

WORLD WAR II  
**TIMES**



**The "Fighting Lady"**

"Pop" Condit — POW

"Mr. Yorktown" — Jim Bryan

Smokey Stover

Search to know the truth

Recalling "Jocko" Clark

Jimmy Flatley

Plus book reviews,  
pin-up, pictorial





## Thoughts from

### a Royal 440

Elbert L. Watson

## Another veteran

A few days ago another World War II veteran passed through the thin veil which separates this life from the next one. He woke up one morning, stirred about for awhile, then experienced a dull feeling in his chest. Soon he was gone.

His early years gave little indication that one day he would be part of a mighty world-wide conflict. His childhood home was in a rural setting in Eden, Alabama, about 30 miles east of a "Magic City" called Birmingham. He plowed fields, chased rabbits, and fished in Wolf Creek. His fine baritone voice got him the lead male role in the senior class play at Pell City High School.

Birmingham's dynamic magnetism drew him there one day. Leather goods became his trade. He was a salesman, a fine one, too. He utilized his good line, ready smile, and quick mind. He learned a lot about life, could talk politics, religion, and sports — especially Alabama football.

Then the war came and he was gone, out to a place called Camp Barkley, Texas, to serve in the 77th Medical Unit attached to the 13th Armored Division. The nearest he got to live combat was the day he climbed out of a training trench, and inched his way across an open field while machine-gun bullets zinged over his head.

Oh yes, there was that other time when his unit was on field maneuvers. Encamped for the night, the fellows were telling stories by campfire when a huge Texas-size rattlesnake slithered between the legs of one soldier. The ensuing commotion left "hardy" U.S. troops scattered all over the camp area.

August, 1945 found him in California preparing to board a troop ship to sail across the broad Pacific, perhaps to the shores of Japan itself. There he would know war first-hand as he attended to American casualties resulting from the expected invasion. He would see their mangled bodies, hear their cries of pain, and witness their agony of death on the battlefield.

Then suddenly the war was over. An American bomber with a deadly missile aboard took off on a lonely, yet dramatic, mission to a place called Hiroshima. The horrible scenes of battle would never become a reality to him and his comrades.

The soldier, now a veteran, came home to his leather store; his church choir; and, of course, his Alabama football. He wore no medals, but he had various citations which showed that his service to his country was beyond reproach. He never talked much about his military service, until recently when pangs of nostalgia began to weigh heavily in his thoughts. Then he would recall people and events of a bygone era, even remembering the small talk of young men far away from home and facing an uncertain future. Their laughter and tears he never forgot.

Many who knew him thought of him as a typical veteran, the kind of person who serves his country then comes home to live out his life. But to me he was rather special. His name was Elbert L. Watson, Sr. He was my father.

## Letters

### Great service

I like the Times very much. You are doing a great service because you tell it like it is, by the people who were there — not the politicians' garbage.

Keep up the good work.

Preston Bristow  
Duluth, Georgia  
(Former Marine WW II)

### Time flies

I am glad to see the Times salute my old PBY squadron, VP 11. It's hard to believe 40 odd years have passed when we roamed the skies in our 85 mph "Black Cats."

I have often wondered how many of our guys recall that for a few months we were assigned to the 5th Air Corps in Port Moresby, wore Army uniforms, lived with the Army, flew with the Army, and received medical and dental care from the Army. We were like gypsies without a home.

By a strange coincidence the "newly" commissioned VP-11 is based here in Maine at the Brunswick NAS. They fly sub patrols off the coast in what used to be the old Lockheed Electras flown by Eastern Airlines, among

## Saluting heroes

Several weeks ago a friend remarked: "Why do we honor the Elvis Presleys and forget about the Pappy Boyingtons?" Our conscience breathed easier that day because already we had a story and photo of Pappy ready for this issue of the Times.

Too, we are happy that special tributes and stories arrived honoring such men as Smokey Stover, Benny Mott, and Jimmy Flatley, all of whom have passed beyond the scene of battle.

Early on, we learned that few heroes of World War II made the major headlines. That is why our columns are directed to correcting those oversights. And we are willing to take yet another step for those of you who want to remember a departed loved one, either lost in war or in the normal passage of time.

These remembrances will be set in six point type with a bold heading. If you wish to include a photograph (head shot), there will be a \$3.00 picture screening charge. Please type and double-space your tribute and limit it to 200 words.

