



From the Desk of Roundtable President Charles Holt

July 2020 Newsletter www.WWIIroundtable.com

Greetings to members and guests of the Roundtable. Many of the board members and I have been working diligently to update our master contact list. If you received a post card from us (or have not spoken to us, within the past month, about your current contact info), please send us a letter with your current information: name/ address/ phone number/ email address. Unfortunately, the website entry for your email address is JUST so you can get our newsletter by email (of course, it is also posted on the website)—Our membership master list is only as good as our current information. Please help us by sending your current name/address/phone number/email to this address: WWIIroundtable, Inc., 3969 West SR 234, McCordsville, IN 46055 (this is a more direct address for updating our records than the P.O. Box 1965, Noblesville, IN 46061, which is for dues payments.) If your address changes in the future, please remember to send us an update! You are important to our organization!

We look forward to bringing you more excellent programs. For the (continued on p. 2)

Please Join our Program July 27, 2020, 7:00 PM via Zoom



Stephen Baranyk, Speaker PowerPoint Program: "Firebombing of Japan"

A 75th Anniversary Remembrance

Thank you for your patience and using Zoom to join our meeting. Let's plan on joining one another later this month for a much anticipated program. It will work the second time around like a "charm"! We will also have Ozzie presenting an intriguing story about Hitler's secret bombers.

Future Meetings Announcement

All in-person dinner programs are cancelled until the Covid-19 pandemic is behind us. Therefore, the board has decided to stream monthly programs via Zoom to our members. This newsletter and our webpage will also keep you informed of changes.

INFORMATION DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER August 10TH

Please send to editing committee, Kathryn Lerch & Marlene Mendonsa: c/o klerch@parktudor.org

INDIANAPOLIS
ERNIE PYLE CHAPTER
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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 Member Dues

Mail a check to WWII Roundtable, INC, P.O. Box 1965, Noblesville, IN 46061 or go to our website to pay

online: WWIIroundtable.com

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

meantime it will be via Zoom until we can meet again, in person. We are continually reassessing our potential speakers to try and present the most interesting ones. This requires a lot of effort and the board needs all the help we can get from you. Sometimes we just need members who can contact other members/provide technical help to us or/and fellow members, such as helping them with emails and Zoom meetings. We need you to help **with our various committees and, when we can meet again, offer to provide transportation to members near you who no longer drive—especially at night. Don't be embarrassed to ask for assistance or offer it! Get at least ONE battle buddy!**

As stated in the recent post card request to update our master contact list, we operate on a shoestring; no one is paid for their VOLUNTEER work! So, we heavily rely on PAYING members and DONATIONS. You know where your money is going with OUR organization—to maintain our website, to purchase items for our drawings (which generates more revenue), post cards, stamps and coins to sell and similar such things. The board, me and YOU are key to helping this great organization continue through this Coronavirus Pandemic. We will NOT let a pandemic ruin 30+ years of programs devoted to WWII and its era!

We welcome offers to volunteer or suggestions so that we may “Be Calm And Carry On”, please email Kathryn Lerch (newsletter editor), OR mail suggestions attention to Dr. Holt at the WWII Roundtable address. PS: I read obituaries and I am always sad when I read one about a WWII or Korean War vet, or about someone from that era, who may NOT have heard about us, or may have had an incredible story to tell, but we never got to hear it. Please spread the word, tell folks about entering their email on the website, joining our Zooming programs, and recommending topics and speaker suggestions. Just like the war posters, “We are all in this TOGETHER.”

Do you know that you can join our meetings “virtually”!

Do you have an iPad, iPhone, computer? If so, “zoom” with the WWIIRT! All you need to do is click on a link sent to you in an email, or in this newsletter. (See below). The moderator will help if you have questions. It is also possible to join a meeting through a regular phone line. There is a “silver lining” in the cloud —now potentially all our members, wherever they are, may join our monthly programs from a distance!

Time: Jul 27, 2020 06:45 PM EDT

Sign-in Available Program Starts 7 PM

Join Zoom after 6:45 and before 7:00 if possible.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89248554639?pwd=OGY1T2FSYmc5S0RyK1B4L2tvM3lQQT09>

Meeting ID: 892 4855 4639

Password: 543819

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,89248554639#,,,0#,,543819# US (Germantown)

+13126266799,,89248554639#,,,0#,,543819# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 892 4855 4639

Password: 543819 Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89248554639>

See the next page for additional information to make a Zoom meeting easy to do. We look forward to seeing you soon!

