching was not his bag and he possessed persuasive powers. Soon he was back in action as a pilot officer on 214 Squadron Stirlings. He was on his 57th operation - on Osnabrück - when a ME-110 attacked. After three encounters both the Stirling and ME-110 were in flames and falling out of control. Two crew-mates were dead and four had baled out. Joe and his captain were about to jump, themselves, when the aircraft exploded at about 1000 feet. Joe found himself in mid-air then on the ground with burned face, hands and minor injuries.

IMMOBILIZATION

Undeterred and joined by his front-gunner Flight Sergeant Bailey, Joe established their location on an escape-kit map. He reckoned they were about 70 miles from the Dutch border. Hiding by day they made it into Holland in six nights of walking. By this time Red was in considerable pain and his right hand was becoming septic. But when several attempts to contact friendly help failed they pressed on for several more days. Eventually they were stopped by two Dutch policemen whose limited English nullified Joe Noble's persuasive powers. When the police indicated they would have to turn over the airmen to the German authorities, Bailey bolted from one policeman's grasp and Joe Noble immobilized the other with a blow that did further damage to his swollen and inflamed right hand.

Armed with the kay-bed policeman's revolver and astride his bike, Red sped towards the Belgian border. Riding virtually one-handed he sped across the first bridge under the noses of border guards. Four police captured him at the second bridge. After hospital treatment for his hand and facial burns he faced interrogation by German occupation forces in Holland. Accused of being a civilian and told he would be shot, Joe finally persuaded his captors he was a downed airman. They handed him over to the Luftwaffe. At Dulag Luft he was hospitalized for a month before joining us at Luft III.

FROM COOLER TO CAN

Red had no intention of remaining in a POW camp. His first escape attempt was a leap from the hut roof into a cart-load of fir branches. Seen by a guard he spent his first stint in the cooler. His second try was in a garbage can. But the garbage intended to cover him contained hot cinders. Rescued from burning or suffocation he spent a further fortnight in the cooler. His third effort was more successful. He was in a party of 24 kriegies escorted by other POW's disguised as guards and equipped with wooden rifles. Waving forged gate passes the phony guards persuaded the real ones that they were taking bug-ridden kriegies for delousing. By the time the escape was detected an hour later Red Noble was enroute to Danzig by train in the guise of a Norwegian worker. He sustained two routine checks. A third by the SS sent him back to Sagan for another three weeks in the cooler.

I shared Joe Noble's final escape attempt. He and I worked together as a digging team on the Great Escape which earned us numbers 78 and 79 on the roster of escapees to use the tunnel Wally Floody had engineered. In mid-winter we planned to head "hard-arise" for Yugoslavia. It seemed impossible but I felt that somehow with Red Noble I would make it. We came close to liberty or death. We had pulled about 25 escapees from the last halfway house to the exit shaft and number 77 was going out just ahead of us when gunfire stopped us in our tracks.

The escape of 76 Air Force officers just weeks before the expected Allied invasion made the Germans extremely nervous. That was evident during the lengthy Appel that followed the tunnel's discovery. Red and I noted the German jitter at first hand. Our captors considered us "difficult", lacking appreciation of their sensibilities at a trying time. I joined Joe on his fourth stretch in Luft III cooler.

On the night of January 19, 1945 we were evacuated from the camp at Sagan to march through freezing weather for some 18 hours before being temporarily sheltered in hay-filled barns. That was the first but not the last occasion on which Joe Noble's willful strength and leadership would come into play. As we dropped shivering and exhausted into the hay you could hear Joe's voice citing the fire hazard. "No smoking," he belted. "If I catch one sod smoking I'll stick this pitchfork in them." He meant it, too.

AIDE TO WRAY

Our next camp was Miag-Mariag North near Hamburg. Here the Senior British Officer was RCAF Group Captain Larry Wray. In the spring of 1945 as we were again evacuated to keep us from the advancing Allied armies, Larry Wray appointed Red to be his adjutant, in effect. The SBO was, himself, fearless, enterprising and thoroughly respected by friend and foe alike. He recognized those same qualities in Joe Noble. With Red at his right hand, Group Captain Wray assumed the German commandant's authority in the final weeks of the war in Europe. We were billeted on a large farm near Lubeck where we were liberated on May 3, 1945.

Both Larry Wray and Joe Noble remained in the RCAF. Wray eventually became Air Commodore; Red Noble made it to Group Captain. It is hard to visualize Group Captain Noble as commandant of an RCAF station in post-war spit and polish. I remember the red hairy legs and if I listen intently I can still hear the bull-roar voice softening to a slightly off-key rendering of "There Was a Man from Kansas."

Hail and Farewell, Wally

Wally Floody played a big role in our lives, not because he engineered The Great Escape – momentous though that was – but because he epitomized the camaraderie, goodwill, mutual respect and optimism that sustained us in the bag. Then for 45 years he exploited those qualities of our wartime fellowship to create the ex-Air Force krieg community in which three generations now count ourselves kin.

— R.S.

A big man

On October 25, 1940 Wally Floody and I stood at the desk of the RCAF Recruiting Centre on Bay Street, Toronto to sign our enlistment papers. Our service numbers were one digit apart.

