

WWII - SMOKY



SMOKY (c. 1943 – 21 February 1957), a Yorkshire Terrier, was a famous war dog who served in World War II. She weighed only 4 pounds (1.8 kg) and stood 7 inches (180 mm) tall. Smoky is credited with beginning a renewal of interest in the once obscure Yorkshire terrier breed.

In February 1944, Smoky was found by an American soldier in a foxhole in the New Guinea jungle. Another GI then sold Smoky to Corporal William A. Wynne of Cleveland, Ohio, for two Australian pounds (equal to \$6.44 at that time)—the price paid to the seller so he could return to his poker game.

SERVICE IN WORLD WAR TWO

For the next two years, Smoky back-packed through the rest of the war and accompanied Wynne on combat flights in the Pacific. Throughout her service, Smoky slept in Wynne's tent, shared Wynne's C-rations, and had daily baths in his helmet. Unlike the "official" war dogs of World War II, Smoky had access to neither veterinary medicine nor a balanced diet formulated especially for dogs.

As described by Wynne, "Smoky Served in the South Pacific with the 5th Air Force, 26th Photo Recon Squadron [and] flew 12 air/sea rescue and photo reconnaissance missions." Smoky was credited with twelve combat missions and awarded eight battle stars. She survived 150 air raids on New Guinea and made it through a typhoon at Okinawa. Smoky even parachuted from 30 feet (9.1 m) in the air, out of a tree, using a parachute made just for her. Wynne credited Smoky with saving his life on an LST (transport ship), calling her an "angel from a foxhole." As the ship deck was booming and vibrating from anti-aircraft gunnery, Smoky guided Wynne to duck the fire that hit 8 men standing next to them.

In the down time, Smoky learned numerous tricks, which she performed for the entertainment of troops and in hospitals from Australia to Korea. According to Wynne, Smoky taught him as much as he taught her, and 'his little buddy' developed a repertoire beyond that of any dog of her day. In 1944, Yank Down Under magazine named Smoky the "Champion Mascot in the Southwest Pacific Area."

Smoky's intelligence enabled her to become a hero in her own right by helping the engineers wire a pipeline in an airbase at Lingayen Gulf, Luzon. Early in the Luzon campaign, the Signal Corps needed to run a telegraph wire through a 70-foot-long (21 m) pipe that was 8 inches (200 mm) in diameter to avoid being ambushed by sneak attacks and paratroopers. Soil had sifted through the corrugated sections at the pipe joining, filling as much as half of the pipe, giving Smoky only four inches of headway in some places. What would have been a dangerous three-day digging task to place the wire was instead completed by this little dog in minutes.

POST WAR

Wynne and Smoky were featured in a page one story with photographs, in the *Cleveland Press* on December 7, 1945. Smoky soon became a national sensation. Over the next 10 years Smoky and Wynne traveled to Hollywood and all over the world to perform demonstrations of her remarkable skills, which included walking a tightrope while blindfolded. She appeared with Wynne on some of the earliest TV shows in the Cleveland area, including a show of their own on Cleveland's WKYC Channel 3 called *Castles in the Air*, featuring some of Smoky's unbelievable tricks. Smoky performed in 42 live-television shows without ever repeating a trick. Smoky and Wynne were also very popular entertainers at the veterans' hospitals. According to Wynne, "after the war Smoky entertained millions during late 1940s and early 1950s."

On February 21, 1957, "Corporal" Smoky died unexpectedly at the approximate age of 14. Wynne and his family buried Smoky in a World War II .30 Caliber Ammo Box in the Cleveland Metro park, Rocky River Reservation in Lakewood, Ohio.

Nearly 50 years later, on Veterans Day, November 11, 2005, a bronze life-size sculpture of Smoky sitting in a GI helmet, atop a two-ton blue granite base, was unveiled at Rocky River Metropark. It is placed above the very spot that Smoky was laid at her final resting place. This very special monument is dedicated to "Smoky, the Yorkie Doodle Dandy, and the Dogs of All Wars".^[9]

FIRST THERAPY DOG

Smoky was the first therapy dog of record. Her service in this arena began in July 1944 at the 233rd Station Hospital, in New Guinea, where she accompanied nurses to see the incoming battlefield casualties from the Biak Island invasion.

By Nancy Roe Pimm

Nancy Roe Pimm is an award-winning author of nonfiction narratives for young readers. She is a Choose to Read Ohio author and her books have been chosen as Junior Library Selections. Pimm's newest title, *Bonded by Battle: The Powerful Friendships of Military Dogs and Soldiers from the Civil War to Operation Iraqi Freedom* explores the unbreakable bonds formed by military dogs and soldiers as they face life and death in the war zone. These heroic, intelligent four-legged soldiers are always full of courage and a whole lot of heart. Open the pages of this book to meet a bunch of unforgettable canine commandos.

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Read the full story in *Yorkie Doodle Dandy*. A memoir by World War II veteran William A. Wynne available on Amazon.com or www.smokywardog.com



Photo: Smoky sits in front of the re-created airfield culvert, contemplating her heroic mission at Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, as displayed at the AVM's War Dog Memorial at Turkey Brook Park in Mount Olive, NJ