



# From the Desk of Roundtable President Charles Holt

May 2020 Issue No. 5 [www.WWIIroundtable.com](http://www.WWIIroundtable.com)


## President's Message

Dear WWII Roundtable members: It is with a humble servant's heart that I have accepted the presidency of our great organization. As you know, Ponytail and his lovely spouse have gone south...no, not that kind of south, but moved permanently to Florida. He assured me that he will return periodically; so be on the lookout! Our incredible board members and others continue to work hard, behind the scenes, to ensure that we have speakers lined up for each month. As you know, this is a daunting task and we ask you to contact us if you, or someone you know or meet might be a potential speaker. We can help those, who might need it, to put a presentation together. (Continued on p. 2)

## 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of V-E Day May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945



For more information on celebrations on V-E Day see page 3. [Where were you or a family member when this happened?](#) Send your comments to the editors for the next issue.




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[WWIIroundtable.com](http://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
April 27	6:00-8:00pm
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**  
Please pay Lucy Parker at June meeting

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

## Let's Keep Looking Ahead . . .

*Please enjoy the first letter from our new WWII RT President, Charles Holt. Charles and the board all agree it is in the best interest of our veterans and members to delay our meetings until which time it is safe to reconvene. We hope everyone is staying safe and well during this challenging time. "Doc" Holt is especially aware of how important this is for all of us. Hopefully many of you have been able to make use of FaceTime, Zoom, phone calls and emails to "stay connected".*

## Charles Holt's Letter (cont.)

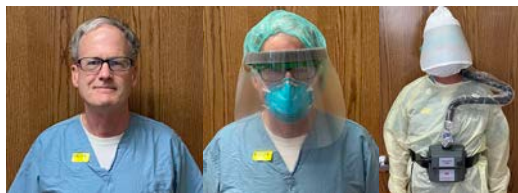
Some presentations can be short—maybe just a great story—that we can put with other short ones. We try to carefully vet each speaker. So, help us, by giving us leads, as soon as you think of one. Also, we only have one dinner presentation per month, so not everyone will get to present . . . just the way it is.

So with this Coronavirus nightmare, we cannot tell you when we can have our next meeting . . . and it makes it even more difficult to schedule speakers. We will keep you informed, as best we can. Also, **if you have a really interesting military history story from the last century or someone interesting and/or famous from that time frame, or book, movie, website, article, TV special, etc., let us know.** Obviously, we want to be very careful with what we recommend and will vet them the best we can. So, please be very judicious with your submissions and don't have a hidden agenda!

Keep your neighbors in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time (and always); ask if you can help them—maybe get their groceries or run errands for them. They will thank you for your concern, even if they don't need anything, at that time!

I can't wait to see you all, again (I'm tired of live streaming church and meetings, already) and hear some great presentations and eat that delicious buffet. I have continued telling folks, as always, about the Roundtable, almost every day and handing out our bookmarks. We all need to reach out and invite folks to the dinner presentations and encourage them to join. Be on the lookout for someone who wants to attend but has transportation issues—perhaps you could bring them with you—I have met so many older vets who have no one to bring them and would love to come 😊 As always, we run on a shoestring; so if you, or someone you know, would like to make a donation, just contact one of the board members (using social distancing and washing your hands with soap and water before and after, of course) 😊

Sincerely, *Charles Holt*, D.O.  
COL (RET), MC, USAR



Now you see, Charles—then you can't—Thank you for serving our veterans during the Covid-19 pandemic!

Inhalation protection: 1<sup>st</sup> Tier: surgical mask (not shown) 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier: N95 mask 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier: PAPR (Powered Air-Purifying Respirator) (of course, it is always a good idea to take the protective cover off the hood mask first!). Please note the daily yellow sticker you must wear at all times, signifying that you passed the screening questions, before you entered the building, at one of only a few highly guarded entrances. It has that day's date on it. (Photos on the left)

Now to cheer everyone up . . . V-E Day!

## V-E or Victory in Europe Day, May 8, 1945 “Happy & Glorious”

After six years of unremitting war, the British celebrated victory in Europe a week after Hitler’s death in Berlin. These links provide some photos and film of the celebrations that took place across Britain—but the crowds were especially lively in London. Go to: <https://flashbak.com/twelve-fantastic-pictures-of-ve-day-in-london-34642/>. One particular photo caught my eye—there is no “social distancing” here! One can just imagine the happy chaos, noise and excitement—especially when the lights came back on May 11th! Americans followed the news of the war from London through radio and the broadcasts by the famous reporter Edward R. Morrow. The movie theaters also showed this joyous occasion in London. Two of the best video clips are here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEavcsrMoMw> and here from the Imperial War Museum [https://youtu.be/\\_CdpqhxDR8](https://youtu.be/_CdpqhxDR8)



Piccadilly Circus is still the center of action in London (except during the shutdown, of course) as Marlene and I witnessed this past Fall while we were in the city. This great excitement for the end of the war in Europe was not only shown in photos, but in a letter home from an US Army officer who was in London at that time. I think you will enjoy this account which was published in the *Words of War Wartime Memories: From the Four Points*