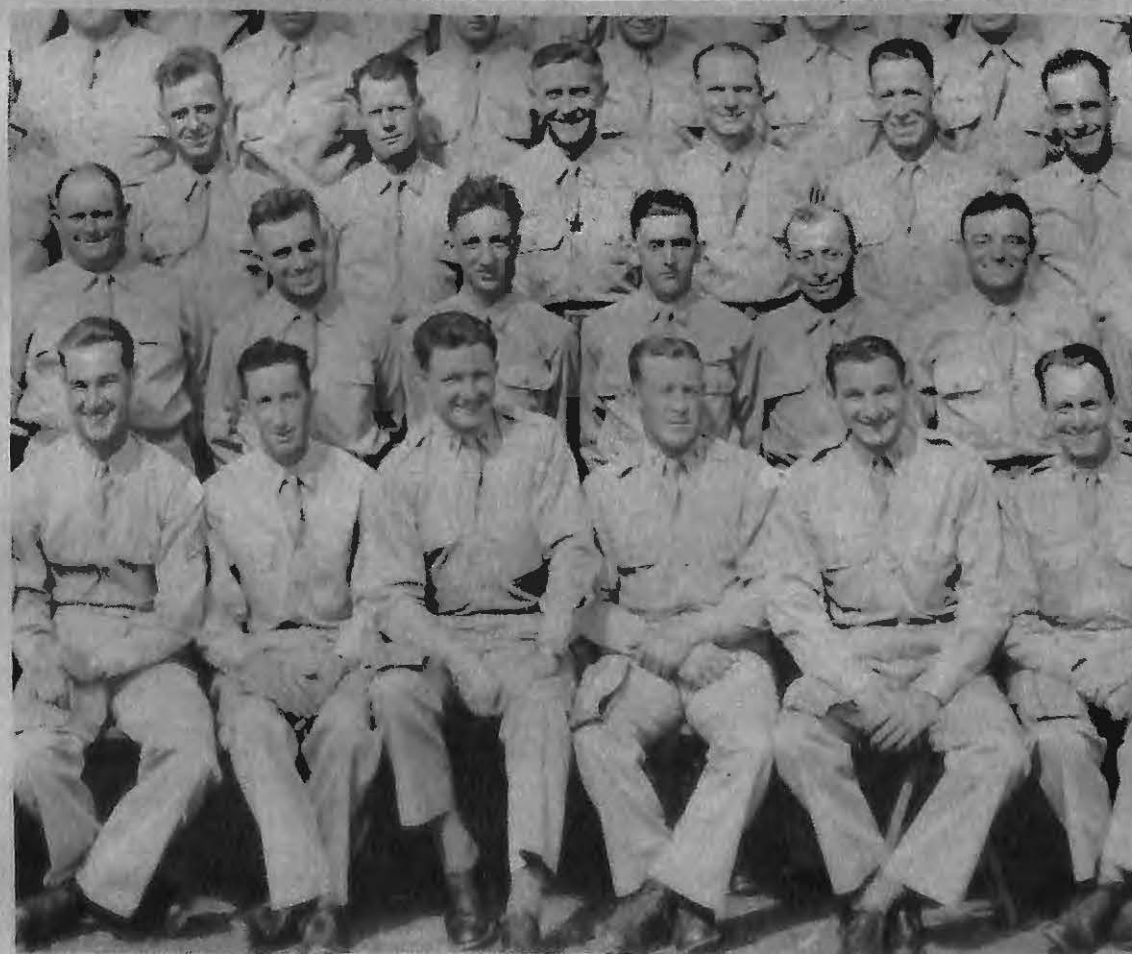
## Thanks to Yorktown folks

Our special thanks to Jim Bryan, Executive Director of the YORKTOWN Association, and Dr. Clark Reynolds, noted Naval historian, for providing most of the material and pictures for this issue. Bryan, who served aboard the YORKTOWN as Aviation Ordnance and Rearming Officer, is a dynamic and innovative leader whose vision extends beyond the decks of his own ship to other vessels which have fought for freedom worldwide.

We salute Jim Bryan, Clark Reynolds, and their host of comrades who keep alive memories of a noble time in our national history.

others, in the pre-jet days, too. Like the venerable PBY's, I guess they have nine lives,

Roland Beauregard  
Harmony, Maine



Elbert L. Watson, Sr., was all smiles with Camp Barkley, buddies, 1944.



# The saga of Smokey Stover

Someday we'll go out to the stars to see and to conquer.

*Elisha Terrill "Smokey" Stover was only 19 years old when he penned those lines in his gripper-edge steno notebook pad. Amazingly, he mapped out the scientific requirements it would take to reach such lofty space exploration goals. One day, he thought, he might be one of those who conquered the heavens.*

*It was not to be, at least not in that fashion. Instead, his reaching the stars came through his service abroad YORKTOWN. Though cut down in the flower of life, Stover's name is honored today by his comrades who remember his boyish features; his ready humor; and his sterling character — qualities which compose the memory of YORKTOWN herself.*

*Smokey grew up in Denton County, Texas. As a teenager he acquired his nickname from a popular comic strip character "Smokey Stover." Dreaming of becoming a Navy pilot, Smokey on December 17, 1940, was offered an appointment as an Aviation Cadet in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He accepted and was sworn in immediately. He was 20 years old.*

*With the outbreak of World War II, Smokey was assigned to the carrier HORNET as a member of VF-8. His first combat came at the Battle of Midway, June 4, 1942. In aerial action over Guadalcanal in late 1942 he brought down four Japanese planes, flying off the carrier SARATOGA.*

*In January 1943, Smokey was detached from his old command and ordered to Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company to serve aboard YORKTOWN, CV-10, the*



Lt. E.T. "Smokey" Stover on the wing of his F6F Hellcat several days before he was shot down over Truk.

Jim Bryan Collection

TO PAGE 34



# "Jocko" headed "Fighting Lady"

Clark Reynolds,  
Yorktown Historian

"The Right Reverend J. Jonathan Jockey Clark!" So hollered an anonymous voice from the rear ranks of plebe midshipmen at the U.S. Naval Academy one day in 1913. Aimed at a 19-year-old Joseph James Clark, the barb stuck, and hence forth "Joe" Clark became "Jock." The "o" was added during World War II.

The future fighting carrierman had been born in Oklahoma before it became a state. He was one-eighth Cherokee Indian, and one of his neighbors was the humorist Will Rogers. Cartoonists during the Pacific War caricatured him scalping Japanese Premier Hideki Tojo as the carriers blasted their way westward into "Indian country."

Clark earned his "golden wings" at Pensacola in 1925, led Fighting Squadron Two on the *Lexington* (the "Lady Lex") in the early 1930s, and endured the tedium of the peacetime Navy waiting for the shooting to start.

When it did, he quickly rose to the occasion. Executive Officer of the *Yorktown* at the time of Pearl Harbor, he rushed the escort carrier *Suwanee* to completion just in time to take her into the North African landings in November 1942. He repeated the feat with the "new" *Yorktown*, which quickly became the pacesetter of the new Fast Carrier Task Force.