That night we entrained for No. 6 Manning Depot at Brandon, Manitoba. Within a few weeks most of us were despatched to various stations for guard duty. Wally, who had been in a high school cadet corps, was sent directly to Initial Training School, gaining eight weeks on the rest of us. The next time I heard his name mentioned was when I joined 401 Squadron in November 1941. Wally had already arrived at Biggin Hill and been shot down on his first operation a few days earlier. I finally caught up with him when I entered the gates of Stalag Luft III North Camp in July 1942. Wally, Wing Commander Stanford Tuck and Aubrey Ferguson were standing there to greet and identify me.

I was repatriated at the end of October 1942 and home for that fourth wartime Christmas. Wally and the others remained at Sagan to make The Great Escape a living legend. Wally and I met up again just before the war ended. His family and mine developed apace. Their elder son Brian was born one day after our son Bruce in September 1946. But what kept us together again was the ex-RCAF POW Association. Wally was a co-founder and quickly enlisted his friends. Knowing him, it would have been impossible to avoid participation in krieg affairs even if you had not shared his enthusiasm.

Wally Floody was a big man in every way and I was proud that he counted me a friend. His role in our krieg community will be irreplaceable. Cheers, Wally.

Don Morrison, Toronto

Life was good

All of us fortunate enough to have known Wally Floody as a friend were touched by a presence as uniquely warm and human as it was heroic. Wally's contribution to our



Wally, as pictured by John Elliott at Ottawa reunion.

prison-camp society was monumental. It encompassed much more than devotion to duty and a passion for freedom. He was at all times an unflinching reminder that no matter how hard the going, life was good and well worth living. We thank him for the memories.

He was exceptional in so many ways. He seems to have been born for the great purpose of inspiring us in the days when we needed it most. His passing marks the end of an era but Wally will remain warmly in mind as long as there are any of us to remember.

Kingsley Brown, Antigonish, N.S.

A very gutsy guy

Wally Floody was a very gutsy guy whose tunnelling experience in prison camp probably contributed to his death. He was one of the gutsiest guys I ever knew and I don't think The Great Escape could have gone ahead without him. His dedication made it work. Without Wally's organizational skill I don't think we would have got very far. I think that Roger Bushell, Wally Floody and Wings Day could share credit for the success of the enterprise. He was the tunnelling expert but more than that he

had the skill, the determination and the dedication to press on with it. Wally kept in touch over the years and was a very helpful friend. If someone needed something Wally could always come up with it.

Paul Brinkhill, Balmoral Beach, Australia

Reunions won't be the same

Wally has been an inspiration to us all both in Stalag Luft III and since the war ended. It is good that this has been recognized in the British press and by the public. Said the Daily Telegraph "Floody surveyed, designed and engineered the tunnel through which 76 RAF and Allied prisoners-of-war officers made their escape."

We shall all miss Wally; reunions will never be the same without him. All members of the RAF ex-POW Association send their deepest sympathy to Betty and the family.

Charles Clarke, Richmond, Surrey

He inspired respect

In April 1943 around about his 25th birthday Wally Floody had been a POW for 18 months, much of that time spent underground. He was selected by Roger Bushell to take control of the design and construction of three tunnels. This massive operation in a new compound led to the escape a year later of 76 officers in what subsequently became known as "The Great Escape."

Wally's contribution to its final success can be measured by the brilliance of the overall concept and design, but more importantly by the leadership he gave to the underground workers – men of many nationalities and temperaments engaged in the construction of Tom, Dick and Harry. His personal control of the operations remained undisputed and was derived from his ability to inspire the respect and, indeed, affection of his diggers and all the others who worked with him.

Peter (Capt. Hornblower) Fanshawe,
United Kingdom

Comrade par excellence

Wally was a friend and old comrade par excellence. His name will be forever linked with The Great Escape in which fate and Roger Bushell chose him to play a leading part. He was the right man in the right place at a time when his expertise and forceful personality were needed to direct

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Red Cross Connections

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their families in 1963 - communications which had a recognizable impact on the recovery of Franco-Prussian War casualties half a dozen years later. In 1914 the ICRC formally set up its International Prisoner-of-War agency. That became the Central Prisoner-of-War Agency 25 years

later. With the advent of total war, genocide and the mass resettlement of European populations they subsequently became the Central Tracing Agency - 30 Swiss citizens, aged 25 to 45 - who currently make connections with victims of war in about one fifth of the world's nations.

Air Force kriegies remember best the food parcels. Their families recall the Red Cross "capture cards" that invariably brought the first word that sons or husbands were still alive. In fact the ICRC provided 26 services in aid of POW's and their next-of-kin. A staff of 4,000 processed up to 100,000 pieces of mail per day. ICRC delegations made 11,000 visits to POW and civilian internment camps. Some 36 million Red Cross parcels were distributed, 120 million letters and postcards were exchanged between kriegies and their kin; another 23 million between civilian internees and their families.

Momentous as these figures are, they were only background for the Red Cross work that began when WW II ended. An estimated 700,000 people in Europe alone were reunited with their families through the good offices of the ICRC in the immediate post-war years. Today the Central Tracing Agency maintains war-victim data on 60 million index cards on three floors of ICRC headquarters in Geneva. They record those interned, imprisoned and displaced in the past 110 years. In the past decade some 100,000 such people a year have been identified and their whereabouts filed in computer memory banks. Red Cross headquarters tallied their Central Tracing Agency work for just nine months of 1987. In that period they located close to 27,000 missing persons; reunited more than 300 families; expedited the exchange of 1.6 million messages on Red Cross forms. About 40,000 enquiries for such services reach ICRC headquarters annually.

