



From the Desk of Roundtable President Charles Holt

January—March 2025 Newsletter

www.WWIIroundtable.com

Greetings to you and friends of the Roundtable! We have had a great time at the monthly dinner meetings in 2024 with lots of varied topics and speakers. We look forward to another exciting year of programs in 2025. Won't you please continue to help us identify potential speakers and many more interesting topics? Don't forget to spread the word about our Roundtable, too, and its programs. Consider bringing a guest to the next dinner in January! In 2025 we will continue to sprinkle in some programs relating to WWI, Korea, Vietnam, and more recent conflicts. Also, thank you to so many of you who have already paid dues for 2025, or have given donations to our organization. We also welcome more help at the entrance table, to set up books for the drawing, or if you have a program topic or other talents to share—please let me know. Thank you! I'm very excited about our upcoming 2025 programs and hope you are, too!

Charles A. Holt, D.O.

WHERE HISTORY AND
HEROES MEET



WWII HISTORY &
WARTIME STORIES
for Everyone!



Ernie Pyle
WWII Pulitzer Prize Reporter

MONTHLY DINNER PROGRAMS

Live Guest Speakers
Northside Events & Social Club
(formerly "Knights of Columbus")
2100 E 71st Street,
Indianapolis, IN 46220

Doors open - 5 PM
\$11 Buffet Dinner - 6 PM (RSVP)
Program - 7 PM

WWIIROUNDTABLE.COM

Dinner 6-7:00 at North Side Social! 7:00: Trivia Presentation 7:15 Featured Program

Programs Jan. 27, Feb. 26, & Mar. 24, 2025

"Operation Dragoon: The
2nd D-Day"

80th Anniversary Tour



Kathryn Lerch &
Marlene Mendonsa

Indianapolis
Metropolitan Military
Honor Guard & Military



Walter Sherman
US Air Force (ret)

WWII Monuments &
Memorials in Indiana



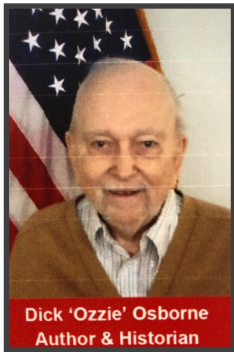
Ron May
US Navy (ret) & author

Roundtable Board

Charles A. Holt, President
Kathryn Lerch, Vice President
Treasurer, Andy Fulks
Asst Treas., Richard Eisgruber
Meeting Arrangements: Karl &
Jan Kleinbub

At Large: Brad Damon, Travis
Petrie, Marlene Mendonsa,
Steve Hogan, & John Chalfin
Web/Audio/Visual:
Travis Petrie & Steve Hogan

Regular Monthly Dinner \$11++ Join us in person if you are able! Be sure to send your monthly dinner RSVPs to Karl Kleinbub: knj1002@mytwinestars.net or phone 317- 607- 6948 **no later than Thursday prior to Monday's program!** (Do not rsvp via the website!) A head count for Northside Events & Social Club (K of C) is very important. Also, please have CASH in exact change \$11 ++ tip for your meal. We encourage you to invite a guest! Thank you!



Dick 'Ozzie' Osborne
Author & Historian

WW 2 Trivia January through March 2025

Inspired by Ozzie's earlier trivia reports . . .

Eighty Years ago! . . . January through March 1945 with a focus on Operation Dragoon

[Source: <https://onwar.com/wwii/chronology/194502.html>]