Jocko Clark's success as captain of the "Fighting Lady" at the invasions of the Gilbert and Marshall islands was followed by promotion to rear admiral and assignment as Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's leading carrier task group commander for the Central Pacific offensive. He particularly distinguished himself in the Marianas and Okinawa operations.

Chafing again at the inaction of the postwar world, he returned to action in command of Task Force 77, the fast carrier force operating off Korea in 1951-52. His aggressive leadership culminated with his promotion to vice admiral and command of the Seventh Fleet for the final 15 months of the Korean War.

He inspired the devastating "Cherokee Strikes" of Navy carrier bombers against Communist positions which helped force the enemy to conclude the armistice.

His autobiography, *Carrier Admiral* (David McKay, publisher), appeared in 1967, four years before his death.



YORKTOWN'S first, and only, wartime admiral, Rear Admiral Arthur W. Radford enjoys a laugh with Captain Jocko Clark off Hawaii, July 1943.

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# My quest to know the truth

Teresa James Martin  
Former WASP

**W**e had just taken off from DeGaulle Airport and as we were climbing for altitude, I gazed through misty eyes at the City of Paris below. I wondered if my husband ever saw Paris when he flew over it or was it cloud-covered.

I was in Paris as a guest of the French P-47 Pilots Association to attend ceremonies commemorating D-Day Plus 40 in June 1984.

I was ferrying P-47s out of Republic Aircraft's field in Farmingdale, New York, when I received the telegram notifying me that my husband, a B-17 pilot stationed somewhere in England, was missing on an operational mission.

One week later I received his last letter to me which was dated June 22, 1944, three days before his last mission. He was in the 337th Squadron of the 96th Bomb Group. He mentioned that he needed a "flak suit" and more sleep. Their crews were getting little rest at that time.

Time passed and I got no further word on his "missing" status. One day, a WASP friend, Helen Richey, from my home town, who later became the first woman co-pilot on an airline, and was now ferrying Jugs out of Republic with me, said she would write to her old buddy, Jimmy Doolittle, to see if he could help.

The information (November 28, 1944) he sent her reiterated that my husband was the pilot of the missing B-17, which other members of the mission claimed was hit, causing a fire in the number three engine and throwing the plane out of control immediately. Three chutes were seen opening. The plane leveled off after that and four more 'chutes were seen opening.

No further observations were made as the plane went out of sight, so the fate of the other three crew members was still uncertain. It was Doolittle's observation that my husband would probably "show up."

That same week I saw a picture in the New York Daily News with the caption, "American Airmen Captured by Nazis." It looked like a side view of my husband and two of his crew members whom I had met prior to his volunteering for overseas duty.

This left me with the assumption that he was a POW and would come home after the war was over.

The WASP was disbanded in December 1944, and I returned to Pittsburgh to work in my parents flower shop.

Having received no further information from the Army, I wrote to the



Teresa and George Martin. Their paths crossed in Texas where they had their picture taken.

Chief of Burial Records in the European Theater asking if, in fact, my husband was deceased. They replied that they had no records to substantiate his death.

On July 26, 1945, however, I received a letter from Lieutenant General Ira Eaker extending his sympathy in the official determination of the death of my husband in the European Arena.

In March 1949, I was notified that my husband's remains were initially interred with his comrades at Solers, France, and would be casketed and shipped to Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri.

Following this letter was one signed by Major General Edward Witsell, informing me that my husband was a crew member on a B-17, hit by anti-aircraft fire on a mission to Paris and crashed in Joinville le Pont, France.

In 1950, while working in the flower shop, a man came in and asked for

Teresa James Martin, identifying himself as the waist gunner on my husband's plane. After I collected my wits, I asked him what happened that day. He said he remembered the hit that blew off the whole front end of the plane. He said that my husband, his co-pilot and navigator never knew what hit them. His last memory was jumping out of the wounded bomber and his 'chute opening.

His memory loss lasted many years, but he had to find me to tell me the story. He said he was going to New York, but he would return so we could talk some more. I never heard from him again. I still felt my husband was alive and would come walking in one day. Even after his supposed remains were interned in St. Louis with his crew, I didn't believe he was buried there.

When I learned that Paris, France, was chosen as our reunion site in 1984, I searched through my old papers, and found all the World War II

correspondence.

I found out the name of the mayor of Joinville le Pont and how far it was from Paris. The mayor contacted the President of the Veterans Association in that area and they both extended an invitation to visit.

Several weeks went by, and then I received additional word from them that they had found witnesses who had seen my husband's crash. Needless to say I was astounded. This now had become a three-fold trip.

While overseas I would be looking up my deceased mother's childhood home in Ireland; try to visit all the shrines in France; and go to Joinville le Pont. (Besides being at our reunion, of course.)

Before leaving the States, I wrote to Roger Belbeoch, President of the Veterans Association, and set a date to go to Joinville le Pont. One small problem, he spoke no English, and I spoke no French.

On Sunday morning, May 27, the



French Mother's Day, Roger and his wife, with an interpreter, met me at the hotel and we drove to the City Hall, where Pierre Aubry gave me a welcoming speech in English. After introducing me to the witnesses, we drove to Avenue de Lille, the crash site.

We pulled up in front of the house that the wing had hit. The woman who was living there then still does and she described her feelings about the crash, and how it was a miracle that the plane stayed in the middle of the narrow street.

On the wrought-iron fence in front of the house is a memorial plaque with the inscription in French, "In honor of the nine American Airmen who gave their lives for freedom." The last line on the plaque read, "22 June 1944." I was overcome with sadness. His last letter to me bore the same postmark. Two young girls brought me a large arrangement of red, white and blue flowers.

Then, we walked over to a garage where two 17 year olds hid when they heard the air-raid siren back in 1944. Moments later they heard the crash, and when they peeked out of the door, they saw the smoking wreckage and a body intact, lying between two trees. They rushed him to the hospital, but he was already dead. That man was my husband.