The Canadian Red Cross handles more than 5,000 cases and locates about 400 missing people in an average year. At the end of WW II, Canadian Red Cross files in Ottawa listed nearly 70,000 POWs and civilian internees for whom enquiries had been made. The most urgent information sought was whether the POW or internee

was alive and in what state of health. But at war's end the Canadian Red Cross Enquiry Bureau played an increasing social service role. Six months after the war ended in Europe a member of the Ottawa staff observed: "As long as servicemen are away from home there will be problems which their next-of-kin and friends feel that the Red Cross will be able to solve. Our overseas office frequently asks on behalf of wives or fiancées still in Europe for a report on servicemen who have returned to Canada. Conversely reports on conditions of families here are frequently requested by servicemen still overseas."

In those immediate post-war months Canadian Red Cross workers sent some 4,000 "Dispersed Family" cards postage free from provincial Red Cross offices to ICRC headquarters in Geneva. In cooperation with the CBC they transmitted nearly 90 messages in Dutch to Holland and about 250 in Slavic language to Czechoslovakia. Virtually every Canadian kriegie liberated in Europe utilized Red Cross communications to tell the folks back home he was okay. With greater difficulty the Canadian Red Cross began late in 1944 to establish contact with Canadian POW's and internees in the Far East. Some 700 cables were transmitted to or from people in Japanese camps, half of them before the war ended in the Pacific. On liberation the POWs in Asia received more than 1,200 Red Cross message forms flown from next-of-kin in Canada. In 1945 the Canadian Red Cross Enquiry Bureau in Ottawa wrote 13,200 letters. "They covered a multitude of subjects concerning thousands of people in many countries," an official said.

Half a century since the 30 Swiss volunteers reactivated the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva, Red Cross staffers there still receive queries, especially concerning people from Poland, Italy, German and the Soviet Union. "These inquiries stem mainly from ex-servicemen seeking to establish their pension rights with a certificate from our agency that they were captives and, of course, from people still looking for missing relatives," says an ICRC spokesperson. How long will the millions of records held at Geneva headquarters be needed for practical and humanitarian reasons? The Central Tracing Agency envisages that its work concerning WW II will continue "at least until the year 2,000."

FAREWELL, WALLY

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the construction of one of the most successful escape tunnels in history.

He will be remembered by all with affection and admiration; not the least for the care that he and Betty provided for our American comrade George Harsh in his last days. It was my good fortune to visit Wally in Toronto not long before he passed on. It was my privilege to have known him for nearly half a century.

B.A. (Jimmy) James, Ludlow, Shropshire

One man personified us

Hundreds of us contributed in varying measure to the success of the Sagan tunnels but only one personified us all. Wally Floody epitomized the whole venture. It was his life and the pinnacle of his wartime accomplishment. Both its success and tragic aftermath pursued him in peacetime.

Wally was the number one kriegie. At successive POW reunions we met and swapped yarns but all of us paid respect to Wally Floody. Obviously frail, failing and confined to a wheelchair when we met a last time in Ottawa last summer, he remained a commanding figure compelling the respect of all. He was a unique character.

Gwyn Martin, Aberystwyth, Wales

A remarkable character

Wally was an exceptional fellow and I am proud that I was lucky enough to be chosen to dig in what must be called his tunnels. Without professional training he was, nonetheless, an outstanding engineer on those kriegy tunnels and it was his leadership, drive and inspiration which assured the success of The Great Escape. We mourn the loss of a remarkable character and a good friend. He will be sadly missed by friends around the world.

Kenneth (Shag) Rees, Rhosneigr, North Wales



Gen from around the circuit

Among events reported in recent months by Don Brown, *The Camp's* peripatetic American correspondent south of the Mason-Dixon Line, were the sighting of an Unidentified Flying Object by more than 100 fellow citizens as sober as Don at Fyffe, Alabama between Crossville and Rainsville in DeKalb County and a memorial service by Sons of Confederate Veterans and the 34th Alabama Infantry Regiment at Montgomery's Oakwood Cemetery. Camp readers who recognize Don Brown as the original Yank in the RAF and recall his front-page photo of the Scot piper in full lament among the gravestones a year ago will know his propensity to cover the cemetery's happenings. He has kin there and as he explains, "My grandfather, who was in this Alabama Confederate Regiment told me when I was extremely young 'Help the English if the time comes.'"

Another voice from south of the Mason-Dixon Line is that of Basil G.D. Jackson who wrote secretary Al Wallace from Roswell, Georgia last fall to say that "Having just received information about the Association after 45 years I would be honoured to establish contact." Al was equally honoured to invoice him for membership.

Nick Carter's historian son William S. Carter has teamed up with Spencer Dunmore, author of *Bomb Run* and a string of other superb flying fiction, to write an operational history of Six Group, the RCAF squadrons who succeeded Four Group bomber squadrons late in 1942 on Yorkshire bases within hovering distance of Betty's Bar. Six Group squadrons were 408, 415, 419, 420, 424 to 429 and 431 to 434. "We need anecdotes from the air-men and women who served with the Canadian bomber group from October 1942 to May 1945. We would like to hear from

any of these veterans or their family members" says Dr. W.S. Carter who is at Apt. 205, 9 Longwood Rd. S., Hamilton, Ont. L8S 1S4 (phone 416-522-9573) Spence Dunmore is at 44 Ravenscliffe Ave., Hamilton, L8P 3M4 (416-528-4404).