ATTENTION COMPUTER USERS



If you are not familiar with Zoom I recommend that you take a few minutes to become comfortable with Zoom. Use the link below to read about how to get set up and how to use the Zoom system. It very easy and has great potential. It is a Zoom Tutorial.

https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362033-Getting-Started-on-Windows-and-Mac#h_97174a74-246a-4e54-8e9c-22b55cd0b665

After becoming familiar with Zoom I recommend the following be accomplished well before attending a Zoom meeting:

DOWNLOAD ZOOM: <https://zoom.us/support/download>

1. Sign in to your own Zoom account.
2. Once signed in select "New Meeting"
 - a. You can check your camera, microphone and settings.
 - b. What you "see" is what others will see when you go to a meeting.
 - c. Tips: provide lighting in front of you so that your image is viewable, not a dark silhouette.
 - d. Set you camera (laptop) pretty much level with your face. If you tilt the screen back the back ground ends up being your ceiling fan.
3. Once you are satisfied with your equipment and picture composition "Leave the Meeting". You are all set.
4. Once you have left the video page click on "Home" at the top line of options. Then click on "Settings" at the right corner icon is a gear wheel. Browse down through the options and make selections you want. I do recommend that you select "Allow HD video. You will look real good in HD. There are features there that allow you to check out your video and audio systems.

1. Once you have **signed up for a Zoom account** you only need your email and the password you created to join any meeting provided you know the Meeting ID and the Meeting Password a. Use the Meeting ID and Meeting Password at the top of this memo and enter it on Zoom. b. The meeting that the Zoom host set up will be indicated in a dialogue box. If the Host (the meeting moderator) has not opened (started) the meeting the dialogue box will remain active. As soon as the Host opens the meeting you will be immediately entered. I suggest that everyone do this well before the start time of the meeting. 10-15 minutes is not too early.

2. Zoom protocols

- a. Not everyone can speak at once. Well, they really can but it's bizarre and the system tries to highlight (yellow border around their image) who is speaking. Normally, the moderator will mute everyone then ask the next speaker to unmute. The mute icon is a microphone at the bottom left corner. Moving the cursor to that area turns the selection bar on.
- b. There is a "Chat" icon at the bottom middle of your screen. If you click on it everyone attending the meeting is listed. You can select their name and send them a chat text message while the meeting is going on. You can also send "Everyone" a text message. Response back to you will be indicated by a number in the chat icon
- c. If you need to step away from the meeting to get a cup of coffee, kiss the wife or let the dog out you can "Stop Video" at the lower left of your screen. If you have entered a picture of yourself in your Zoom account profile that image will appear. When you return to the meeting click Start Video and your camera's image will come back on-line. 3.

If you have any questions email me or call: Charlie Russell 317-872-2800, charlierru@aol.com

Possible Program — Marlene Mendonsa

Are you familiar with Executive Order 9066? If not, then you will appreciate another stimulating and interesting program which we hope to present later this summer or early fall. Marlene Mendonsa who lives in northern Indiana has been visiting and learning much more about a Japanese-American family who were interned in this country during WWII under Executive Order 9066. The family may join us, most likely virtually, and guided by Marlene's PowerPoint slides, they will share their story.

According to Marlene, "They are very gracious, articulate and interested in telling their story. The husband, now 92 continues to work and he gave a grand tour of his shop including his current race car that he was working on. He is truly a remarkable man. In addition, his wife is just as wonderful. We agreed on a program to tell their story of their life in one of the Japanese American internment camps."

Suggestions for Summer Reading, etc.

If you wish to read ahead on this topic, here is a link to fifteen suggestions for books about Japanese-American internment during WWII:

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 background on Hawaii's Nisei Veterans and other items, see "Related Topics" and there are more links on page 8.

