



From the Desk of Roundtable President Paul "Ponytail" Cauley

February 2020 Issue No. 2 www.WWIIroundtable.com

President's Message

Dear Club members, well the next time that you will see me I will be another year older, and becoming the RIPE OLD AGE OF 70 MAKES YOU STOP AND LOOK BACK AT YOUR LIFE. Now I know a lot of our members are going to say that I'm barely wet behind my ears, but between you and me I have had some very rocky times and some smoother times in my life. I have done some things that was very hard to do but they had to be done, and I have done some easier things that has brought some happiness to my life (continued on page 2)

History Topic by Dick "Ozzie" Osborne:

"Our Coffee Agreement with the Central American Republics"



Program: February 24, 2020

From popular Pacific Theatre expert Jeffrey R. Cox comes this insightful new history of the critical Guadalcanal and Solomons campaign at the height of World War II. Cox is a litigation attorney and independent military historian specializing in WWII in the Pacific since 1981.

Jeffrey R. Cox, Speaker "Rising Sun, Falling Skies"

Part of the Guadalcanal-Solomons Trilogy



INDIANAPOLIS ERNIE PYLE CHAPTER WWII ROUNDTABLE
WWIIroundtable.com
Where history comes alive!
 Northside Knights of Columbus
 2100 E 71st
 Indianapolis, IN 46220

2020 DINNER PROGRAMS

January 27	5:00pm
February 24	\$10 Buffet
March 23	Program 6:00-8:00pm
April 27	
May 19	
June 22	
July 27	
August 24	
September 28	
October 26	
November 23	
December 15	
January 25, 2021	
February 22, 2021	

2020 Membership Dues Reminder

Please pay Lucy Parker at the February meeting

- ✚ Veteran \$20
- ✚ Non-Veteran \$25
- ✚ WW2 Veteran free membership

Announcements: Public Service & Special Events

- Commemorating 75th Anniversary Battle for Iwo Jima, February 21, 2020 at the Indiana War Memorial, 3:00 PM with Sen. Todd Young & Congressman Greg Pence
 Please RSVP to Jay Kenworthy, Communications Director for Sen. Todd Young: jay_kenworthy@young.senate.gov

INFORMATION DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER MAR 9TH send to editing committee c/o klerch@parktutor.org

now, and I now want to share with all of you so that like myself we all can learn how precious life is and that we all need to make the most of it.

Some of my best memories that I have had is being involved with the WWII Roundtable. I have learned so much that I didn't even know that I didn't know it, and I have had the Great Joy of being around some of the "Greatness Generation". I have come across a little story that was shared with me awhile back, but at that time it didn't mean as much to me as it does now and I now want to share with all of you so that like myself we all can learn how precious life is and that we all need to make the most of it.

THE MAGIC BANK ACCOUNT

Imagine that you had won the Following *PRIZE* in a contest: Each morning your bank would deposit \$86,400 in your private account for your use.

However, this prize has Rules:

The set of Rules:

Everything that you didn't spend during each day would be taken away from you. You may not simply transfer money into some other account. You may only spend it.

Each morning upon awakening, the bank opens your account with another \$86,400 for that Day.

The bank can end the game without warning; at any time, it can say, Game Over!"

It can close the account and you will not receive a new one. What would you personally Do?

You would buy anything and Everything you wanted right?

Not only for yourself, but for all the people you love and care for. Even for people you don't know, because you couldn't possibly spend it all on yourself, right?

You would try to spend every penny, and use it all, because you knew it would be replenished in the morning.

ACTUALLY, This GAME is REAL Shocked? YES!

Each of us is already a winner of this *PRIZE*. We just can't seem to see it. The PRIZE is *TIME*

Each morning we awaken to Receive 86,400 seconds as a gift of Life.

And when we go to sleep at Night, any remaining time is not credited to us.

What we haven't used up that Day is forever lost. Yesterday is forever Gone.

Each morning the account is Refilled, but the bank can dissolve your account at any time WITHOUT WARNING...

SO, what will YOU do with your 86,400 seconds?

Those seconds are worth so much More than the same amount in dollars. Think about it and remember to Enjoy every second of your life, because time races by so much quicker than you think.

So, take care of yourself, be Happy, love deeply and enjoy life!

Here's wishing you a wonderful and beautiful day. Start spending....

"DON'T COMPLAIN ABOUT GROWING OLD!" SOME PEOPLE DON'T GET THE PRIVILEGE!

Happy Trails to You, Pony Tail & Valerie

"SUGGESTION BOX"

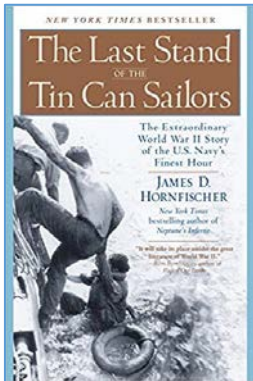
What are your ideas? Bring your newsletter to the next meeting with your suggestions . . .