We suggest that Carter and Dunmore get in touch with Roy and Joyce Inkster now semi-retired to 55 Donly Drive N., Simcoe, Ont. N3Y 5A5 (phone 519-426-0313). Still organizing the annual Allied Air Forces Reunion at Toronto's Royal York Hotel - it will be Sept. 28-30 in 1990 - the Inksters have stored 11,000 names of ex-Air Force personnel in computer memory.

Someone, whose identity we have misplaced, has sent us an analysis of the Six Group squadrons noted plus No. 405 Vancouver Squadron which Roy Inkster says got swooped up by the Pathfinders just before the Canadian bomber group was established. 405 and 408 Squadrons began operations in 1941; 419, 420, 425 and 427 the following year; 424, 426, 428, 429,

431, 432 and 434 in 1943; 433 and 415 saw service in 1944. These 15 Canadian squadrons flew just under 50,000 sorties (operations by individual aircraft) and dropped 150,000 tons of bombs on enemy targets until they stood down two weeks before the war ended in Europe. In the course of those operations they lost 8,025 aircrew when 1227 aircraft were shot down. A guess-estimate is that probably 2,000 of those casualties wound up in the bag. Air gunners on Six Group operations shot down nearly 100 Luftwaffe planes. The analysis shows that Six Group aircrew won a Victoria Cross, 26 DSO's, 1562 DFC's - 59 of them with bar, 251 DFM's, a Military Cross, two Air Force cross, three George medals and a dozen OGM's.

A memorial plaque bearing the names of the 50 Luft-3 kriegies killed after recapture following the Great Escape was unveiled at RAF Hendon base last March 23 on the 45th anniversary of the tunnel break. The plaque was designed and built by Michael McHale, a member of the Jaguar staff at Birmingham. One of Wally Flood's tunnelling crew, inveterate escaper and the author of *Moonless Night*, Jimmy James officiated at the unveiling.

Three others who survived the Gestapo guns in the wake of the escape, Bob Nelson, Dick Churchill and Peter Fanshawe, along with honorary treasurer of the British ex-POW's Bill Bloxham, participated.



This is the memorial at RAF Hendon to the 50 Luft 3 kriegies shot in the aftermath to The Great Escape. The shield beneath the RAF Ex-POW Association logo says: "Look at this, friend. Take the freedom they strove to give you and be in their debt."



ED CARTER-EDWARDS

Ed Carter-Edwards, perhaps the most gregarious, socially-sophisticated and gracious-mannered of the kriegy community, spent much of the past summer and fall celebrating ex-POW survival, attending reunions and writing thank-you notes to all and sundry. Ed and his wife Lois moved on from our ex-RCAC POW Reunion in Ottawa in July to the National POW Association convention, held jointly with the American POW Association at Niagara Falls in September.

Among other things Ed is an organizer of the Former Prisoners of War of Stalag Luft III and of the K-L-B Club in Canada. The latter stands for Konzentrationslager Buchenwald, whose membership according to Bud Ward includes 169 Allied airmen picked up in France in the summer of 1944 while in Resistance hands. They were incarcerated at the infamous Fresne prison in Paris until it was threatened by advancing Allied forces in August 1944. Then they were moved to Buchenwald for two months until the Luftwaffe regained custody of them as Air Force POW's and they were transferred to Luft III. Carter-Edwards persuaded 15 of the K-L-B members and their wives along with two former Danish police officers and their wives who were in Buchenwald as well to attend the joint meeting at Niagara Falls. "For most of us it was the first time together since 1944," he says.

He had no problem getting Ottawa Police co-operation for the Camp picture shown here. Who but Carter-Edwards would write Ottawa's police chief following the kriegy reunion to say "My wife and I wish to again thank you for the excellent manner in which your men handled the escort duties for the convey of buses. Many of the officers expressed their personal feelings of appreciation for the freedom we all

enjoy, an expression we do not hear too often especially from the younger generation." Only a guy retired to the sylvan glades of Bala far from the clamorous capital would write that!

Denis C. Bateman of 7 Standale Grove, Ruislip, Middx. HA4 7UA, England is a former member of the British Ministry of Defence historical branch, commissioned by BBC TV to see if he can collect sufficient material on Dixie Deans on which to base a television play. If you can add an anecdote, incident or profile from your association with Dixie during POW days drop Bateman a few lines about it.



It's 20 years since the Colonel Perry Magwood, Andy Rodgers and Billy Sproule met Dixie Deans at Toronto International Airport on his arrival for our 25th anniversary. This is one of the photos Barbara Rodgers-Falconer has provided for Camp files. Photo by Bob Aldrick.

Veterans Affairs Minister Gerald Merrithew notes that under provisions of Bill C-24 passed by Parliament last June POW's widows who previously lost their pension benefits if they remarried will be reinstated. Bill C-24 applies to surviving spouses and other dependents of the War Dead, of disability pensioners and POW's. "We think there are about 4,500 widows, widowers and other dependents who will now be entitled to reapply," Merrithew says.

