

# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION LEGIONS OF HONOR



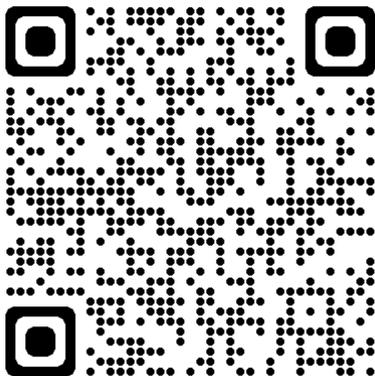
January 2024

Volume 94, Issue 1



The annual convention is fast approaching. The registration form is on the IALOH website at [www.ialoh.org/Events/Annual Convention](http://www.ialoh.org/Events/Annual%20Convention) or you can click on the QR code below. You can also contact one of the IALOH Officers for information.

The Aliante hotel is a great hotel and the convention will be a lot of fun. The Commander Russ and Lady Ginny have done an outstanding job providing a great convention. So don't delay, get your registration forms in today.



## Convention Registration

There are two ways to register for the annual convention on the website.

1. Fill out the online registration form and click the submit button.
2. Fill out the regular registration form and mail the form and your payment to the address indicated on the form.
3. You can also pay for the convention using a credit card. Just click on the "Pay By Credit Card" link.

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**April 2024  
Newsletter  
Article Cutoff Date  
March 15th, 2024**

The newsletter is published quarterly and is on the IALOH website at [www.ialoh.org/Newsletter](http://www.ialoh.org/Newsletter). If you would like something in the newsletter please sent it to me. My contact information is on Page 15.

## Commander's Call

**GRAY AREAS:** I hope you had a joyous and Merry Christmas, and that your New Year is off to a great start. Where did 2023 year go? It seems like it was just yesterday we were in Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, for Junior Past Commander Ginapp's convention and here we are just 4 months away from my convention in Las Vegas.

Since the Arlington Pilgrimage in early November, things have slowed down a bit for the holidays, but things will get busy again at the beginning of the New Year with invitations to several installations. Speaking of Arlington, the feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive. As this was the first year in the new headquarters hotel at Crowne Plaza-Crystal City, we expected there would be a few growing pains. These issues were all addressed to hotel management, and we believe they have been resolved. One important issue that we addressed was the buffet line at the after-ceremony luncheon, next year it will be moved to the foyer to accommodate double-sided serving line to expedite the process. Thank you again to all who attended: 133 attendees with 47 first-time visitors. If you were there, we hope you enjoyed yourselves and we hope to see you again at next year's event. I want to thank 3<sup>rd</sup> Lt Commander Geoffry Lyster, and everyone that assisted in ensuring that this was a successful event.

What an incredible honor and emotional privilege it was to stand on the platform in front of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers with Imperial Sir Ed Stolze, Navy Lt Commander (Ret), my Lady Virginia, USAF MSgt (Ret), and my COS Mike Kearns, Navy Corpsman, to place our wreath before the Tomb. A memory that I will treasure for the rest of my life. To anyone considering taking a place in the IALOH line, this is truly one of the perks making it worth the journey.

April 24<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup> 2024, brings the annual IALOH convention to fabulous Las Vegas. The Aliante Casino + Hotel + Spa is a very clean venue located in North Las Vegas, small

by Las Vegas standards with only 202 rooms. The room rate is inviting and it's good 3 days before and 3 days after the convention dates for those of you who would like to come early or stay for some fun/sightseeing. The resort boasts 5 great restaurants, an Imax theater, a sports book, and, of course, a full casino. The Welcome Party will be a 60s & 70s theme to Welcome Home Vietnam Vets. April is one of the best months for weather in Vegas, daytime temperatures average in the upper 70s with overnight lows in the low 60s, with little or no precipitation. Perfect for lounging around the pool after a long cold winter.

I am offering a few fundraisers this year including two Henry 22 S/L/LR rifles. One is a Freemason Tribute Edition rifle, and the other is a Military Service Edition tribute rifle. Both will include the official Henry Rifle display case and the firearms transfer fee. Only 1,000 tickets will be sold for each rifle. Other raffle items are a beautiful 50" X 50" patriotic quilt with matching pillow (only 500 tickets will be sold) and if you plan on staying at the Aliante Hotel for the 4-day duration of the convention you could have those nights paid for a \$600 value. For tickets, see one of the Lieutenant Commanders or me. You can visit our website IALOH.org under the events tab to make your reservations to attend the convention, all the raffle information and raffle order form are out there as well.

I am challenging the Legion of Honor Units and IALOH to take over this hotel for the convention. As a smaller hotel, I recommend you get your reservations and registration in sooner rather than later.

Russ Gray

Commander

Middle Photo:

Commaner driving the LOH trailer in the Las Vegas Veterans Day parade.



Russell Gray, PC



Mark Miles  
Lt. Commander Candidate

To review Mark's qualifications go to the IALOH website at [www.ialoh.org/Main/Candidate](http://www.ialoh.org/Main/Candidate)

If you would like to run for a Lt. Commander position the cutoff date is 2/23/2024. The application is on the website mentioned above.