The neighbors ran into the street and gathered remains of bodies before the Germans arrived. They were taken to church for blessing and buried together.

When we returned to the City Hall the Mayor showed me a niche in the corridor wall. On the shelf was a large piece of landing gear from the B-17



Teresa James and "Ten Grand," the aircraft from Republic which she ferried from Long Island, New York to Newark, New Jersey, 1944.



George Martin, the perfect Air Force Officer.

with a gold plate that read, "In Memory of George L. Martin." I was close to tears.

In the assembly room with the witnesses to the crash, the Mayor made presentations in French, and then in English. The two teenagers, now 57 years old, who had found George's body presented me with the most exquisite bouquet of flowers I have ever seen. Next a man presented a 10 x 12 framed coin with an attached letter that explains in part:

After the crash and explosion, we popped out of the garage. My Dad examined the impact area after they had removed my husband's body. They discovered a coin. He kept it in his purse for the rest of his life like a talisman. After he died in 1965 I decided to save this relic until today. Now I'm happy and proud that the City of Joinville le Pont is honoring this hero, and the coin is going back to his family as a testimony of his sacrifice for freedom in the World.

Signed,  
Jacques Dumay

One woman who had taken a picture of the crash, presented me with a framed 8x10 enlargement, also with a letter. Another witness had a piece of metal mounted in a blue velvet lined leather box. Still another had a dog-tag belonging to a crew member.

They also presented me with a tea-cup size gold medal from the City of Joinville le Pont, inscribed: George Martin. June 22, 1944.

I stood to thank everyone for honoring my husband but I couldn't speak — I just cried. They all understood.

Mayor Aubry's wife took me by the arm and led me into another room, followed by the many witnesses. There, awaiting me, was a champagne reception. After I regained my composure, I thanked about 50 people, kissing each one cheek to cheek.

I was happy, tired and emotionally drained when they drove me back to Paris. At last I knew what really happened to my beloved husband. It was a very moving and emotional experience. Truly a day to remember forever.



# Summitry, W.W. II style

As the Times goes to press, President Reagan has just taken off for the historic Moscow summit. All Americans wish him well.

We're not interested in getting involved in the politics of such events, preferring to leave that effort to our elected officials to help us breathe a little easier about the future.

But we can show a bit of "Summitry Nostalgia" on this page — our small contribution to "making the world a little safer place" in which to live.

What we have here are two photographs (one an American, the other a Soviet) of scenes long since forgotten, except, perhaps, by those who were there.

The pictures tell a story of young men and women of different backgrounds and beliefs who share a camaraderie which strangely is only found through the tragedy of war.

As powerful world leaders gather at their Summits, it might be well for them to invite some representatives who, together, experienced the awful travail of war.

And if a picture is worth a thousand words, the American and Soviet airmen at the lower right hand corner of the photograph at the bottom of this page, would have much to tell.



Another face of war not often seen. American WACS, Soviet soldiers, and German girls have only smiles for the camera

Helen Oliver Collection



American and Soviet pilots in a congenial mood, Fairbanks, Alaska, 1943. Many Soviets flew U.S. aircraft to the front via Eastern Siberia.

Novosti Press Agency



# “Pappy’s” last mission

Colonel Gregory “Pappy” Boyington, one of the legendary heroes of World War II, flew his last “mission” January 11, 1988 when death by cancer claimed him at a hospice in Fresno, California. Recipient of both Medal of Honor and Navy Cross, Boyington was buried with full military honors near the tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

Born at Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, of Indian ancestry, Pappy graduated from the University of Washington in 1934 with a degree in aeronautical engineering. He gained an appointment to the newly formed aviation cadet program in February 1936, and received his wings at Pensacola on March 11, 1937.

Known as a hell-raiser, Boyington was marking time as a flight instructor in Pensacola in late summer 1941, when he heard of Claire Chennault’s effort to get seasoned pilots to back China’s Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek’s war against the Japanese. He immediately signed up under the impression he could resume his Marine career if war came to the United States.

During his service with the “Flying Tigers” Pappy shot down six Japanese planes. He was part of a pre-dawn P-40 fighter sweep of the large Japanese air-field at Chiang Mai, Thailand, March 24, 1942, wreaking havoc with multiple strafing runs.

When the announcement came down that the “Flying Tigers” were to be inducted into the Army Air Corps, Boyington, at his own expense, headed home to reenter the Marine Corps. Because he had officially left the Corps, he was only given a commission as a reserve (rather than a regular) major.

Boyington’s first assignment when he arrived in the South Pacific in January, 1943 was administrative work. To get back in action, he convinced his group commander to establish a temporary squadron in the Solomon Islands using the 2,000 horsepower F4U-1 Corsair, which had been given to the Marines because of its unsuitability on carriers.

Boyington quickly whipped his men into a close-knit fighting unit known as the “Black Sheep.” On his first long range mission covering 300 miles to Ballale Island airbase near Bougainville, Pappy shot down five highly maneuverable Mitsubishi A6M Zero fighters. On December 17 he led a sweep over an airfield at Rabaul, daring the Japanese by radio to come up and fight. To this a voice in English replied: “Come on down, sucker!”

Shot down himself on January 3, 1944, Pappy languished in a Japanese



GREGORY PAPPY BOYINGTON shown in his classic photo.

prison camp for 20 months of harsh treatment. On one occasion fellow POW’s were brought out to watch him being publicly beaten with a baseball bat. There was not a murmur out of him.

Though he came home to a hero’s welcome, Boyington’s post-war years were less pleasant. He worked in department stores, traveled as a liquor salesman, and refereed wrestling matches to support himself. Bouts with alcoholism made his family life

disastrous. In 1966 he almost died of emphysema.