Eileen Robinson, who took over as full-time secretary of Irvin Great Britain's Caterpillar Club a year or so ago, might be described as a new broom with a clean sweep except that (a) she is nicely shaped and (b) has a husband who might not like the comparison. They attended the ex-

RCAC POW reunion in Ottawa where Eileen pursued her global efforts to update Caterpillar Club membership. She has her work cut out for her. Of 31,875 names on the Club's rolls last year, "most addresses were from (World War II) RAF Stations or POW Camps," she says. Accordingly she began contacting ex-aircrew through newsletters such as this one. A brief item in the British Aircrew Association magazine last year brought 600 updated addresses in response. By last fall she had 2,000 current addresses.

Meanwhile, the Caterpillar Club's honorary archivist has been steadily working in alphabetical order through membership files for the past seven years. As things

stand if your surname begins with A to T, and you ever applied for a Caterpillar pin then you are one of 26,000 membership entries on a computer list that gives name, rank, the date you bailed out and whether it was over friendly or hostile territory. The computerized membership roll means "we can answer queries regarding fellow crew members and put old crew mates in touch with one another," says Eileen Robinson.

But she needs your mailing address. If you haven't been in touch with Irvin Great Britain, Icklefield Way, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 1EU, United Kingdom since you were still operational or bagged, write Ms. Robinson now. In addition to name, rank, number, squadron and the date when you had to use an Irvine chute, they would like

of August out bag to continued next page



Still on Circuit

to know if it worked. In any case the Caterpillar Club is still interested in your shot-down story - which 45 years after the late unpleasantness is more than you can say for family and friends.

A gold Caterpillar pin costs 25 pounds and 50 pence sterling; a silver gilt one half that much. That includes engraving the date you got the chop and posting the pin to your address in Canada. If you want to wear a Caterpillar Club tie or blazer badge, T.M. Lewin & Sons at 106 Jermyn Street, London SW1Y 5EQ can provide it. They won't be responsible if the wearer is mistaken for an entomologist.

Edwin Richardson of Northampton, England, wants to catch up with three Canadian crew-mates he hasn't seen since 1945. One of them is Bill Wynne, an ex-RCAP POW member at Box 183, RR 1, Corbeil, Ontario. The others are Robert Sims, last known at 82 Woodside Ave., Toronto and W.B. Studnile, Second St., Lekehead. Richardson can be contacted through Stan Croft, 56 Hiscock Blvd., Scarborough, Ont. M1G 1S8.

Bud Ward's Edmonton newsletter in September reported the car-crash deaths on August 21 of three ex-aircrew while enroute home to Regina with a Fraser-Nash front gun turret they had borrowed from the BCATP Museum in Brandon last August to display at the AG's and WAG's reunion in Regina. George Tudruk, Steve Young and Grant Wilson, all executive members of the air gunners' association, were less than half an hour out of Brandon on a section of the Trans-Canada Highway under repair when a gravel truck travelling in the wrong lane struck their pick-up truck head-on.

The 20th century was a third spent when Harry Cresse, Marie Beacom and I attended Windsor's Kennedy Collegiate. Yet even then Harry was an Edwardian. Like Wings Day he had that courteous and concerned manner of bygone days; a noblesse oblige that led by example. And he had Wing's sense of good fun though in

the pursuit of wine, women and song. Harry was considerably more restrained. There was no woman beyond Marie and a little drink turned him to music. In more than half a century I never saw Harry Cresse less than impeccable.

Windsor, Ontario was a lunch-pail town and none was hurt worse in the Dirty Thirties. Yet in those mid-Depression years our elders spared no expense to build the William Costello Kennedy Collegiate Institute where the old Windsor Jockey Club had stood. Tall gothic-styled windows fronted a well-endowed library. We had an almost Olympian swimming pool; a moderate-sized stadium and a coach named Heck Creighton who developed exceptional athletes in both. Harry was one of them. He played football with the likes of Joe Kroll, Tony Golab, Ken McKernan and he was a master of the high-diving board.

Harry was one of the first Windsors to join the Air Force and he was already a seasoned flight-lieutenant Hurricane pilot when he was shot down over France early in 1941. He was among the first kniegies at Luft III North Camp; Gwyn Martin remembers him as a room-fuehrer with a firm hand on the ladder door and the room-arbeit roster. Harry worked on The Great

Escape, of course. In 1945 Harry married Marie. And he was one of the founders of the Canadian Air Force kniegry association. A perfectionist, himself, he drove successive Ex-Air Force POW leaders to drink by his insistence on parliamentary procedure and Round Table decorum. They protested but cherished the excuse to imbibe.

Lynne and I remember him best from the reunion at Oxford in September 1982. Long past midnight after the closing banquet we could hear music rising to our 16th century digs in Christ Church College from the quadrangle below. In one corner where two university dormitories are joined Harry stood tall and in full flight on an outside harmonica. Like all else he did, Harry Cresse played it with studious care and great gusto. Song after song rose on the night air, reverberating from gothic arches, gargoyles and turreted walls.

It might have been Percy Bysshe Shelly making music on a flute in this same Oxford courtyard 170 years earlier. But the comparison is flawed. This was my high-school mate, a catholic, Edwardian-mannered, one-woman man, playing by the rules. Perpetually optimistic; *per ardua ad astra*. If you grew up in Depression-day Windsor and survived the gloom of mid-war captivity that was reason enough to be gung-ho these latter days of the 20th century. Harry Cresse was always aware of it.