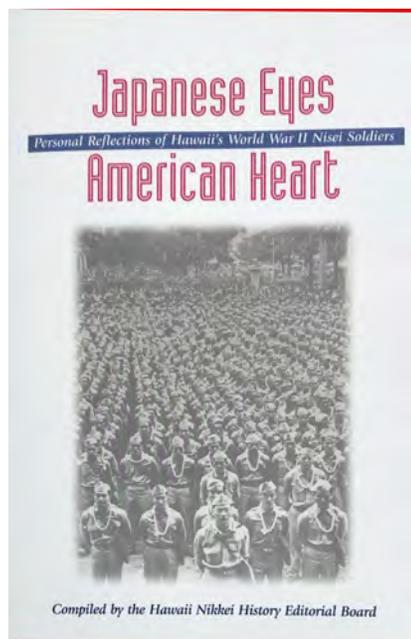
Related Topics by Kathryn Lerch



While reflecting on our potential program with the Japanese-American family, I was reminded of some events eons ago. I personally became connected with two individuals who had a remarkable connection to WW2 and Hawaii. I did not know at the time (as a high school student) how important and potentially transformative this would be for me until years later when I started making connections through research. A close friend of our family lived in Honolulu—Dr. Katsumi Kometani also called "Kome". He was one of the Nisei officers who served in the famous and most highly decorated US Army regiment in WW2—the 442nd or the "Go For Broke" Combat Regiment which served in Italy and France.

In the 1990s Kome's son, Frank, published a book with his father's wartime letters. More recently, however, while online I discovered a book with some of his letters and accounts from oth-

er Nisei from Hawaii and the mainland who served in our military forces. I quickly ordered and read ***Japanese Eyes—American Heart: Personal Reflections of Hawaii's World War II Nisei Soldiers***. I could not put it down and the first person accounts seem especially timely with recent events: e.g. racism and the Black Lives Matter movement.



The book was compiled in 1998 by the Hawaii Nikkei History Editorial Board and published by the Tendai Educational Foundation in Honolulu.

The Foreword was written by the late US Senator Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii. Inouye sets the background for treatment of residents living in the territory of Hawaii: “With the dawn attack on Pearl Harbor, the US government assumed total governance of Hawaii through martial law. The US military was unfamiliar with Hawaii’s multiethnic population, and less able to differentiate between the Issei Japanese, who were ineligible for US citizenship, and their Nisei offspring, who were American citizens by virtue of their birthplace. In the early stages of the war, all residents of Japanese ancestry were declared ‘enemy aliens’ by the governing authorities, who believed that people with Japanese roots would side with Japan.” However “the question of loyalty of Japanese Americans was reassessed, due largely to the exemplary behavior of Japanese Americans who volunteered for the Hawaii Territorial Guard. . . . In

January 1943, the U.S. Army announced plans to form an all-Japanese American regimental team for combat assignment in Europe, which was designated the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (followed by another, the 110th RGT).” Unfortunately, following the war, returning Japanese-American service men had to battle yet again for equal opportunity and for Hawaii “as equal status as a political subdivision of the nation.” [p. ix-x] A few excerpts from various Nisei accounts are very powerful—especially read today in light of the Black Lives Matter movement and racial prejudice against elements in the US population. Various themes predominate throughout the book:

Honor: Seiso Kamishita in the 110th Combat Team has a painful memory. Initially he was put in charge of guarding a stretch of shoreline in Hawaii. His parents, both of whom were born in Japan, lived in Waimea. When he returned to visit his family on his first pass, they met him “with heads bowed and they were holding hands”. This was shocking for him. His mother said, “You are an American soldier. Your country is America—a wonderful country. Our country, Japan, attacked your country. That makes us your enemy. If you feel it is your duty as an American soldier to shoot us, we will be proud of you.” Kamishita was “totally flabbergasted”. “‘*Bakatare*’ (Fools)! I shouted. If both of you intend to kill me, only then will I shoot you.” They thanked me and asked what they could do. My request to them was simple: ‘Just obey and do whatever my government asks you to do.’” [p. 47]

Your race: Samuel Sasai, who was in the 442nd Combat Team, was shocked in high school to find race, not high scores determined rank. He was a member of the Roosevelt High School Reserve Officers Training Corps. . . .We had been informed that our test scores would determine our rank. . . .my test score being the highest, I expected, in my innocence, the highest rank. When the appointments were announced, I was shocked to find myself about tenth from the top. . . .When I reminded [the recruited] of earlier statements, he said, “It’s just one of those things!” [p. 83]