# 1st Lieutenant Commander

# Division 4



David Hobbs, PC



I still have some traveling to do before the Annual Convention in April at Aliente Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada. Coming up in February Lady Lisa and I will be attending the "Passing of the Gavel" at the Ismailia Legion of Honor in Buffalo, NY. Two weeks after that we will be traveling to Austin, Texas for the TALOH Legion of Honor Convention. In March I will make the last trip of the season with Past International Commander Dave Ginapp to Jericho Shrine Legions of Honor Mid-Winter Meeting.

The year wraps up at the Annual Convention. I hope everyone is getting their registration in and making the reservations. I have visited the site of the convention and it is beautiful with plenty of restaurants to indulge your taste buds. Be sure to add "The Farm" to the eats list. They have the best Chicken Pot Pie...!! Let's have a great turnout to send Commander Gray, Lady Ginny, and the "Dude" Vince off in style. Hope you guys have a strong "Tailwind" as you go forward with your future endeavors.

As a side note: The NEW Arlington Pilgrimage Challenge Coin for 2024 is now available. Go to the IALOH website [www.ialoh.org](http://www.ialoh.org), then go under events, and Arlington Wreath Laying. You will find the downloadable order blank there. They are selling fast.

Lady Lisa and I will like to wish everyone the very merriest of holidays and a prosperous 2024.

If you have any questions please feel to reach out to me anytime.

Yours In The Faith,  
Dave & Lady Lisa

Greeting Brothers,

Where has the time gone???

This years Arlington Pilgrimage was one, if not the best I have ever attended. If you missed it you missed a goodie. I look forward to returning to the Crowne Plaza, Crystal City.



Sahib Legion of Honor posting the colors at the stated meeting. 1st Lt. Commander Dave Hobbs presented the charter to the Unit. Sahib is a new reinstated Unit.

### Unit Dues

Units can now pay their annual dues online with a credit card. Just go to the IALOH website at [www.ialoh.org](http://www.ialoh.org) and click on the "Unit Dues" menu option. Just a reminder the Unit must still submit all the required annual forms to the Adjutant.

## 2nd Lieutenant Commander

Nobles, as another year comes to an end and we finish up our holiday season I want to tell you how much Lady Vicki and I have enjoyed spending quality time with everyone. It has been nothing but a pleasure for us. We have had a great year and one can only hope that this coming year will be more of the same. Hope you had a memorable Holiday Season and you have great upcoming year.

The number of participants who attended the pilgrimage to Arlington, Virginia for the annual wreath laying was superb and everyone I spoke to indicated that they had an exceptional time and plan on attending again in the future. If you have not had the opportunity to attend one of these events, I strongly encourage you to do so next year. The pilgrimage is held every year during the first weekend of November. I promise you will be glad you did.

Lady Vicki and I are planning to attend many events during 2024 and have made our plans to travel to Las Vegas for the International Association Legion

of Honor Convention in April. I know we will have a great time and I'm hoping many members of Division Six will join us there. Make it a family vacation. Registration information is on the IALOH Website and the hopes of the IALOH Commander is to fill all the rooms. I think we can do that. Register early and put it on your calendar.

The By-Law Committee has completed a full review of the current By-Laws with several proposed changes, which has been posted on the IALOH Website for your review. They will be voted on during the Annual Convention in Las Vegas. Make sure you submit you voting delegates so your unit can be represented.

I know it is election time again at the shrine LOH units, so please send me the information on your new officers, so I can make contact with them. Thanks!

Fraternally,  
Wayne Steele  
2nd LtCmdr, IALOH  
Email: wayne.r.steele.usmc@gmail.com

## Division 6



Wayne Steele, PC



**Bylaw Change Error:** There was a typo on bylaw change # 8. It states enter section 5 it should have been enter section 4.

## 3rd Lieutenant Commander

Greetings. As I write this article we are nearing the end of the autumnal season and "winter is coming." That means our Shrine Temples will be illuminated with holiday decorations and blessed symbols. It's the best time of the year and a great time for masonic fellowship! The following is a synopsis of recent Shrine Legion of Honor (LOH) happenings and a preview of events "on the horizon."

The event of the season was the IALOH Arlington Wreath Laying Ceremony, held on November 1-5. Over 140 guests attended the annual pilgrimage (an increase of 40 percent over last year. Attendees witnessed a solemn wreath presentation ceremony featuring International Commander (IC) Russ Gray and Imperial Potentate Ed Stoltz at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Attendees of the (hotel) Memorial Service witnessed several guest speakers, a spectacular demonstration by the U.S. military Color Guard; Fife & Drum Corps (in Colonial dress); a bugler playing taps; and our Chief of Staff Corps conducting a memorable flag folding ceremony.