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Pat Stinson is pictured at Skipton-on-Swale where husband Ray planted a Canadian maple tree on the site where an RCAF Halifax crashed just short of the air field killing two of the crew. The cairn commemorates all Six Group casualties. Pat translated entire ceremony into three Yorkshire dialects.

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Royal Flying Corps and RAF (left), Royal Naval Air Service (right) uniforms of World War I were illustrated by A. E. Haswell Miller in 1921. Left to right are: RAF air mechanic, pilot, RFC private-observer, RAF pilot in first blue uniform (1918), RFC pilot on parade (1914), RNAS air mechanic (1917), pilot, air mechanic (1914), Flight sub-lieutenant (1915) and Flight commander (1915-17).

At the end of October, Jack Lyall suffered a heart-attack that might have felled a young ox. It was critical enough to cure his two-pack-a-day smoking problem overnight. Nine weeks later the indomitable 68-year-old was back at work, his leather-lunged bellows demanding decorum in Toronto court-rooms.

...

Fifty-six years since Norman Watts, flying a 416 Squadron Spitfire, was shot down near his Digby Lincolnshire base, his remains and remnants of his battledress and flying gear were discovered in the wreckage of a Spitfire buried three metres deep in a muddy farm field. The discovery was made last September by aircraft archivists, one of the amateur groups who track down RAF wreckage.

Watts' death had been recorded in wartime but he was thought to be buried at nearby Scopwick where a tombstone bears his name. At last report British Defence Ministry was trying to sort out the SNAFU.

A month later the remains of Art Miron, another Canadian fighter pilot, was found in the wreckage of a 245 Squadron Typhoon near Tilly-sur-Seuilles, where he was brought down by ground fire in an attack on a German truck convoy during the battle to close the Falaise Gap. The Typhoon wreckage was discovered by a French group looking for the remains of a French pilot. Miron's brother Ernie, a RCAF wartime bomber pilot, and four other family members flew to the Canadian Forces base at Baden Soellingen for a belated funeral ceremony.

Joe Fulkerson of Chilliwack, B.C. secured me a RAF 10 Squadron pin to wear on my tie on Remembrance Day. It bears "Shiny Ten" squadron motto - "Rem acu tangere." My comprehension of Latin is even worse than my French but this did not deter me when Air Force Auxiliary youngsters made week-end visits to our squadron site at Leaming. What did the motto mean? they would ask. "In the air we only eat spaghetti." I would tell them.

...

Bud Ward, who tracks the facts for Edmonton kriegies with the intrepid eye for detail one would expect from a former RCMP chief inspector, quoted the *London Daily Mail* verbatim when they reported last spring that "Britain's top World War II fighter ace died last night. James 'Ginger' Lacey shot down 27 enemy aircraft and his tally of 18 kills in the Battle of Britain, more than any other pilot, made him a national hero. Squadron Leader Lacey, 72, waged a four-months fight against cancer and died in hospital at Cottingham. His wartime exploits included a strike on a German Heinkel that bombed Buckingham Palace. His courage won special praise from the Royal Family. 'Ginger' Lacey, then a sergeant, flew Spitfires with 501 Squadron. He was shot down nine times."

The *Mail* had it almost right, said Bud, politely scoring their errors with asterisks and footnotes. "Lacey wasn't top ace; 'actually he was 11th'; "he shot down 28, not 27; "add a Japanese kite in Burma." "that was no "strike" over the palace, Ginger shot it down; "Ginger

flew Hurricanes, not Spitfires, in the Battle of Britain.

That done, Bud dashed off a correction to a *Camp* item a year ago on the Northwest Passage voyage by a RCMP crew in 1940. They sailed in the schooner *St. Roach*, not "St. Roach" as I reported it. My misspelling had Bud reaching for a can of Raid.

...

Toronto branch Air Force kriegies reported an attendance of nearly 50 couples at the annual pre-Christmas bash - dinner and dancing at the Officers Mess of CFB Downsview.

...

I cherish a postcard that Jake Watson sent me from Bangkok, Thailand last spring. "Getting by without language but with a smile, loud talk and hands - the same way I get through to you!" he wrote.

...

Gwyn Martin has published his kriegie memoirs which we reviewed in last summer's *Camp* under its original title. The book is now ambiguously called *Up and Under*. It's in hard cover and illustrated. Gordie King is acting as Gwyn's Canadian agent so if you want a copy send Gordie \$29 to cover the cost including mailing charges. He's at 14015/81st Ave. NW, Edmonton, Alta. Kingsley Brown's *Bonds of Wire* is the other side of the literary coin spun in the North *Camp* room that housed Gwyn and Brownie. You can get this book directly from the author for \$26, which includes postage and mailing. Brownie is at R.R.#7 South Side Harbour, Antigonish, N.S. B2G 2L4.

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Still on Circuit

Eileen Egles, whomever she may be, penned these lines which wound up in *The Camp* mail-bag.

Dashing young heroes, tall, slim and fair,

Quick-witted, moustached, with luxuriant hair;

A pretty girl passing them brightened their eyes

And for freedom they fought in the perilous skies.

Oh what has become of these gallant young men

Grounded for forty-odd years since then?

Where are the happy young heroes of old,

The boys in blue of whom legends are told?