A revelation: “Twenty-six hundred of us left Hawaii on board the SS *Lurline* in April 1943. We landed in Oakland, California . . . and began a cross-country journey that ended in the state of Mississippi at a place called to Camp Shelby. When we were on the troop train and still within the city limits of Oakland, I saw a sight that amazed me . . . a crew of men on a city refuse truck were picking up trash. . . .It was *who* the trash collectors were that mesmerized me. They were all white men! In Hawaii prior to World War II, it was always Native Hawaiians and Asians who did the manual labor. The white man was always the boss.” [p. 88]

Above and beyond: “The Nisei was a superb fighter, both in Europe and in the Pacific, because of characteristics he shared with the Japanese soldier. Some people call it *Yamato damashii* (spirit of the Japanese)—except the Nisei had another reason to fight. It wasn’t simply loyalty to his country, but a desperate need to prove to others in his beloved country that although the enemy looked very much like him, his loyalty was to America.” [p. 102]

Loyalty: In spite of Executive Order 9066, Nisei served—even though a parent was sent to a detention center. “In February 1942 my father was arrested and detained by the FBI as a suspected enemy agent. . . . There was tension in our family because it wasn’t clear who should take charge in my father’s absence. . . .Those of us who could, worked to help support the family. I remember having to sell my most treasured possession—my bicycle—which I had bought with my earnings from selling newspapers. After going to the Santa Anita Assembly Center, our next ‘home’ was Amache Relocation Center, located in the southeastern corner of Colorado. About the same time, the War Department required all Nisei to fill out and sign a loyalty questionnaire—a prerequisite to leaving a camp. The Nisei was asked: “Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States in combat duty wherever ordered?” and “Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America . . . ?” The response from Hawaii was an overwhelming ten thousand volunteers. I was among the mere eighteen hundred who volunteered from the ten relocation camps on the mainland.” [p. 139]

Young eligible Nisei could get out of the relocation centers by serving in the military, however their commitment to duty for duration of the war did not bring freedom to a male parent. Roosevelt’s Order 9066 was reactionary and deplored unfortunately by only one Western governor, Gov. Ralph Carr. He wrote the following:

When it is suggested that American citizens be thrown into concentration camps, where they lose all the privileges of citizenship under the Constitution, then the principles of that great document are violated and lost. If a man may be deprived of his liberty . . . without proof of his misconduct, without the filing of charges, and without a hearing, simply because men now living in the country where his grandfather was born have become the active enemies of the United States, then we are disregarding the very principles for which this war is being waged against the Axis nations. [p. 220] [Use this link for more information and sound file on Gov. Ralph Carr: [Ralph Carr: Defender of Japanese Americans](#)]

Perhaps Michael M. Miyatake in military intelligence in the 442nd, sums up the Nisei obligation to duty the best: “Serving my country on the front lines as an American soldier whose job it was to provide language assistance made me feel important. It made me forget the racial discrimination I had experienced. I vowed that I would serve my country bravely and dutifully. I was determined to protect my comrades and do whatever I could to save their lives, even if it meant sacrificing my own, for we were all fighting for a worthwhile cause.” [p. 173]

Where am I going with this monologue?

Finally, here is another connection for me to WWII. Sometime during 1961-63, while attending school in Winnetka, Illinois, I was thrilled to hear General Mark Clark (Ret.), US Fifth Army speak to us at one of our daily school assemblies—I already “knew” his story about his secretive landing in North Africa from a submarine, because I had just watched a 1950s movie about this (however the title escapes me today). At any rate, Clark retold the same story to all of us who were in the audience. It was amazing how he “followed” the plot of the movie exactly! [For more specifics on this secret mission, go to this website where this event is documented: <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/2016/09/07/general-mark-clarks-secret-mission-to-north-africa/>]

Later, in 1963 I spent the summer living with my grandmother in Hawaii while studying Asian History at Punahou School. On Sundays I typically attended Kawaiahao Church, which had been founded in 1820. As was the tradition there, part of the service was in English and part in Hawaiian. This was very special and certainly memorable for me. On one particular Sunday, the gentleman sitting in the pew right in front of me was none other than Gen. Mark Clark. I had a hard time concentrating on the service—watching his head right in front of me. This time—after the service—I finally had the opportunity to say “hello”. I did not realize at the time that he had a special connection to the 442nd Combat Regiment and Kome Kometani.