The Arlington Luncheon on Saturday was one of the best ever. We enjoyed stimulating speakers and a fabulous buffet with ample portions of turkey with all the trimmings. The added benefit of us being allowed to serve our own "Hospitality" beverages during the luncheon was appreciated by our members and guests. Our new hotel – the Crown Plaza Crystal City is considered an improvement over the last hotel (lower cost and better quality). We have a three-year contract with the

## Division 7



Geoffrey Lyster, PP, PC, PMC



3rd Lt. CMDR Continued page 5

**3rd Lt. CMDR Continued From Page 4**

Crown Plaza with fixed price rooms, so we are looking forward to returning to this venue for years to come. Overall, this was one of the best 'Arlingtons' we have had in years. Thanks to IC Gray and Lady Ginnie for their extensive planning and attention to detail. It was my pleasure to be your Arlington Chairman this year and I would like to thank all those who volunteered for this event; although too numerous to mention here, you have our profound thanks.

SASA had a good Fall Meeting in Myrtle Beach with LOH annual elections and Installation of Officers. Their parade on Saturday morning had a great turnout. Although, the LOH banquet had to be cancelled this year, we want to convey to CDR Smith and all of his Officers our congratulations and the best of luck for the coming year.

Lady Theresa and I were pleased to attended the Ladies of the Oriental Shrine-North America (LOSNA) Mid-Eastern Unit Meeting in Richmond, Virginia, on October 6-8. This year Lady Theresa is serving as High Priestess of Al Manarah Court No. 50 and I have been accompanying her to many of the national LOSNA events. In Richmond, we had a chance to meet with Grand High Priestess Karen Prztula and the Unit Leaders (High Priestess') of all the other courts in the Mid-East. The host Potentate, Michael Lott (Acca) was a great featured speaker and most of his Divan were also in attendance.

On October 25th I participated with the Kena LOH Honor Guard at the annual Vienna Halloween Parade. This night parade was very well attended and featured illuminated floats and lighted costumed marchers. At Kena Shriners we conduct at least one "night" parade each year.

There were numerous Shrine events to commemorate Veterans Day 2023 all around the Mid-Atlantic area. In my vicinity, Acca Shriners held a Veterans Day Breakfast in Richmond; Boumi Shriners (Baltimore) held their annual

Veterans and First Responders Annual Brunch; and Kena LOH (Manassas) held a fine Veterans Day Brunch with guest speaker from Warrior Retreat in Haymarket. I personally attended the Warrenton Veterans Day Ceremony at the Fauquier Veterans Memorial and had an opportunity to speak.

On December 2nd we were honored to attend the Manassas Christmas Parade. The local LOH Unit looked magnificent marching down the avenue with flags unfurled! The looks on the faces of the children as the parade went by were priceless.

**On the horizon .**

We are looking forward to visiting various Shrine centers for the "2024 Shrine Installation Season." I am scheduled to attend Kena Open Installation on January 7th; Almas Installation on January 13th; and the Kena LOH Installation on January 20th.

On March 24th I will be lacing up my sneakers and participating in the 2024 Vietnam Veterans 5K in Warrenton, VA. Although, not a Shriner sponsored event per se, I will be running with hundreds of veterans for charity. All proceeds from the event to benefit veterans via Heroes Bridge Foundation. I better start training, soon. Lady Theresa and I would like to wish all of you and your families—Happy Holidays! We hope to see soon, at a Shrine Center near you!

YITF,  
Geoffrey D. Lyster, PC, PP, PMC

Right Bottom Photo: Kena LOH at Manassas Christmas Parade; Dec. 2, Manassas, VA.

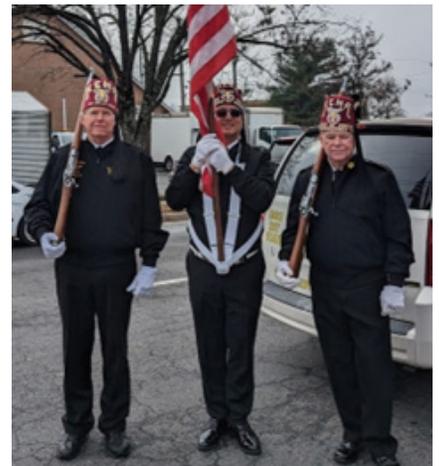
**2022 - 2023 Yearbook**  
We still have a few yearbooks. If anyone would like one contact the Quartermaster or the Adjutant. Contact information is on Page 15.



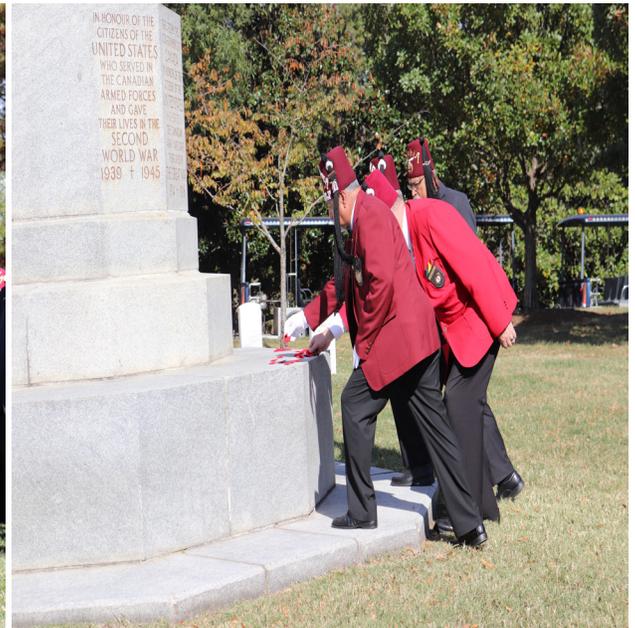
LOSNA Grand High Priestess Karen Prztula and Al Manarah Ct High Priestess Theresa McGrath; Oct 7; Richmond, VA.