- I know a veteran who could be considered for a future program. _____
- I recommend the following place of interest to visit . . .
- Upcoming future event that might be of interest to our membership . . .
- One of our members is being/ has been specially recognized with an award
- A card "we are thinking of you" should be sent to
- Notify the Roundtable of deceased members/veterans

[Send topics of interest for newsletter to editing committee c/o klerch@parktudor.org Deadline is always 2nd Monday of the month (Mar 9, April 13, etc). Newsletter will be sent electronically on the 3rd Monday of the month]

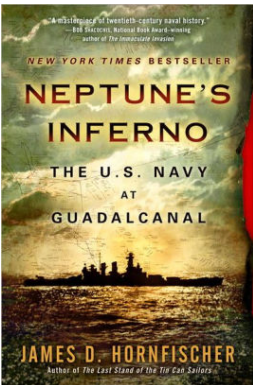
When my students in the Legacy Initiative Project and Military History classes at Park Tudor School were studying WWII, I recommended they read the first book by James D. Hornfischer, as well as the next two. I enjoyed all three books and I know our WWII Roundtable Readers will also find them well written and fascinating.

It is also possible to listen to podcasts by Hornfischer talking about his books on the Pritzker Military Library website. Here is their link: http://www.pritzkermilitary.org/whats_on/programming-overview/ Naturally, if you become a member you have greater access to resources, which will give you some great items to listen to as well.

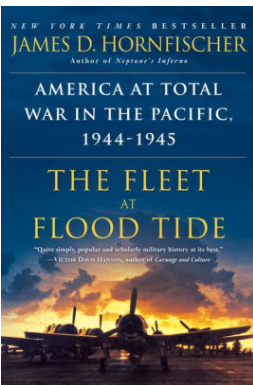


Recommendations! I could not put any of these books down! They are all extremely well written and gripping.

Book 1: *Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors* A WWII veteran who served on a DD-680 USS *Melvin*, a destroyer in the Pacific, recommended *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors* to me. I read it from cover to cover and especially appreciated the references to his ship and related experiences he had when he sailed through the “Slot” in the Philippine Sea during the battle of Leyte Gulf. Hornfischer captured the sea battles perfectly. According to Publishers Weekly, this is “One of the finest WWII naval action narratives in recent years, this book follows in the footsteps of *Flags of Our Fathers*. . . . Exalting American sailors and pilots as they richly deserve. . . . Reads like a very good action novel.”



Book 2: *Neptune's Inferno*. . . Again, a WWII veteran, whom we featured in our first *Words of War* anthology, was a radio man on the USS *Chevalier* (DD-451). His story got me interested in the naval battle in “The Slot” adjacent to Guadalcanal. Hornfischer captures remarkably the terror of sailing through the darkness with Japanese ships and American ships sinking in the strait. “Hornfischer tells for the first time the full story of the men who fought in destroyers, cruisers, and battleships in the narrow, deadly waters of “Ironbottom Sound.” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*—“Here, in stunning cinematic detail, are the seven major naval actions that began in August 1942, a time when the war seemed unwinnable and America fought on a shoestring, with the outcome always in doubt. Working from new interviews with survivors, unpublished eyewitness accounts, and newly available documents, Hornfischer paints a vivid picture of the officers and enlisted men who opposed the Japanese in America’s hour of need.”



Book 3: *The Fleet at Flood Tide*

I needed to read *The Fleet at Flood Tide*, which relates to the end of the war because of our research about the USS *Intrepid* and a fighter pilot who served on that ship. (Hornfischer is the winner of Commodore John Barry Book Award, Navy League of the United States Winner, John Lehman Distinguished Naval Historian Award, etc.)

“With its thunderous assault on the Mariana Islands in June 1944, the United States crossed the threshold of total war. In this tour de force of dramatic storytelling, distilled from extensive research . . . Hornfischer brings to life the campaign that was the fulcrum of the drive to compel Tokyo to surrender. . . . Here are epic seaborne invasions of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam, the stunning aerial battles of the Great Marianas Turkey Shoot, etc. . . . *The Fleet at Flood Tide* is a stirring, authoritative, and cinematic portrayal of WWII’s world-changing finale.”

Let me know what you think too. Please send me your recommends to other books that our veterans and Roundtable members might enjoy. Thanks, Kathryn Lerch
klerch@parktudor.org

UPCOMING PROGRAM IN MARCH

With so many 75th anniversaries relating to the war in the Pacific in 2020, it is fitting that in March, **Stephen Baryniak**, a WWII Roundtable member, will present a program titled “Firebombing Tokyo”. This should be fascinating and informative for our members and guests. Steve and Charlie Russell are guaranteed to have put together an excellent and informative program.