*on the Compass* (2011), p. 234-236. Capt. Ernest Allan Brown served in the History Section of the US Army in Paris and London. He wrote letters from London on May 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> to his mother: “. . . So there is officially peace in Europe once more. How long will it last? London rose magnificently out of her shambles to celebrate VE-day. . . . This dirty, tired, beaten-up old city dressed her wounds, put on her shabby finery and really celebrated Victory with a capital V. It was wonderful to behold and something I shall never forget. Londoners had waited five years and eight months for the day and they were ready and waiting impatiently when the announcement was made. All day Monday most people did very little else but wait by the radio for the Prime Minister’s words announcing that the war was over. But the entire day passes and no word was received. After work I had a quiet dinner alone at the Officers’ Mess and then wandered down toward Piccadilly Circus to the movies. On the way, I was very much impressed with the beauty of the enormous flags which were displayed everywhere. They were mostly British flags, of course, but the American and Russian flags were prominently displayed, as well as the Chinese and all

other nations. It seemed as though everyone in London had bought a flag and had hung it from the window. There were many flags that I had never seen before including the flags of the Papacy, French, Swiss, Dutch, Norwegian, Poles, Brazilian, Belgian, Czech, but it would be impossible to name them all. They lined the streets. One of the most prominent flags was the Royal Standard which is the Lion rampant in deep red on a lemon yellow background. After becoming used to London's drab streets and the lack of color, it was most amazing to behold the beauty of the city decorated. I walked down to Piccadilly and went to the movies to see The Fifth Chair with Fred Allen and Jack Benny.

When I came out of the movies, it had happened and Piccadilly Circus was perfect bedlam. Great crowds of people surging out, screaming and shouting like mad. I wormed my way through the mob to a nearby club, where everyone was celebrating and I confirmed the news. . . . a little bit later we went into the streets to join the mobs. It was the most amazing experience I have ever had. The dim-out was still on, although not officially, and there were very few lights anywhere. Millions of happy people were going crazy in the darkness, wandering aimlessly up and down the streets celebrating lustily. The official announcement by Mr Churchill was not made until the following afternoon, so the celebration on Monday was wholly spontaneous and unofficial. We made our way down toward Victoria and stood with the crowds in front of Buckingham Palace, but the King and Queen did not appear. . . .

Tuesday evening all the lights were turned on all over London. All the important buildings were floodlit and it was quite beautiful. We walked from Piccadilly Circus down Lower Regent Street to the Admiralty Arch; then down Whitehall to Westminster Bridge. Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament were swimming in light, and the reflection on the Thames was splendid. Then we walked through St. James Park toward Buckingham Palace. The lake was beautiful with the Palace reflected in the water at the end of the park with the Horse Guard barracks reflected at the other end. We arrived at the Palace just as their majesties had retired from the balcony, and it was late so we went home.

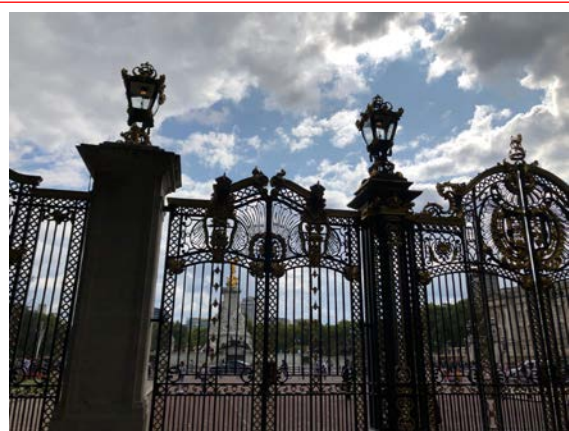
Wednesday afternoon I stopped by the American Embassy [on Grosvenor Square] just as Mr Churchill arrived to call on Mr Winant [the ambassador]. He drove up in an open automobile with an escort of police mounted on white horses. There was a large crowd gathered to receive him and he waved his hat and cigar characteristically. I was pleased as punch to have had a glimpse of him. Wednesday evening we did the rounds again, and if such a thing was possible, there were actually more people on the streets than the previous evening. I am sure there were people tottering about who had not left their homes since the Great Fire of 1666. All kinds of fireworks were going off; skyrockets and flares lit up the sky from time to time, it was really quite wonderful.