Imperial Sir Ed Stoltz and LCDR Lyster at Arlington Nat'l Cem. on Nov. 4.



# Arlington 2023



## Arlington Wreath Laying

You can watch the complete Wreath Laying ceremony on the IALOH website. Just go to [www.ialoh.org/Events/Arlington Wreath Laying](http://www.ialoh.org/Events/Arlington Wreath Laying) and click on the video.

# 4th Lieutenant Commander

## Greeting Nobles and families.

January will be filled with many exciting visits to Unit Installations in which we look forward to participating in. February takes Jennifer and I to the great state of Texas for the TALOH mid-winter for the first time. We have made our travel plans to attend the IALOH Annual Convention from 24 – 28 April 2024. I hope many of you will be able to join the fun and festivities at the Aliante Hotel and

Casino. All the general information and registration forms can be found on our IALOH website, [www.ialoh.org](http://www.ialoh.org). Hope you and your families have a safe, happy and blessed holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you.

Doug Tayrien,  
Lt. Commander

# Division 2



Doug Tayrien, PC



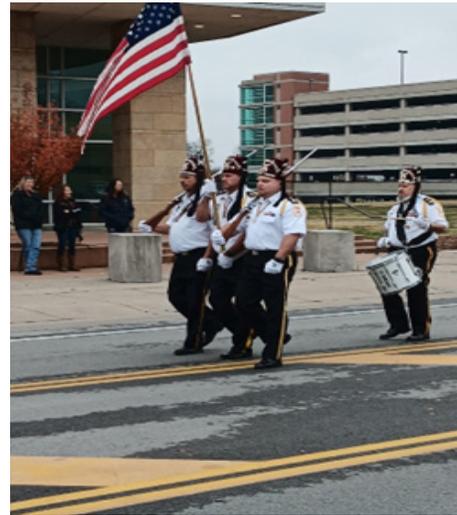


*The International Officers  
would like to wish everyone a  
Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year.*



# 6th Lieutenant Commander

# Division 8



Dean Cook, PC



Top Left: ABA at St. Roberts, MO Veterans Day parade. Top Middle: ABA Fall Ceremonial Parade 2023. Bottom Photos Arlington 2023

We all had a great time at the new hotel location. Imperial Sir Ed Stolze, Commander Russell Gray, CSSA 1 LT Commander Gilbert Negrete and IALOH 6th LT Commander CoS Derreck Sander pose for a photo.

Date: November 28, 2023

From: Joseph Bartley, PC GLSALOH

Subject: Proposed Bylaw Change

To:

Russell Gray, Commander, International Association Legions of Honor

David L. Smith, Adjutant, International Association Legions of Honor

Tracy Coughlin, Judge Advocate, International Association Legions of Honor

Purpose: The purpose of this bylaw change is to allow an Association Commander to be authorized to vote during the International Association Legions of Honor Annual Convention if they are present at the convention and not otherwise authorized to vote as listed in current bylaws.

Bylaw currently reads:

Article 5

Section 3. VOTING: The only persons authorized to vote during the International Association Legions of Honor Annual Convention are: Legion Nobles holding Elective Offices of the International Association Legions of Honor as listed in ARTICLE III, Section 1, all Past International Commanders, the two (2) Accredited Voting Representatives from each Legion of Honor Unit and Emeritus Members. Only those members who are present with signed credentials will be allowed to vote. Proxies or absentee votes will not be allowed.

Change to Read:

Article 5

Section 3. VOTING: The only persons authorized to vote during the International Association Legions of Honor Annual Convention are: Legion Nobles holding Elective Offices of the International Association Legions of Honor as listed in ARTICLE III, Section 1, all Past International Commanders, the two (2) Accredited Voting Representatives from each Legion of Honor Unit and Emeritus Members. **An Association Commander of the Legion of Honor is authorized to vote as a representative of the Association only if they are not otherwise entitled to a vote as described previously.** Only those members who are present with signed credentials will be allowed to vote. Proxies or absentee votes will not be allowed.

Submitted by Ansar Temple Legion of Honor

Len Carroll, PP PC  
Ansar LOH Commander

John JD Loscher, PC  
Ansar LOH Adjutant

#26 - Adding Association Commander as voter

## Association Meetings

### CSSA

Mid-Winter

March 14th - 17th, 2024

2024 Convention

August 29th - September 1st, 2024

Topeka, KS

Arab Temple

### SESA

Mid-Winter

February 24 - March 3, 2024

Carnival Vista

Carnival Cruise Lines

Port Canaveral, FL

### TALOH

Mid-Winter

February 29 - March 3, 2024

Holiday Inn Mid Town

6000 Middle Fiskville Rd

Austin, TX 78752

Phone: 512-451-5757

### WSA

February 29 - March 2, 2024

More Information will be posted at a later date

### SASA

Mid-Winter

March 29 - 30, 2024

Jericho Shrine

Main Hotel - Laquinta

Kingsport, TN

For more information about the association meeting visit our website at [www.ialoh.org/Associations](http://www.ialoh.org/Associations) or scan the QR.