- ◆ **Jan. 2, 1945:** *On Western Front...* In the Ardennes, US 3rd Army troops take Bonnerue, Hubertmont and Remagne. *Over Germany...* About 1000 USAAF bombers nominally attack troop concentrations and communications in western Germany while about 1000 RAF bombers strike Nuremburg and Ludwigshafen.
- ◆ **Jan. 8:** *On the Western Front...* Allied forces eliminate German positions on the west bank of the Maas River. In the Ardennes, American forces now control 9 miles of the Laroche-St. Vith road. US 3rd Army captures Flamierge, 9 km northwest of Bastogne, on the southern flank of the German held salient. Meanwhile, in Alsace, the battles north and south of Strasbourg continue. The US 7th Army is under considerable pressure near Rimling and Gamsheim.
- ◆ **Jan. 14:** *On the Western Front...* The US 1st Army achieves an advance 2 miles toward St. Vith in continuing attacks. British forces attacking southward from Laroche link up with elements of US 3rd Army advancing northwest from Bastogne; *Over Germany...* The US 8th Air Force resumes strategic operations after a month-long pause caused by the Battle of the Bulge. Some 600 B-17 and B-24 bombers strike oil targets and encounter heavy resistance from Luftwaffe fighters. *In the English Channel...* Six German motor torpedo boat flotillas operate in the estuaries of the Scheldt, Thames and Humber rivers during the night (January 14-15). *Over Britain...* The last German V1 launched from an He111 bomber lands on Yorkshire.
- ◆ **Jan. 20:** *On the Western Front...* French 1st Army (de Lattre) begins an offensive in the Vosges area near Colmar. [Continuation of Operation DRAGOON] Bad weather hinders the advance and the defense by the German 19th Army is effective. Progress is gradually made however. To the north, in the Ardennes, the advance of US 3rd Army continues. Brandenburg is taken.
- ◆ **Jan. 24:** *On the Western Front...* Units from the French 1st Army take crossings over the River Ill in Alsace, on the northern flank of the Colmar pocket. . . .
- ◆ **Feb. 3:** *On the Western Front...* French and American units complete the capture of Colmar. All formations of French 1st Army are now making good progress in this sector. The other Allied armies keep up the pressure on the Germans all along the front.
- ◆ **Feb. 11:** *On the Western Front...* Elements of the Canadian 1st Army capture Cleve in the advance toward the Rhine. Farther south, elements of the US 8th Corps (part of US 3rd Army) capture the important road junction at Prum.
- ◆ **Feb. 14:** *Over Germany...* During the night (February 13-14), 773 Lancaster bombers, of British RAF Bomber Command, raid the eastern German city of Dresden. Five bombers are lost. However, the incendiary bombs dropped generate a fire storm that continues to burn for 7 days and 8 nights and ultimately razes 6.5 square kilometers. Casualty estimates vary from 30,000 to 250,000 killed. Among the witnesses to events in Dresden at the time is Kurt Vonnegut, an American POW, who will vividly describe the scene in Slaughterhouse Five. During the day, the US 8th Air Force raids Dresden where the firestorm continues. *On the Western Front...*
- ◆ **Feb. 14:** The British and Canadian forces reach the south bank of the Rhine opposite Emmerich in the advance of British 21st Army Group. American forces farther south are mostly regrouping to prepare for the next series of attacks.
- ◆ **Feb. 22:** *On the Western Front...* The US 20th Corps (part of US 3rd Army) achieves most of its objectives in the area between the Saar and Moselle rivers.
- ◆ **Feb. 23:** *On the Western Front...* A major new offensive by US First and Ninth Armies begins with heavy attacks along the Roer, especially in the Julich and Duren areas. The river is crossed in several places. The attacks are opposed by the German 5th Panzer and 15th Armies (both part of German Army Group B). Farther south, there are also attacks by units of US 3rd and 7th Armies.
- ◆ Continued . P. 3: **Mar. 2:** *On the Western Front...*

History Trivia Continued

Trier is captured by units of US 20th Corps, part of US 3rd Army. The US 1st Army, to the north, is extending its advance beyond the Erft River toward Cologne and to the south. US 9th Army captures Roermond and Venlo on the Maas on the left flank of its advance while on the right, the Rhine River is reached opposite Dusseldorf.

◆ **Mar. 6:** *On the Western Front...* Units of the Canadian 1st Army are preparing to clear the final German pocket west of the Rhine around Xanten. The US 9th Army has reached the Rhine all along its front. To the south, US 1st Army is fighting in Cologne and driving toward Remagen farther south -- the US 9th Armored Division leads the advance. Farther south, units of US 3rd Army are making a rapid advance toward the Rhine at Koblenz.

◆ **Mar. 7:** *On the Western Front...* The leading tanks of US 3rd Corps (part of US 1st Army) reach the Rhine River opposite Remagen and find the Ludendorff Bridge there damaged but still standing. Troops are immediately rushed across and a bridgehead is firmly established during the day. Other elements of the US 1st Army complete the cap-

ture of Cologne. Units US 12th Corps from US 3rd Army continue to advance rapidly.

◆ **Mar. 19:** *From Berlin...* Hitler orders a scorched earth policy to be put into effect on all fronts. Industrial plants, buildings and food are to be completely destroyed. Speer, who remains in charge of German industry, does his best to prevent this decree being carried out. In addition, many of the German army commanders in the field either ignore or circumvent the order.