*We walked to Leicester Square [the Theatre district] which I am convinced was really the maddest place in town; even more wild than the Circus. Again we went to Buckingham Palace, where a huge crowd had assembled again and was screaming for the King and Queen. Finally a huge shout went up and their Majesties appeared on the balcony; two tiny people standing on an enormous balcony of a gigantic building, waving graciously at the mob of thousands of people who had gone quite mad with excitement. I shall never in this world forget the sight. It was all so wonderful.*

*There are many details of the historic events of the past few days that I have forgotten, but I've done the best I could now to tell you a bit of the excitement we've had here. It was the experience of a lifetime for me, and I have but one regret through all of it: that you were not here to share it. Best love, Allan*

*London, May 12 . . . I forgot to mention in my VE-Day letter that I had gone to church on Tuesday afternoon, not to any of the many Thanksgiving services, but I just dropped into the chapel alone for a few minutes to thank God that the killing in Europe was over for a little while anyway. . . .”*

Because Brown worked in the History Section, US Army, and the war was ending in Europe, his duties changed. He went over to France in November 1945 with the General Board “to prepare a factual analysis of the strategy, tactics and administration employed by United States Forces in the European Theater. He returned to his hometown of Durham, North Carolina sometime in 1946.



The Victoria Memorial next to Buckingham Palace, Sept. 2019; Gates to Green Park by the palace where Marlene and I walked during our WWII road tour.

Public Service Announcement from **Andy & Denise**

**Fulks:** Please spread the word—if anyone is stuck in their house (like all of us should be), we have vehicles and can provide grocery shopping or other needs until this thing blows over. Let us know: **317-796-1863**



Marlene and I are trying to keep everyone sane and entertained during our not-so-fond absence from one another! Last month's issue was filled with links to various museums, suggestions for good books, and other entertainment. I am sure there isn't a person stuck at home now who does not enjoy seeing some of the creative activities being posted online. I know I need more exercise instead of sitting in front of my computer—and the weather has not been ideal, BUT there are ways to make a difference—whether for one's family or the community. Colleagues of mine have been running miles to raise dollars for Wheeler Mission, and there are many more out there doing similar wonderful things. It seems I cannot get the subject of England out of my mind—therefore I have been entranced with Captain Tom Moore who celebrates his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday May 30<sup>th</sup>. Obviously he does not let infirmities of old age slow him down and he has been walking around his yard with his walker. He wanted to do 100 laps to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. He challenged Brits to send £s for each of his laps to the National Health Service—he thought it might raise a couple hundred Pounds—to help out the beleaguered staff. Little did he anticipate this would quickly generate £23+ million and still growing for the cause. He has since been recognized by the Pride of Britain (a prestigious award for an “ordinary” person) and has recorded his first, and probably only, hit single! He has been recognized for his positive attitude and spirit.

See: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-52333127>

Coronavirus Captain Tom Moore passes £30m in NHS fundraising - BBC News.htm

To catch up on all this exciting news, check out the following links: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-52333127>

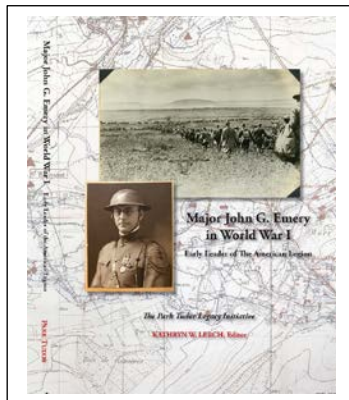
I really enjoyed the following music video with “Capt. Tom”. I guarantee this will cheer you up as well! <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-52419261/captain-tom-tops-the-charts-breaking-record>

According to Tom, “You’ll never walk alone” and the sun will shine again. Let’s keep this in mind until the shut-down is lifted and we can be together again. PS: He celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on April 30<sup>th</sup> and was also appointed an honorary colonel, besides receiving over 125,000 birthday cards. We told you this would cheer you up!

## Moving back 100 years now. . . to 1917-1919

**Two Upcoming Books from the Legacy Initiative:** Here is a progress update on two big projects for the Legacy Initiative at Park Tudor School. First, a revised manuscript belonging to the late Raymond Featherstone (which includes a collection of photos, letters and logs notes) documents the history of his father's service on Sub Chaser 38 in WW1 (as well as Ray, Junior's Korean War service). It is almost ready to go to our book designer for layout. We are extremely pleased that our draft has been approved by the authority on WWI Submarine Chasers, Todd Woofenden. This is quite encouraging!

Another acquaintance of mine, a Park Tudor School alumna, has also generously allowed our project to scan hundreds of her grandfather Major John G. Emery's WW1 photos, maps, letters and reminiscences manuscript for publication. Three plus years in the works, this manuscript is heading to the printer very soon. It has been reviewed by the Commander of The American Legion, as well as the Director of the Indiana War Memorial, and the First Division Museum in Illinois, etc. More information about presale orders and book signing events will be available in soon.



*These two WWI accounts bring to mind the Pandemic of 1918-1920. Since documenting historical events is always important, I have initiated a Journaling Project for our students, faculty and alumni of our school. I will attach a copy of the project with the question prompts for recording your own experiences during this pandemic in the next newsletter. We should always leave something for the next generation!*

Another news item appeared recently—and I only picked up on it because of my interest in WW1. Marlene and I agree it is a bit macabre, but intriguing just the same.

**Soldier's bedroom remained untouched for 102 years after he died in battle during World War I in 1918**

<https://www.theblaze.com/news/wwi-soldiers-bedroom-untouched-1918>

Stay well everyone! Kathryn & Marlene