# 8th Lieutenant Commander

# Division 1

Greetings from Texas....

Hello Legion Nobles,

Lady Shari and I began our trip to Arlington on October 28th. Shari had been invited to the First Lady's Luncheon from Arabia Shrine and as in the past, she sat with the LOH Ladies. I think they actually had three tables. Rick Villarreal's Lady Olga helped the First Lady Marty Reed set up the room for the ladies' arrival. It was held at the Houston Junior League's building and from all accounts, it was beautiful and wonderful. Several of the LOH members invited me to lunch with them including the Commander Robert Nields, Past TALOH Commander Rick Villarreal and Marty Rodriguez. I mention this because Arabia Legion of Honor, ladies and men, are all very active in the Temple. They have a "showing of force" at all functions, many of them are on Temple committees and they have fun together. Obviously, they are one of the great LOH units in International and they continue to grow.

From Houston, we drove to Arlington for the Wreath Laying Ceremony & Pilgrimage. The number of attendees continues to grow after the Covid shutdown and I think we had 50 new timers. This was a new hotel for us and it worked out great for our needs. We

have this same hotel for at least the next two years so please mark your calendars now to attend in November 2024. Commander Russ Gray and his officers, especially 3rdLtCmdr Geoffrey Lyster, who was in charge of reserving the time at the ceremony, arranging for the Color Guard, Pipes & Drums, Bugler and buses did an outstanding job. Many officers and nobles helped with the bar.

As you know, the IALOH Convention in Las Vegas will be here before you know it. The dates are 24 April – 28 April, 2024. I urge you to get your units there, plan to participate in the Color Guard Competition and just plain 'ol "have fun". If you remember, the IALOH officers held a Board Meeting at the hotel we'll be staying in at the convention and let me tell you, it is nice. It is not large like the ones on the strip but has roughly 200 rooms, WE NEED TO FILL IT UP WITH SHRINERS! So please, get your reservations in as soon as possible

As I'm typing this I understand you will not receive it until after Christmas, so I hope and pray you had a Merry Christmas.

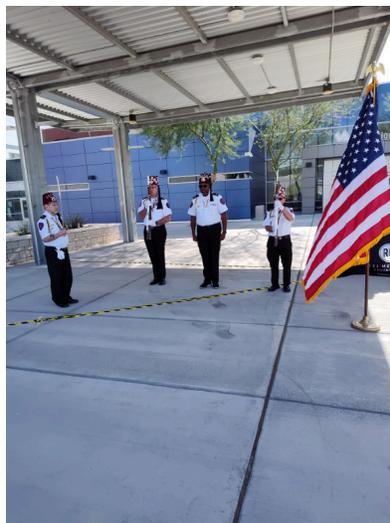
Semper Fi,  
Eddie Daffern, PP, PIC, 8thLtCmdr  
(Appointed)



Eddie Daffern, PP, PIC



## Around the Legion of Honor



Left Photo and Center Photo: Zelzah presenting colors at the Las Vegas Veterans Day celebrations,

Top Photo: Zelzah LOH in the Las Vegas Veterans Day parade.

## From the International Adjutant/Editor

Hi Everyone,

The yearbook for 2023-2024 has been printed and mailed. If you did not receive a yearbook and think you should have received one please let me know.

I also have a few extra yearbooks and if you would like one just let me know or you can order one online at the market page on the website.

The Arlington Wreath Laying was a great event. The new hotel the Crown Plaza went all out to make our event a great success..

If I can be of any assistance to your Unit please let me know. Also, please keep me informed of any changes to your Unit's contact information. This is very important so I can keep you informed of any IALOH information.

The 2024 annual forms have been sent to the Units. If you did not get them please let me know. The dead line for paying the Unit dues is March 1st, 2024. They are also on the IALOH website. Go to [www.ialoh.org/Forms](http://www.ialoh.org/Forms). If you have

any questions about the forms please let me know. If you like you can fill out the forms online and then email them to me and just send the check in the mail.

The Units can now pay their annual dues online with a credit card. Go to the website and click on "Unit Dues".

If your Unit or Association would like to include any information in the newsletter, yearbook or on the website please let me know. My contact information is on Page 15. Please submit information in a word or PDF document.

That is all for now. Until next time, aim high.

YITF,  
David Smith, PC



David Smith, PC



### Remember Our Service Men and Women

As we celebrate the Holidays please keep our men and women that are serving our country and specially those in harms way in your prayers

## Ottawa Wreath Laying Ceremony 1 June , 2024



The Ottawa Wreath Laying Ceremony will be held on 1 June 2024 at 1400hrs at the National War Memorial Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. During the ceremony we plan to acknowledge the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the 80th anniversary of D-Day. Additionally, Tunis will be holding their Ceremonial and Visitation Saturday morning. The registration form can be found on the Tunis Shriners website ([tunisshriners.ca](http://tunisshriners.ca)) in early 2024. We look forward to seeing you.