Finally, there is another reason WWII events and memories of Hawaii stick with me. On weekends my grandmother and I felt it was important to be adventurous by bus. Thus we visited traditional Hawaiian cultural sites, as well as the significant new memorial at Pearl Harbor which had only been dedicated the year before. We were among just a handful of tourists that day on the motor launch out to the white marble structure which hovered above the sunken battleship Arizona.

Where is this monologue leading? . . . To Online Resources!

- For more information on Dr. Kometani and his family's history in Japan and Hawaii, go to this link: <https://www.100thbattalion.org/history/veterans/officers/katsumi-doc-kometani/>
- There is an important connection between the Nisei soldiers and Gen. Mark Clark. Please check out the link to the famous 442nd Combat Regiment and also watch the two-minute video clip about an event in July 1944: https://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675072897_Japanese-American-soldiers_Italian-Campaign_General-Mark-Clark_34th-Infantry-Division Clark's words of praise were also seconded by President Harry Truman: “You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice — and you won.”
- For more information on the 442nd, go to: ‘Go For Broke’ (442nd RCT): http://www.goforbroke.org/learn/history/military_units/442nd.php



“The 442nd Regimental Combat Team was the most decorated unit for its size and length of service, in the entire history of the US Military. In total, about 18,000 men served, ultimately earning 9,486 Purple Hearts, 21 Medals of Honor and an unprecedented seven Presidential Unit Citations and a Congressional Gold Medal.”

- See also Nisei Veterans Legacy: <https://www.nvchawaii.org/nisei-war-europe-100th-and-442nd>

(Photo by Marlene Mendonsa; part of display honoring the 442nd in Honolulu Airport, 2020)

The WWII RT Board Still Seeks Assistance . . .

For years, our members have enjoyed monthly programs—covering innumerable topics related to WWII and occasionally limited wars (Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan, etc.) There is a wealth of individuals who have stories to tell, experiences to share, and memories of important times in our history. Our programs appeal to a broad group—veterans and non-veterans, students, educators, spouses, etc. The WWII RT’s mission is to promote this service to the community—whether in person or virtually!

Program Coordinator: The WWIIRT Program Coordinator is the principal point of contact for inviting, scheduling and supporting speakers at the WWIIRT meetings.

While all members of the RoundTable are encouraged to solicit possible speakers the Program Coordinator is the final decision maker. The PC has an expectation that referred speakers have relevant topics, are vetted at a reasonable level and are prepared to present. But anyone can discuss their possible speaker with the PC.

The PC will inform potential speakers about possible dates, meeting expectations and audio/visual equipment prior to scheduling a presentation date. Once an agreed date is set the PC is the only person who can change the scheduled speaker.

On the date of the WWIIRT meeting the individual who referred the speaker will arrive at the meeting ahead of the speaker in order to greet them when they arrive. Once they arrive the referring individual will escort them to the reserved table for the speaker and any guests. The referring individual will introduce the speaker to the PC and the Audio/Visual staff to address any issues the speaker may have. It is important to any speaker to realize that the group has their presentation’s needs managed so that they can enjoy their meal and evening. The Program Coordinator will have several WWIIRT members supporting them in direct and indirect ways in order to enhance the meeting’s impact on our attendees. It is everyone’s job to make the PC shine and have speakers who what to come back.

To conclude our solicitation for WWII RT membership assistance, if you wish to express any interest whether to help with programs, greet members, etc., please send an email to one of these board members and we will forward your offer to President Charles Holt and appropriate board members. We value your enthusiasm and interest in our organization! We’ll get through this together! Also, if you wish to suggest a new member—neighbor or work colleague—pass on their name and contact information to Karl Kleinbub: knj1002@mytinet.net Thank you!

Charles Russell (re programs): charlieru@aol.com

Kathryn Lerch (re website update, newsletter): klerch@parktudor.org



NEW BOOK JUST OFF THE PRESS THIS JUNE!

Major John G. Emery in World War I & Early Leader of the American Legion

For more information about the book & ordering, go to: <https://www.parktudor.org/legacy>

Our next book (going to press this fall) will honor fellow Hoosiers, Ray Featherstone, Senior & Junior. *US Submarine Chaser #38 in World War I “My Dad in the Motor Boat Navy”*

Thank you for supporting our project, which honors and remembers our veterans!

Kathryn Lerch, Director Park Tudor Legacy Initiative