But there were bright spots along the way. His book *Baa Baa Black Sheep* became a best seller in the 1950’s. A television series in the mid-1970’s about Pappy and the Black Sheep brought him back into the public eye, making him a familiar figure on the speaking and air-show circuit. He even acquired a single-seat amateur-built aircraft and resumed flying in the late 1970’s.

A former Marine Corps pilot, Colonel Charles J. Quilter, remembered Boyington this way: “By far the most colorful Marine aviator of any era, he was pugnacious, witty, rebellious, fun-loving, a disaster as a peacetime officer, a gifted pilot in both dogfighting and gunnery, and a brilliant combat leader.”

Pappy would have loved that generous epitaph.



# Big E's Tom Hamilton was the luckiest of plebes

We were the luckiest of Plebes! We got to "carry on" after the Army game until Christmas. It was 1926 — Navy was undefeated and won the National Championship. We faced some powerful teams that year: Princeton, Georgetown, Colgate and Ar-

my, to name a few. Georgetown had a 300 pound guard, "Babe" Connaughton, who ran like a deer. Colgate featured a hard-driving fullback, "Iron Duke" Shaughnessy, whose game-long heroics were extinguished in the final minute. About

to increase his team's one point lead, he fumbled inside our five yard line. The ball popped into the arms of our speedy classmate, Whitey Lloyd, who outraced everyone enroute to a 99 yard touchdown run to score our winning points as the final

gun sounded.

By far the most formidable opponent that year, though, was Michigan under the famed coach, Fielding Yost. They had enjoyed a two season winning streak that included a 54-0 debacle over Navy at Ann Arbor a year earlier. They

were loaded with All-Americans: Bennie Friedman, Bo Molenda, and Benny Oosterbaan. We were a dead cinch to become their next victim at Baltimore but, instead, we won 10-0. We, too, had great stars: the stalwart Frank Wickhorst; the fine triple-threat back, Tom Hamilton; and the heroic Alan Shapley, all Class of '27. Tom, as Navy people all know, later became a successful coach and a Hall of Famer.

For the Army game, we went to Chicago for the first and only time, to dedicate the newly built Soldiers Field. Before we left Annapolis, Commander Jonas Ingram, Class of '07, gave the Midshipmen a rousing pep-talk. He was the Director of Athletics and his brother "Navy Bill," Class of '20, was Navy's coach. At the end of the rally Jonas said, "Gentlemen, the nearest thing to war in time of peace is football." I have never forgotten it.

The day before the game in Chicago we marched down Michigan Avenue on frozen pavements with leggings and overshoes, overcoats, white gloves and rifles with fixed-bayonets.

The Army team was experienced and powerful and the game was a toss-up. With the score tied 14-14, a punt to our normally sure-handed safety man reached him simultaneously with two Army players. There was no fair-catch rule in those days, and neither was there a rule against kicking a loose ball. When the inevitable fumble followed, an Army player kicked the ball repeatedly along the ground for about 35 yards, before falling on it in the end zone for a touchdown.

Well, we came back and got another touchdown when, on a reverse, our "pulling-guard" on the play, Ben Born, Class of '27, knocked down his brother, Army's brilliant Charley Born, to clear the way for Alan Shapley to get into the promised land beyond the goal line. With the score at 21-20, Army leading, the imperturbable Tom Hamilton coolly drop-kicked for the extra point to make it 21-21.

Thus ended our greatest season.

Benny Mott  
Naval Academy, '30

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# His vision evokes memories

Steve Ewing,  
Naval historian

In early October of each year the United States remembers Columbus for his discovery of the new world. On that same weekend, coincidentally, the thoughts of many modern sailors turn to ceremonies aboard the retired aircraft carrier YORKTOWN at Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina.

Aboard the "Fighting Lady" during these autumnal ceremonies, emotions run a full range. Excitement and joy are inspired by reunion of friends and former shipmates.

Tears flow as the sorrowful strains of the Navy Hymn signal final prayers and the laying of memorial wreaths into the harbor. And finally, an inner peace pervades veterans and guests as they walk away from the ceremonies and carrier knowing that few moments have been better spent than those just concluded, which were devoted to reminiscence and honor of friends who gave their lives to preserve freedom.

It is inconceivable that anyone would disagree with the reason for, or essence of, these solemn ceremonies. And, few would argue that any man who was willing to go to war and sacrifice 75% of his life expectancy would not deserve at least some small engraving of his name on a plaque. Such a project to honor Naval aviators and sailors lost in World War II, Korea and Vietnam has begun and is well under way. But, the job is not done.

Despite the fact that hundreds come each October to pay homage to thousands, Columbus Day weekend would be just another relatively uneventful holiday for veterans if not for one man and his fellow shipmates.

Although a close scrutiny of his wartime innovations as an ordnance officer would reveal contributions well above normal expectations, James T. Bryan was like many other officers who served on WW II car-



James and Norma "Mrs. YORKTOWN" Bryan pose in front of plaque honoring "Jimmy" Flatley.



riers. Too often he was the last person to speak to a pilot about to fly his final mission; too often he saw his shipmates being hit by a plane out of control; too often he had to look into the eyes of a man whose eyes could no longer see.

Many who experienced these sad occurrences returned home with an understandable determination to forget the events that prematurely extinguished the adventure of life for friends. But James Bryan could not, and did not, forget.

Desire to accomplish great goals begins with determination, but in any endeavor determination alone is seldom sufficient... even when the goal is to pay due respect and honor to

others. Through a series of ships' company and air groups who were lost at sea and over enemy territory and whose only epitaph is a notation of latitude and longitude in the yellowing pages of their ship's log. If plans are successful, 108 plaques will eventually rest on YORKTOWN's forward hangar deck memorializing close to 10,000 officers and men by name, rank/rating and division/squadron. This enormous project has been and still is costly in time and money.