◆ **Mar. 21:** *On the Western Front...* Most of US 3rd Army forces are engaged in clearing German resistance on the west bank of the Rhine River, to the north of Mannheim. Other elements of US 3rd and US 7th Army units are cooperating to take Annweiler, Neunkirchen, Neustadt and Homberg.

◆ **Mar. 31:** *On the Western Front...* Forces of French 1st Army begin to cross the Rhine River near Speyer. To the north, all the Allied armies continue to advance.



Each month our WWII Roundtable meets for dinner and a speaker—we are also known as the **Ernie Pyle Chapter**. Therefore we have a connection to this world-famous war correspondent from Dana, Indiana and our organization encourages donations in support of the Ernie Pyle World War II Museum. The museum is in the midst of a substantial improvement of the historic property and our Roundtable would like to support this in a meaningful way. The board of directors of our Roundtable have set a goal in 2025 to raise at least \$250 for the museum and you can help us do that at each dinner—you may write a check directly to the museum or contribute at least \$5 extra each month when you attend our dinner. Our treasurer will “match” each contribution of \$5 (up to a total of \$250)—

essentially raising \$500 for the cause. Please consider giving this little “extra” in January, February . . . Thank you for your generosity!

Friends of Ernie Pyle is a charitable foundation that runs the Ernie Pyle WWII Museum in Dana, Indiana. The group is committed to honoring the legacy of the legendary WWII correspondent and the memory of those who served in our nation’s Armed Forces. Funds raised for the Museum “will go toward the memorial park project including developing land adjacent to the museum to provide a gathering space for the community, performance stage, healing garden and more. The park will also feature an already commissioned bronze statue of Ernie Pyle created by Clinton sculptor Bill Wolfe.” For more information about this wonderful gem of a museum, go to: <https://erniepyle.org/#arrow1>

Annual Dues are now due for 2025

Veteran Family \$25.00; Non-Veteran Family \$25.00; WWII Veterans/widows FREE Membership

Please mail your check to: WWII Roundtable 917 E. Walnut St, Lebanon IN 46052 or Pay at the dinner

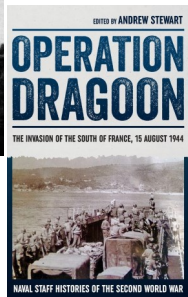
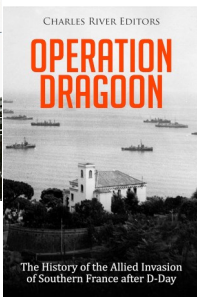
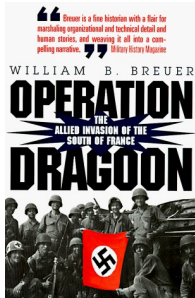
Name: _____ Phone: _____

EMAIL: _____ Address: _____

WW2 Veteran? _____ Post-WW2 Veteran? _____ If yes, branch & period of service _____

As a courtesy to others, with the winter season's rising number of viruses or flu-bugs, please Do Not attend the dinner if you are ill, or possibly becoming ill, as you may be contagious to others. *Same time, same place, great speakers and remember to invite a guest!*

Book Recommendations & Commentary for Studying Operation Dragoon — Kathryn Lerch



Virtually everyone who studies WW2 and military history knows about the events of June 6th, 1944 or the Allied D-Day landings in Normandy. Very few people know or follow the story of the “other D-Day”—the August 1944 invasion of southern France! Marlene and David Mendonsa and I traveled with a group of military history enthusiasts on a Stephen Ambrose Tour in August 2024.

Besides brushing up on my rudimentary French conversation skills, I really needed to understand this military operation before arriving in France. For example, one cannot go to Gettysburg and not know anything about the American Civil War—therefore one should prepare. Although Stewart’s coffee-table like book was well illustrated, Brewer’s *Operation Dragoon* was excellent and very informative. Since I had to travel light—I read the books ahead of time, then journaled during the trip, took hundreds of photographs along the way, along with notes on the bus and in the field.

A well-organized traveler can also design their own road trip which follows the route of US forces up the Rhone Valley, stop and visit a multitude of museums and memorial cemeteries, and also enjoy culinary delights along the way. What makes such a trip even more personal is if one visits American military cemeteries to honor the Hoosier dead or reflect on the cost in all human lives (French & Colonial troops, German, American, Japanese Nisei etc.) who made the ultimate sacrifice in WW2. (442 RCT “Go For Broke” Nisei regiment served first in Italy and then in Operation Dragoon when they rescued a Texas regiment. (photo on right)



German war dead in Strasbourg, France



Necropolis near Turkheim with French war dead



[all photos by K. Lerch]