How these handsome young lads have been treated by Fate,

Slim bodies have put on a fair bit of weight;

Moustaches have drooped and the hair, that of late

Was thick, dark and lustrous, is almost not there;

Just a few thinning strands of swif-greying hair.

That rapier-like wit of long years ago Has become pedestrian, limping and slow.

But one spark remains of those long-gone men;

One memory stirs now as it did then. When a pretty girl smiles at them, My,

what a sight!

Backs straighten, heads swivel, eyes smartly right

For a glimpse of her figure, the tilt of her head.

Those boys of the old days are a long way from dead.

Ken Lees was shot down three weeks before Christmas 1943. He had just turned old enough to buy a drink and it was his 28th trip riding backwards in Halifax tail turret. "I could hear the bullets going through the plane, then it blew up," he recalls. Like other sole survivors of disintegrating aircraft Ken found himself swinging beneath a canopy in the night sky over Germany without any recollec-

tion of baling out or pulling the rip-cord. Blown free of his flying boots, he hit frozen ground and walked a mile in stocking feet before German villagers took him in charge. When one of them told him "For you the war is over," Lees figured "If he spoke English I must have somehow gotten into the underground." Luftwaffe captors disabused him of that idea.

At Port Hope's Central Public School Ken had been taught to read music and at Stalag 4B he learned to play a piano that the International Red Cross had supplied. This was the beginning of an avocation that has become an almost full-time pursuit since he retired from 35 years operation of the family trucking business. Ken plays piano and organ for the Masonic Lodge, at Port Hope Legion Branch and for the Legion's 30-60 club choir, for residents of senior citizen homes and stroke recovery patients. The fingers that once triggered twin turret guns now titillate with Terpsichorean tunes.

J.B. Doug Wilson was posted to a RAF Beaufort squadron in March 1942 and got the chop off the coast of Sicily later that month. He was detained in Italy for about 18 months before the Germans whisked him into Deutschland. He was at Stalag IVB (Muehlberg), Stalag IID (Stangard), Luft VI (Heydekrug) and Luft III (Follingbosten) before "walking out of Luckenwalde with six others and eventually getting to the U.S. Forces before the war ended." Having spent his post-war career with Exxon in South and Central America, Doug never did acclimatize to Canadian weather and has lived in Miami (6831 SW 147th Ave., 33193) since retiring. But he and his wife visit with their two sons in Peterborough each summer. At long last Doug has joined our association and this year he would like to renew Canadian acquaintances. Contact him in Florida but don't mention the weather.

Bert and Edna Dowdy had planned to visit with Ken and Ruth Anthony in Belleville before returning to Britain after last summer's reunion. But when they arrived Ken

had been hospitalized in Toronto and by the time the Dowdys returned from a trip to Vancouver, Ken was gone. Emptying his pockets before flying back to Blighty, Bert found \$25 in Canadian money which he passed along to the Air Force kriegies in Ken Anthony's memory. Who but Bert would think of that!

When James (Pappy) Plant and Mildred (Middy) Presswood were married in Calgary in 1945 they were both veterans of long and active overseas service. Pappy quit Winnipeg in August 1937 to join the RAF in Britain. He was doing anti-sub and convoy patrols in 1939 and flying a 58-Squadron Whitley when he was shot down near Essen in June 1940. Middy was a 1933 graduate in nursing and a staff nurse at Blackfoot Indian Hospital at Gleichen, Alberta before the war. As a Nursing Sister she served in South Africa, North Africa and Italy. Middy Plant died October 30; our condolences to Pappy, their son and daughter.

As if anyone might think Alan (Rocky) Trites insensitive to the arts, he has passed along a poem forwarded by a young cousin from down Rothersey, N.B. way. The author was Joseph Sherman who grew up in Sydney and now edits *Arts Atlantic* over on PEI. It's titled "Somebody's Father", presumably Sherman's.

His best friend stuck the war in a POW camp

- tail-gunner in a Halifax bomber, the first sortie had pitched him into the fire-works night.

His own war unfolded at a Halifax desk, an island flocked with Army linen.

No one remembers him complaining. For years

after, it was Pier Legion nights for both, two Jewish boys who had somehow managed

to weave a course through the world's terrors.

Only the boy with bad feet had a son to ask questions about what it was like to live out that mad tilting of the world.

He might better have asked how one learned to breath again

after the Restoration when the last slugged boot had rattled Göttingen.

The best story teller, important with fear

in an iron harness high over Bremen,

continued next page

End of Circuit



The best story teller I chanced from a Halifax turret into our midst was Percy (Pinky) Gaum, of course. His heroic tales interrupted only by the years he was Nova Scotia's gut-feeling health and welfare minister in the like Smith government, Pinky can still rattle the bottles on the Pier Legion bar.

April '90 is what the Former Prisoners of War of Stalag Luft III, our American counterpart, is calling the 45th anniversary program they have planned at Norfolk, Virginia, April 25 to 29. They will be taking registrations and holding forth in a hospitality room from morning to midnight on the opening Thursday. There will be Tactical Air Force and NASA briefings next day; a tour of Norfolk naval base and harbour cruise on the Saturday. General A.P. (Bub) Clark hopes to see a fair number of ex-Air Force POW's from Canada. The reunion will be at Norfolk's waterfront Omni International Hotel. Registration is about \$150 per person; contact Robert L. Weinberg, 2229 Rock Creek Dr., Kernville, Texas 78028.