# Christmas and New Years Away From Home

As we all know serving in the military means you are going to be away from home during the Holidays. You are going to miss out on the fun of watching your family opening presents and celebrate the Holidays with a traditional holiday meal.

I know for myself I was on deployment for two Christmases during the Vietnam war. While serving in the US I was stationed close to home so I was able to go home and celebrate Christmas with my family. Then in November of 1970 I was sent to Ubon Thailand to work on



AC-130E Gunship #572 in Revetment, Ubon RTAB, Thailand, March 1972. Joe MacDonald Table Nov 1971-1972

the C-130 Specter gunships. Being a naive twenty year old (just turned twenty in October) I thought I would go to work on Christmas day, we would not fly any missions and would celebrate Christmas by playing cards and eating the food from some of the packages we received from home. I was wrong. As soon as I walked into the shop the Sgt. doing the dispatching said Smitty you and Bookout grab your tool box we got a "Red Ball" (a Red Ball is a plane getting ready to take off on a mission and has a problem). We got in the dispatch truck that took us to the plane and within a few minutes we had the plane repaired and the plane was gone on its mission.

The two Christmases and New Years we flew just as many mission as we would on a regular day. The planes would take off at 1800 return at 2200 refuel, reload and we would repair any problems before the next mission which started at 2400.

As a naive twenty year old from a small rural town in Florida I quickly learned that war does not stop for the holidays; if it does take a pause it is not for long.

So on the next few pages I have included a few stories and photos about veterans bing away from home during the Holidays.

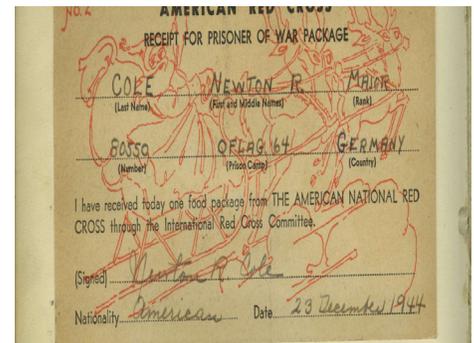
While thousands of their fellow Americans were about to enter into the Battle of the Bulge and likely face capture under harsh circumstances by the war-weary German enemy, others, already in POWs, celebrated a lonely Christmas holiday, the last of the war, in camps across Europe.

At the well-established camps, some Kriegies (English slang for the German Kriegsgefangenen or prisoner of war) were fortunate to receive Christmas parcels. The American Red Cross packed and shipped 75,000 Christmas parcels in the summer of 1944 leaving time for a Christmas arrival. The packages contained mixtures of food (including canned turkey and fruit cake), tobacco, games, and Christmas decorations.

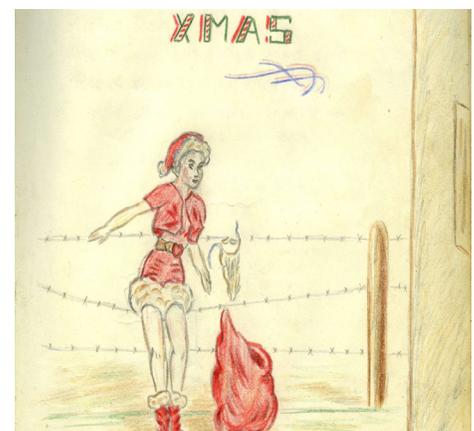
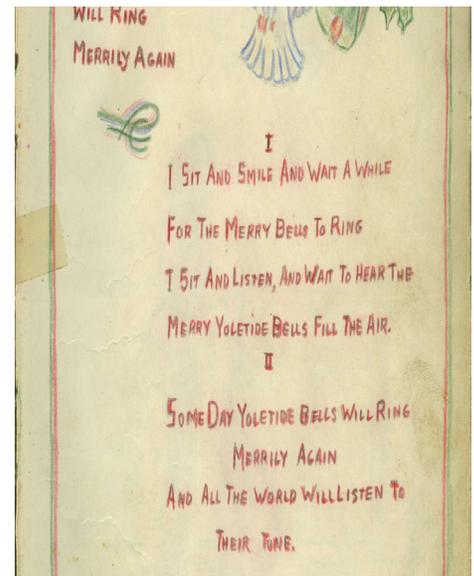
In Stalag Luft III, they had a gigantic "bash." POWs were given freedom to roam the grounds on Christmas Eve and Christmas night. Alcohol was made in several camps by fermenting raisins from aid packages. Most of the camps had Christmas concerts and services. At Stalag Luft III the auditorium held 700 men, but even with several performances, not all of the 11,000 POWs could see the Christmas pageant. In some of the camps, including Stalag VIIA, some barracks received small Christmas trees from guards, which they decorated with snowflakes cut from tin cans, lint, food labels, and nails. Formal dinners were served in many barracks, every mouthful savored. Some of these details as well as menus, cards and programs, were recorded in Wartime Logs, journals printed by the YMCA and distributed by the Red Cross to POWs in Europe.