Lt. Alfred Tsang, XXth Air Force

Before a bombing raid

Relief after a bombing raid

Shortly after I began the Legacy Initiative Project, I was approached by a veteran who had served in the Pacific as a navigator on a B-29 bomber. As a result, he suffered PTSD for decades due to fire-bombing raids over Japan. I did not know this before I met him however. So when he asked to come and talk to me and to share his collection of photographs, news clippings, etc. I was thrilled for the opportunity. I learned a great deal more—to listen and show empathy. Looking back now to 2002, I realize that it took an incredible amount of determination and mental strength for him to do this. I had never been confronted by a scene in which an individual sits directly across from you and tears are streaming down his face. He HAD TO TELL his story. We became good friends and corresponded even after he moved away to join his children in Minnesota a few years later. His incredible story represents not only the heroism of our air crews in the Pacific, but also his fight against racist prejudice. **Lieutenant Alfred K. B. Tsang** was born to Chinese immigrants in New York City. He just graduated high school when he was recruited by Army Air Corps because his Chinese language skills were an asset and he could help train Chinese pilots in China. Anything was possible to win the war. However, he ended up as a navigator in the 29th BG, 314th Bomber Wing in the XXth Air Force, flying out of Tinian and Guam. His account was published in our second anthology in 2004.

“Of [Tsang’s] thirty-six missions, twenty-three were incendiary missions, commonly referred to as Fire Bombing, and all but three took place in the darkness of night. . . Finding Tokyo was not a difficult job. By the time we got there, the city was in flames and could be seen more than a hundred miles away. It was fearsome—and our baptism of fire. . . . After the initial shock, we went on to the other major cities such as Nagoya, Kobe, Osaka, Yokohama, as well as smaller ones, and back to Tokyo three more times. At one of the briefings, we were informed that they had loaded some delayed fuse fragmentation bombs and we asked why. ‘For the benefit of the fire fighters’. We guffawed. Sometimes the reason for the target was [that] the population [was] over 100,000.”

On the Fiftieth Anniversary of the War he wrote an essay entitled “Sorrowful Fiery Remembrance”. Perhaps, the best way to reflect on firebombing of Japanese cities is to read his own words: “For the grieving survivors in Dresden, London, Coventry, Cologne, Chungking, and Tokyo and many other places, it was all the same whether their loved ones were killed by atomic, smart or fire bombs or the V-2 rockets.’ My emotion has been at the bottom of the pit for so long that it has not seen the light of day. I have been told to get over it, and it happened so long ago. If only I could.”

He added, "The memory and my sorrow of the Tokyo conflagration will remain till the last of my days. I have collected samples from soils of Tokyo, Iwo Jima, and places where my parents are interned, and have asked my family to mix them with my ashes; and to cast part of the mixture into the Pacific where many B-29 went, and the remainder in the columbarium at Arlington." Tsang remembered, for the most part, that members of his squadron either came back unscratched or not at all. We were one of the few crews that completed our tour of 35 missions. Our entire crew received the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters." [Alfred Tsang photo below]



FUTURE PROGRAM – JULY 27 JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNMENT

Another stimulating and interesting program will be presented at our July 27th meeting. Marlene Mendonsa who lives in northern Indiana has been visiting and learning much more about a Japanese-American family which was interned in this country during WWII under Executive Order 9066. Mr. Kenneth Hirata (92) and his wife, as well as their son, will join us and guided by Marlene's PowerPoint slides, they will share their story.

According to Marlene's reports, "I met Mr. and Mrs. Hirata on Wednesday afternoon up here. They are very gracious, articulate and interested in telling their story. Mr. Hirata at the age of 92 continues to work on their race cars. He gave me a grand tour of his shop and showed me the dragster that he is working on. He is truly a remarkable man. In addition, his wife is just as wonderful. We agreed on July 27 for the program to tell their story of life in the Japanese American internment camp."

If you wish to read ahead, here is an online link to 15 book suggestions about Japanese American internment: https://www.oregonlive.com/books/2017/02/15_books_for_learning_about_ja.html

In particular, we recommend two outstanding ones: *Farewell to Manzanar* and *Snow Falling on Cedars*. There were "exceptions" to internment, in particular Japanese American students who went to college and Nisei from Hawaii who joined the famous 442 Infantry—the most decorated of any American unit in WWII. See Allan W. Austin's "From Concentration Camp to Campus: Japanese American Students and World War II" For more on Hawaii's Nisei Veterans of WWII go to: <https://www.nvlchawaii.org/>