On more than one occasion, Jim Bryan has gone into his own pocket to fund projects when the good intentions of others could not equal their

Individual bronze plaques have been dedicated into this "Arlington" for 58 carriers and their lost 5,465 crewmembers. The goal of the YORKTOWN CV-10 Association and Foundation is to honor all men of

TO NEXT PAGE



# Yorktown's Jim Bryan a tireless worker for Naval history

FROM PAGE 11

ability to honor financial pledges. So much has been accomplished to date that few would complain if such ambitious programs could not be completed. But, if efforts had ceased one year ago, a 1987 inductee into the Carrier Aviation Hall of Fame could not have said that his induction would be one of the two greatest honors he would carry to his grave.

The forward portion of YORKTOWN's hangar deck is now a sacred place. I salute Jim Bryan as he continues his lonely and difficult uphill battle to secure funds necessary to complete the "Arlington of Carrier Aviation." It is certain that the day comes for each one of us when all we will have is what we have given away.



Jim Bryan (cloth helmet) watches his rearming crew move 2,000 pound bombs TBF Avengers on the aft deck of the flight deck.



Bryan's vision led to the establishment of the "Arlington of Carrier Aviation" on the hangar deck of YORKTOWN.

CARRIER AIR GROUP FIVE

September 6, 1943

From: Air Group Pilots and Flight Crews.

To: The Air Department.

Subject: A VOTE OF THANKS.

1. Please accept the sincere appreciation of all pilots and flight crews for the excellent work you have all done and which contributed greatly to the success of our first combat mission.

THERE WERE NO ENGINE

FAILURES

OUR GUNS WORKED

OUR BOMBS EXPLODED

COMMUNICATIONS WERE ABOUT AVERAGE

THERE WERE FEW "DUE" AIRCRAFT AND

PRACTICALLY NO "HANGAR" CRASHES

All of these things made it possible for us to give the Japs one of the damdest shellacings he's ever taken.

2. Here's what it reminded us of in there the other day. "After our first blow the Jap looked like a boxer knocked out but still on his feet. Next we knocked him down. Then we picked him up and knocked him down again. We continued that all day until he was a pulp." The last plane at the island circled at a thousand feet and a thousand yards off-shore and not a gun was fired at him. THE JOINT WAS A SHAMBLES.

3. We could have no idea that without your excellent work and cooperation. Keep it up and we'll guarantee that the japs will never see anything of the YORKTOWN but her planes, bullets and bombs.

Sincerely Yours

[s] Air Group Five

Copy to: Executive Officer

Air Department

Publish and Post





Lt. James W. "Pop" Condit, second from left, and his crew the afternoon before the Marcus Island strike, during which they were shot down and spent two years as Japanese POW's. Also pictured: Gordy Marshall and Ken Kalberg and plane captain W.F. McMullen.

Jim Bryan Collection

# Pop had the last word

Clark Reynolds,  
Yorktown historian

**L**t. James W. "Pop" Condit helped draw first blood for the YORKTOWN, CV-10, when a strike was ordered against Marcus, a triangular shaped five square mile island lying 2,700 nautical miles west of Pearl Harbor. Since Marcus was deep inside enemy waters, there was no chance a downed pilot could ride the current to friendly shores.

Lt. James W. "Pop" Condit helped draw first blood for the YORKTOWN, CV-10, when a strike was ordered against Marcus, a triangular shaped five square mile island lying 2,700 nautical miles west of Pearl Harbor. Since Marcus was deep inside enemy waters, there was no chance a downed pilot could ride the current to friendly

shores.

The torpedoes left several large fires on the island, but the heavy flak followed them out to sea. Suddenly Pop, the division leader, felt a thump and looked down between his feet and saw a big hole in his fuselage. Though flames spewed from the exhaust pipes in his engine cowlings, Condit decided to try to make it to the YORKTOWN.

The TBF only got 60 miles north of Marcus, forcing Pop to make a dead stick landing in the water. The impact knocked out gunner Kenneth Kalberg, breaking his arm, but radioman Gordy Marshall pulled him free of the rapidly sinking plane. After the three men managed to scramble aboard the life raft, Condit noticed that he had shrapnel wounds in a leg and arm.

For three days they bobbed about in the their raft, getting cooked by the Pacific sun. On the fourth day, a

Japanese trawler came over the horizon and picked them up. They were beaten, trussed up, and eventually delivered to a train bound for Yokohama. Years of torture lay ahead for the three Americans.

The Japanese did not designate Condit, Kalberg, and Marshall prisoners of war but "captives," thus avoiding telling the International Red Cross of their survival or the existence of the camp (Ofuna) in which they were imprisoned. In October 1944 they were separated and Pop was sent to Omuri POW camp. Later he was sent to Yokosuka's Sumida prison camp.

He was at Sumida in August 1945 when the war came to an abrupt end. Rescued, Condit and his fellow prisoners gathered up their meager belongings and marched military style through the gate down to a canal

where they boarded barges and were taken to a hospital ship for a cursory examination. Then they were transferred to a destroyer for their first American meal in two years. Of all YORKTOWN'S airmen once listed as missing in action, only Pop and his two crewmen survived.

There was one last singular honor awaiting Pop. On the last day of August he was informed that he would be one of four liberated prisoners to represent the Navy at the surrender ceremony aboard the battleship MISSOURI. "The greatest sight I'd ever seen," Pop told a reporter afterward, "was seeing the Japanese bowing down and signing the surrender papers."

Pop Condit had the last word, giving further credence to the phrase "poetic justice."