Less than a month later, nearly 80,000 Kriegies would begin what was referred to as the Long March. In one of the coldest winters on record—23 December 1944 at Stalag Luft III in Sagan, temperatures hovered just below 0°F—80,000 Allied POWs were evacuated from camps on the eastern edge of German territory

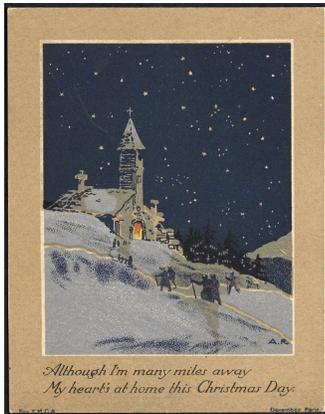
and forced, mainly on foot, to camps further away from the advancing Russians.



TURKEY - 12 oz.  
DEVILED HAM - 3 oz.  
VIENNA SAUSAGE - 4 oz.  
BUTTER - 3 3/4 oz.  
CHEESE - 4 oz.  
HONI-SPREAD - 8 oz.  
JAM - 6 oz.



December 25, 1917 found William James Bean in quarantine at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, New York. Bean had been inducted into the Army a little more than a week before. Unable even to roam the camp freely, Bean was distraught to be spending the holiday far from "Dear Old Syracuse," away from his mother Harriet and his wife Mabel, whom he had married only six months earlier.



Christmas card with blue sky, snow and church. Statement says: "although I'm many miles away, My hearts at home this Christmas Day" Christmas card sent by William Bean to his family. November 18, 1918. "Do you realise that this will be my first Xmas away from home" he wrote to his mother.

By the next Christmas, Bean was even farther from home. He sent his family several holiday cards from somewhere in France. "Although I'm many miles away," reads one. "My heart's at home this Christmas Day."

Bean's correspondence echoes a sentiment common to active duty service members who spend some or all of the holiday season far from their loved ones—a longing for home.

Military families frequently send gifts and greetings to remind their loved ones that home is still there, waiting. In 1951, Marion Gurfein tape-recorded a very special holiday message to send to her husband Joe, who was stationed in Korea. The whole Gurfein family joined in the merriment.

In 2003, Dean Baratta was serving at an Army post near Bagram, Afghanistan. The week before Christmas, he survived his first rocket attack. His spirits were lifted on Christmas Day when a number of units decorated their vehicles and staged an impromptu holiday parade through the camp. Baratta told his friends and family via his blog that the parade was "one of the coolest things I've ever seen



Joseph Brenner's December 24, 1943 letter to his wife Norma is an exception to this rule. "I want to wish everyone a very happy Chanuka," Brenner wrote. "I'll be with you all in spirit I know."

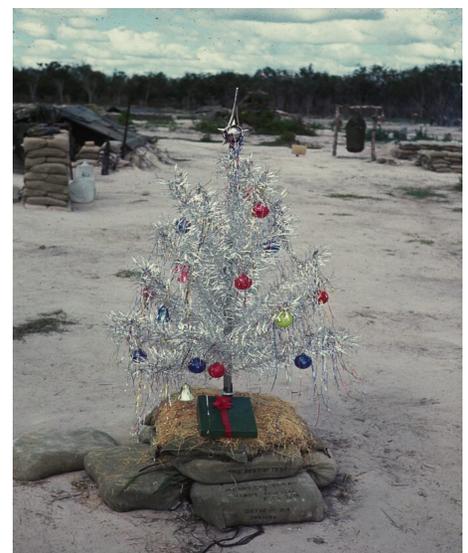
Instead of lighting a menorah himself, Brenner joined "all the Jewish boys" in his platoon at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in volunteering for, the necessary job of K.P. On Christmas Day, he peeled vegetables and prepared salads. Afterwards, he enjoyed the grandest dinner of his life. But what made the season truly special for Brenner was a far more humble meal. Another Jewish soldier in his platoon "got a whole salami and a lot of other real Yiddish stuff" in the mail, which he proceeded to share with Brenner and the other Jewish infantrymen. "It was wonderful" exclaimed Brenner.



Doc Bates came to Claymore Corner, a small primitive base thirty-five miles northwest of Saigon at the beginning of the 1967 Christmas season, at a time when the men there were especially down and gloomy. A few days after Bates' arrival, the new company commander, Howard "Dutch" McAllister, himself fighting depression as Christmas grew near, noticed a small, scruffy, artificial Christmas tree that sat on some flat rocks just outside the mess tent. He also noticed something peculiar going on around the tree every evening. While soldiers listlessly moved through the mess tent receiving their evening meal on steel trays, McAllister spied one soldier carefully brushing dust from the sad-looking Christmas tree each evening. Like everything else on the base, a fine patina of red dust from the day's truck convoys had collected on the tree, making the soldier's efforts basically useless. When McAllister finally drew near, he realized the man faithfully tending to the shabby tree "was the company's senior medical aid man, Doc Bates. He was short and compact with a thatch of reddish-brown hair and a quick smile."