Ottawa Citizen sports writer Eddie McCabe did a full-page profile of Carl (Soggy) Norton last summer, a fortnight before our reunion. McCabe recalled Soggy's leap from high-school football right into the Rough Riders' line-up in 1937 where he remained till he enlisted in June 1941. Generations of Ottawans are probably familiar enough with Soggy's exploits with the Rough Riders and Ottawa Police Force. But they could hardly appreciate the meeting of two recently drowned Ottawa-area Flying Ashholes at Heydekrug on the Baltic coast in the winter of 1944. Soggy had been a kniegi about a year and a half when Eddie Houston arrived with a POW contingent. As the new arrivals were herded along the barbed-wire fence Soggy shouted: "Anybody there from Ottawa?" Houston replied: "Amprior." Norton's next query was about Ed Houston's recent sex life. Alarmed by the effect their shouted and ribald exchange was having

on the German guards, Houston suggested caution. "Aw, don't pay any attention to these stupid!" That was Sog. That's how he handled it. He treated the Germans with utter disdain," Ed told McCabe. Citizen readers got the drift of the kniegi conversation. Even on a sports page, however, you can't tell it exactly like it is when one party is District Court Judge Ed Houston and the other is Ottawa Police Department's former inspector of detectives.



ED RAE

The slickest piece of work in connection with last summer's reunion in Ottawa was the booklet that flanked the programme with photos, cartoons, first-person recollections, articles and moments, virtually all of them seeing print for the first time. Unless you looked carefully at the acknowledgements on the last page you would not have realized that Ed Rae - with the expertise of his wife Irene - was responsible. They must have culled hundreds of pictures to select the ones they used and the reproduction quality was first class. The same selective judgment was evident in the kniegi's first-hand accounts. Ed and Irene did an enterprising, imaginative and professional job. Congratulations.

Vic Gammon makes an intriguing query. Offering not a clue nor motive beyond "good research reasons and a matter of great interest," he wants to know any and all things about R. A. (Dickie) Yates and Harry Olsen. Both were shot down on one of the big raids on Essen about the first week of June 1942. Olsen died in Canada in 1966. Yates may still be here or thereabouts. If you can add anything to that meagre information on Yates or Olsen let us know c/o The Camp and we'll pass it along to Vic.

From Britain Vic reminds us that Charles Rutherford, oldest surviving Victoria Cross winner, died in Ottawa at age 97 earlier this year.

William (Len) Sleeman, who operated Ontario's fire-fighting fleet of water bombers prior to retirement two or three years ago, fights off cabin fever in Sault Ste. Marie these days by curling, dancing the "Butterfly" with wife Marion, and regaling the boys down at the Legion with breath-taking accounts of POW life.

Len was sufficiently ill-advised to be flying a Wellington out of a Tunisian base on July 16, 1943 when Italian flak removed an engine and they landed in the drink off Sicily. They were brought ashore at Trepani by Italian gunboat then transported to Calabria by rail. The trip took 10 days and they were bombed by Allied aircraft daily. There was a brief stay in POW Camp PG65 near Naples. When this was bombed out they were moved by truck and freight train to Florence in Northern Italy. Then the Italians quit fighting and as Len puts it, "The German army attacked the camp without firing a shot. Our Italian guards were sent to Germany by box-car; we were put in box-cars again and moved to Spittal, Austria where the POWs were mainly Australian."

The stay at Spittal was brief and they en-trained for Leipzig. Len jumped from the train near the German-Czechoslovakian border but was soon recaptured. The escape earned him 17 days in the cooler at yet another camp before shipment via Berlin to Luft VI. He arrived there four months after being fished from the sea. With the advance of Soviet troops late in the summer of 1944, Stalag Luft VI kniegi were evacuated by train to Torun, Poland, then further west to Fallingbomel between Hamburg and Hanover. As Allied and Soviet troops closed in early in 1945, the POWs were again on the march.

Ten days before Allied forces liberated them between Hamburg and Lubeck they were attacked by RAF Typhoons. "They came in one at a time, firing their machine guns to get the range then releasing rockets. By the time the third Typhoon attacked we were in the fields waving towels. But six aircraft attacked before the squadron broke off. Some 20 to 30 of our 400 POW's were killed. So were half a dozen German guards," Len recalls. "Within minutes German Red Cross nurses arrived by bicycle to look after the wounded and dying and they did so without discrimination." Three weeks after that Len Sleeman was back in Britain; a month later home in Canada.



Participants in the 1989 Ottawa reunion were captured in all their youthful spirit and elder charm by John Elliott. Clockwise from top left: More than a dozen celebrate climbing ramp without heart attacks; New Zealand's former postmaster-general A.D. (Monty) Lamont; Henry Deth-Weston and another New Zealander; Ed McCullough of Downsview; ex-kriegy president Dabby Dabous and Gloria two-step flanked by Jim and Olio Finnie while Gerry Grant hides wife Mo behind Dabous; Des Plunkett of Zimbabwe, Ivan Kayes of Dorset U.K. and Geoff Ruff of Abingdon, Illinois; Jack Cameron of Mississauga and Brian Walley of Australia rampart with Billy Sproule resting. Want copies, contact John Elliott in Agincourt, Ont.