# Witness to surrender

**E**dger C. Seitz, a prominent Indianapolis Businessman, was a young T-5 signal corpsman in May 1945 when he caught up in one of the great moments of history. Assigned to General Eisenhower's headquarters in Reims, France, Seitz typed a message to a distant station that the war in Europe was finished.

There was more high drama for the



Seitz, in the summer of 1943.

young Hoosier on the day of surrender, May 7, 1945. He showed up that morning at the surrender site, SHEAF'S headquarters, a red brick building of a boys' school, and selected a spot on the porch which placed him within yards of the room where negotiations took place. Today he still remembers seeing the large automobiles driving up to the building with German officers, and later departing with the white flag of surrender displayed.

Seitz began his military service at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, January 10, 1943, and was assigned to administrative duties. In the fall of 1944 he went overseas aboard the Belgium troopship LEOPOLDVILLE. At SHEAF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) he was specifically assigned to the teletype section.

Frequently in letters home Seitz closed by saying, "Nothing ever happens to me." Then the dramatic moment came and he wrote the following letter to his parents:

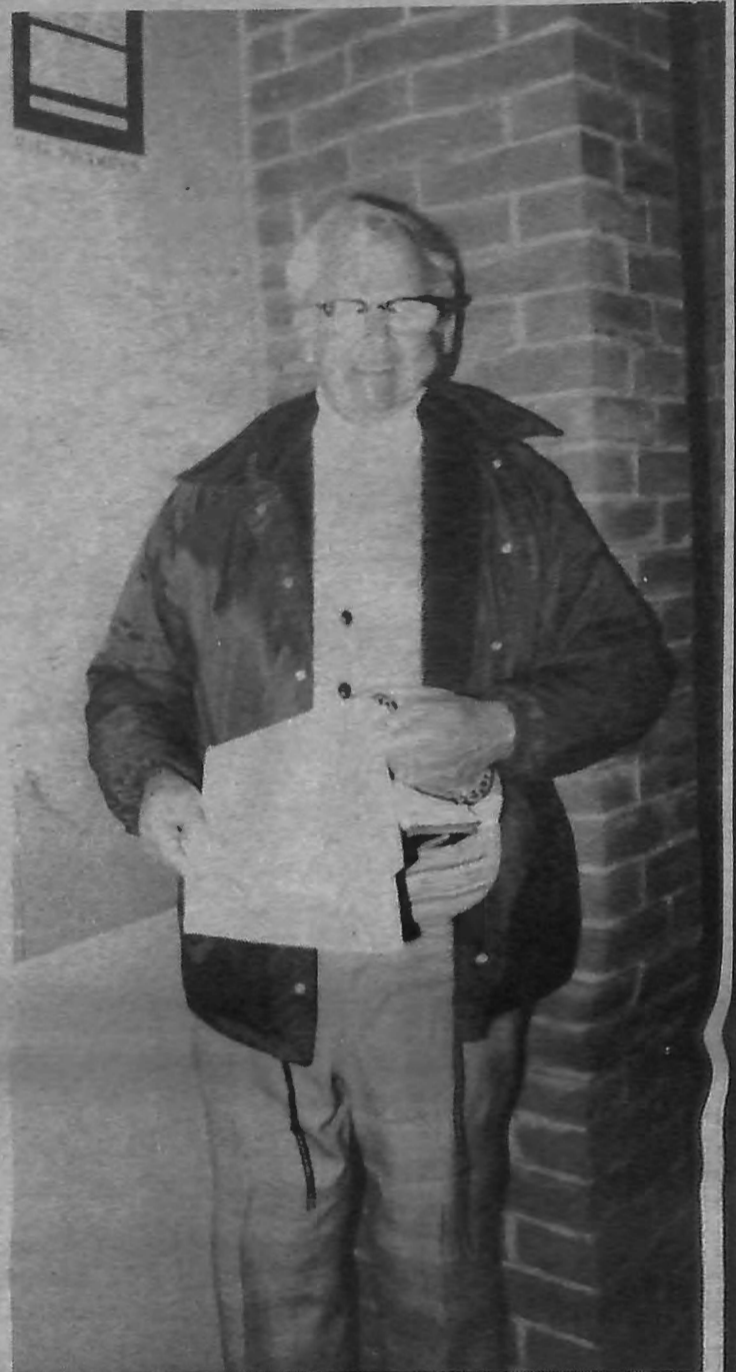
"One cannot help being in a headquarters of this size and repute without knowing a little of what is going on. Several times when I wrote you nothing was happening, I was bubbling over, but such things cannot be passed so I could not tell you at that time.

"Then it happened. Sunday, May 5, I went to work on the midnight shift and at 4:15 a.m., Monday, May 6, 1945, I had the pleasure of typing a message to a distant station which said in effect — the war in Europe is finished. Even though I have played but a minor part in the European victory, when I transmitted the message announcing the war's end I felt elated to a high degree.

"But the thrill I felt in sending the message was not the only one of that evening. About two hours before, I took a quick trip over to the room where negotiations were proceeding and tried to drink in history in the making. I couldn't see much, but there were movie men, other photographers, and on occasion an anxious delegate walking around. And then the meeting broke up and all the brass started to leave.

"To attempt to tell you the sensation I felt when the German delegates came out and climbed into the car with the white flag of surrender is an impossibility."

Today Seitz has a handsome office on the top floor of a building near the heart of downtown Indianapolis. Memorabilia and photographs of the war period claim a modest part of his office furnishings. Though he has come a long way over the years, he has never forgotten that brief moment in Reims when he was one of the fortunate ones to touch history.



Seitz in the surrender room, Reims, France, May 7, 1985, 40 years to the day when he witnessed the surrender.