McAllister approached the quiet medic, asking him, "What's this, Doc? First aid for the tree?"

Bates laughed and replied, "Just trying to make myself count, Captain."



## A 1952 Korean War Christmas Story

by Charlie Nelson

I had arrived at Kimpo Air Force Base, Korea in early December 1952 and was living in a tent, eating C rations, bathing out of a helmet, using an outside john, and freezing my butt off because the Air Force didn't have any cold weather gear. That wind blowing down from North Korea was truly as cold as a well digger's fanny in Alaska. We were being promised that on Christmas Day we would get a hot meal that included turkey, and everyone including myself was pretty excited about the prospect of that. The rumor was that some canned or frozen turkey was being flown in from Japan for the occasion. Christmas Eve morning our squadron command post received a radio message that one of our remote homing beacons near the 38th Parallel that was used by our aircraft when flying missions North was down and they needed radio maintenance assistance. I was the most senior and experienced radio technician in the unit, and it was my job to respond to all such emergencies for all our remote sites in the Northern part of South Korea. I hated the thought of the long drive to the remote site in an open jeep and the cold, and most of all missing that hot Christmas meal.

My buddy, who was a power specialist, and I reluctantly grabbed our carbines, a box or two of C rations, some cartons of cigarettes, and a couple of bottles of Canadian Club Bourbon and hit the road. The CC and cigarettes were for recreational use plus trading material. In the Air Force we could get all the booze we wanted and plenty of cigarettes but few of the more practical necessities. On the other hand the Army had plenty of necessities, but little or no booze and cigarettes. So barter was the name of the game if one were to survive more comfortably.

The homing beacon site was typical of the many remote communication sites throughout Korea. A couple of mobile radio vans, gasoline generators, vehicles, and 12 to 15 guys sleeping in tents. The site was surrounded by a

high fence with the tents and equipment protected by sand bags and there were plenty of fox holes. It was not uncommon for these sites to be bombed at night by civilian type aircraft from North Korea dropping mortar shells. These bad guys were called Bed Check Charlies because they usually came about bed time to keep one from sleeping as well as to do material damage. Guerrillas were also an every present danger, and the fence was also needed to keep locals from stealing supplies.

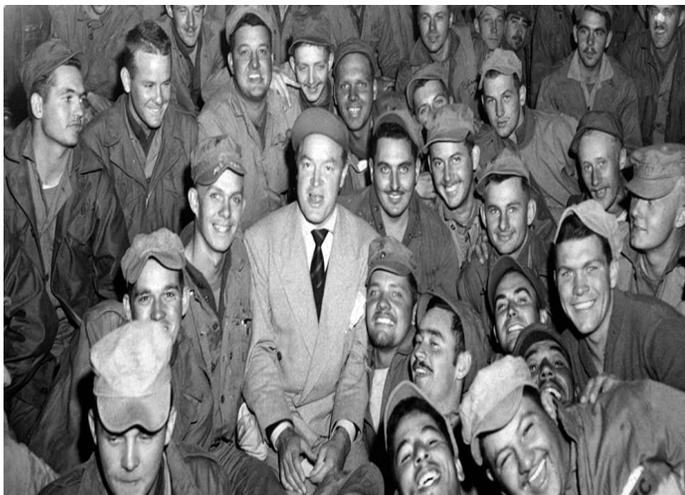
When I arrived on site, we immediately started working on the radio equipment. During the late afternoon, I noticed that a lot of Korean orphan kids were standing outside the fence begging for food. The guys didn't seem to be paying much attention, and were even sort of sheepish about the situation. GIs are usually so generous, I couldn't understand what was happening. After the equipment was restored and working properly, I finally I asked the NCO in charge, a very young sergeant, what was going on with the kids. He told me they were orphans living in caves up above the site and fending for themselves. He said they come every day begging for food, and we have given them everything we could spare plus more, and now we really don't have enough left for ourselves. I asked why don't you go to the Army supply point and get more rations. He told me they were only

allowed to get supplies once a month at the Army supply depot, and it would be three days before they could get more.

So instead of celebrating Christmas Eve with those two precious bottle of CC, we took off for the supply point. We traded our two bottles of CC for a jeep load of rations and headed back to the site. On Christmas day the guys invited the kids in, and we heated up C rations and all had a Christmas feast of sorts with Spam, Lima beans, etc.. We had a communications receiver tuned into Armed Forces Radio playing Christmas tunes loudly and some of the guys were trying to teach the Korean kids to sing hymns with them. Every box of C rations had cookies and the guys gave those to the children for Christmas presents.

Christmas was a cold and snowy day, and as I looked around at all the fellows there that day, it dawned on me that I was the senior person in rank as well as the oldest person on the site. I had turned 22 three weeks before. We were all just a bunch of kids, Koreans and all. I would spend another Christmas in Korea in 1953, but the war was over then, and I finally got that hot Christmas meal with fresh turkey and stuffing, but it didn't measure up to the one with the orphans.





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