## ACT OF MILITARY SURRENDER

WE THE UNDERSIGNED ACTING BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND HEREBY:

SURRENDER UNCONDITIONALLY TO THE ALLIED SUPREME COMMANDER AND TO THE SOVIET HIGH COMMAND ALL FORCE AT THIS DATE UNDER GERMAN CONTROL.

THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND WILL ISSUE ORDERS TO ALL GERMAN MILITARY, NAVAL AND AIR AUTHORITIES AND TO ALL FORCES UNDER GERMAN CONTROL TO CEASE ACTIVE OPERATIONS AT 2301 HOURS CENTRAL EUROPEAN TIME 8 MAY AND TO REMAIN IN THE POSITIONS OCCUPIED AT THAT TIME.

NO SHIP, VESSEL, OR AIRCRAFT IS TO BE SCUTTLED, OR DAMAGE DONE TO THEIR HULL, MACHINERY OR EQUIPMENT.

THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND WILL AT ONCE ISSUE TO THE APPROPRIATE COMMANDERS AND ENSURE THE CARRYING OUT OF ANY FURTHER ORDERS ISSUED BY THE SUPREME COMMANDER ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCES AND BY THE SOVIET HIGH COMMAND.

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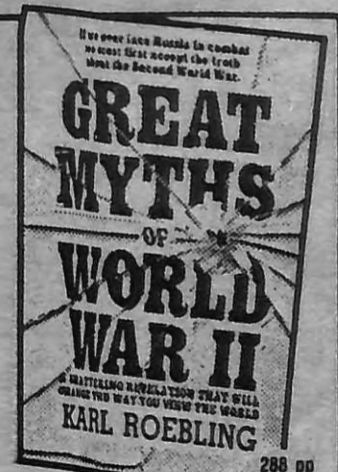
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# Night birds of the "Big E"

A.W. "Arne" Olson,  
Enterprise Association

**F**rom December 7, 1941 to August 25, 1942, the Squadrons of Air Group Six assigned to USS *Enterprise* CV-6 provided daylight raids and attacks on enemy aircraft, ships, and installations.

Their record turned the course of the war in the Central Pacific, and extended to Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands.

They were followed by the Squadrons of Air Group Ten, which were deployed on *Enterprise* from October 16, 1942 to May 9, 1943. They participated in some of the most savage battles of the war.

In the first 13 months, *Enterprise* and her Air Groups had been a major factor in nine battles in the Central and South Pacific. The ship had sustained major damage on several occasions from enemy air attacks.

During that period, night carrier operations were not possible. The development of aviation radar was in its infancy, but several individuals recognized the need for (1) training in night operations, and (2) aircraft equipped with radar to provide the "eyes in the night" for tactical

operations.

On October 30, 1942, Lt. W.I. Martin, Executive Officer of VS-10 received one TBF equipped with ASB-1 radar and Martin requested the opportunity to develop its potential.

The ship's Radar Officer, Lt. Henry Loomis, volunteered to assist Martin in this project. By December, Martin and Loomis had 15 hours of experimental radar flying time. They recognized its capability as well as its limitations, but this was the seed that started the development of night carrier operations.

Training commenced on a crash basis, and improvements in new types of aviation radar were soon forthcoming from the engineers at MIT.

Air Group Six, with LCDR Butch O'Hare as its Commander, was on its third tour in *Enterprise* in November 1943. At Makin Island, enemy night air attacks on U.S. Fleet units were a major problem.

Tom Hamilton, Air Officer, and O'Hare developed a tactic of using a TBF with radar to direct fighters against enemy aircraft.

One of these missions occurred on the night of November 26, 1942. LCDR J.C. Phillips, Commanding Officer of VT-6, was flying a radar equipped TBF. Two Hellcats had also been launched for this new application of

night tactics.

The FDO directed Phillips to the vicinity of a bogey, and closed on the target with the assistance of his own radar, identified it as a "Betty," and splashed it with his own guns.

A few minutes later, the FDO had him on the track of another bogey, the intercept was completed, and he splashed another "Betty."

During the course of this action, one of our Hellcats ventured into the vicinity of the TBF and was mistakenly fired upon by the turret gunner. The Hellcat, piloted by Butch O'Hare was shot down and lost. O'Hare had previously earned the Congressional Medal of Honor in February 1942, while serving with VF-3.

In January, 1944, Air Group Ten was on its second tour with *Enterprise*. LCDR. W.I. Martin was the Commanding Officer of VT-10. He had trained his pilots and aircrews extensively in night operations, and on February 17, 1944 at Truk, the men were given an opportunity for a night attack on Japanese fleet and shipping units located in two anchorages.

This was one mission Martin wanted to lead, but he was grounded due to an accidental injury received aboard ship. He assigned Lt. V. Van Eason to lead 13 TBF's on the mission.

Every pilot made at least one hit on targets. The damage inflicted was immense. One plane failed to return, and was presumed lost. Air Group Ten also had a 4-plane Detachment of F4U Corsair night fighters equipped with radar, and they were employed effectively in both day and night operations.

This unit was known as VF(N)101. Its Commanding Officer, LCDR. Richard Harmer, is credited with the first radar-intercept splash of a bogey by a carrier-based VF(N) Navy night-fighter on April 24, 1944.

Air Group Twenty deployed on *Enterprise* from August 16 to November 23, 1944. Their TBM's were radar-equipped and they also had a 4-plane Detachment of F6F-3(N) night fighters with radar, VF(N) 20. They were effectively deployed when required, and scored several times during strikes at Nansei Shoto, and the Leyte Gulf campaign.

On December 24, 1944, Night Air Group Ninety equipped with TBM-3E and F6F-5(N) aircraft and the latest X-Band radar, was deployed on *Enterprise*, making her a night carrier. In the next five months, this Air Group flew 1,022 night sorties against enemy targets on Luzon, ports on the