

D-DAY, June 6, 1944

Forty-five years ago the greatest amphibious invasion of all history occurred along a 50 mile stretch of German occupied Normandy Beaches. It was called "Operation Overlord."

Two years of intricate Allied planning culminated in an armada of 7,000 ships; 11,000 planes; nearly three million troops; and tons of equipment and supplies crossing the English Channel to meet an entrenched German army.

Sam Fuller, Corporal with the 1st Infantry on Omaha Beach, later became a film director and screenwriter. He appreciated the impossible task of which combat movies, which entertain but fall short of helping us appreciate the human sacrifice. "To do it right," he said, "you'd have to blind the audience with smoke, deafen them with noise, then shoot one of them in the shoulder to scare the rest of them to death. That would give them the idea, but not many of them would come to the theater."

So how do we explore this event which occurred before 69% of our lifetimes, and what is the benefit of such memory?

Elie Wiesel, Auschwitz survivor and Nobel Prize winner, bespeaks the importance of remembering: "Memory, as you know, can be diluted or deepened. "I believe in deepening our memory and, the deeper we go, the more faithful the exploration. But then, the fire that we have seen will be seen by others."

Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor catapulted the United States into a war which not only opposed the tyranny of Hirohito and Hitler, but also united Americans after an economically depressed era.

In Europe, Russia had been fighting German forces on the eastern front since 1941. Allied leaders believed the quickest way to end the European War was to invade western Europe, thus opening a second war front, and strike at the heart of the Third Reich.

In 1942 America committed to a program called BOLERO, a build-up of our forces in Great Britain. There the Allies developed special amphibious equipment and vehicles, and conducted extensive training operations for the D-Day assault.

On January 17, 1944 General Dwight D. Eisenhower took command of the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF).

His immediate subordinates for D-Day were British. Admiral Bertram Ramsey directed sea operations; General Bernard Montgomery, land operations, and Air Marshall Trafford Leigh-Mallory, air operations.

Pas de Calais was only 20 miles across the Channel from Dover, England, an obvious choice for an Allied invasion of the continent. Therefore, it was more heavily defended by the Germans than were other points along Hitler's "Atlantic Wall."

Instead, a 50 mile stretch of Normandy beaches, south of Pas de Calais, was selected. It was a convenient distance from English ports of departure, and within fighter range. Its topography was conducive to infantry landings.

The disadvantages of Normandy included variant tides and several heavily fortified German bluffs.

The invasion would actually be a triphibious assault. Navy firepower would combine with air power to bombard German beach defenses. Paratroopers and gliders would drop behind German lines, secure roads leading inland from the beaches and facilitate the infantry landings.

It was the infantry's job to actually wade ashore and wage "tooth-and-nail" combat with the enemy.

The main objective was to land paratroop and army divisions between Caen and Valogne, root out and link the German defenses, and like all Allied divisions along a secured Normandy beachhead.

Two task forces were devised. The British Second Army comprised the eastern task force to take three beaches: Gold, Juno and Sword. The U.S. first would take two western beaches: Utah and Omaha. Theirs was



Omaha Beach, June 6, 1944, a place and date that will live in honor throughout America

D-Day rememb

Dona Taylor

They were young Americans, the pride of their loved ones; the hope of their country. They came to a distant, unfamiliar shore to face a resourceful enemy. Their task called for courage beyond measure. They would prevail.

the more offensive role.

Allied military forces left English ports for Normandy on June 4. D-Day was set for June 5, the beginning of a three day period when tides and moon would be most advantageous for the invasion.

However, gale force weather on the English Channel prompted Eisenhower to postpone the invasion 24 hours. As convoys retraced mine-swept "highways" back to their ports, some men rumored the Germans had surrendered. Many listened to Jack Benny's Sunday night radio broadcast, glad for a welcome break from their in-



1944, a place and date that will live in honor throughout America's military history.

remembered

Dona Taylor

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vasion preparedness.

The foul weather proved a blessing in several ways. The Germans did not expect an invasion under these conditions. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel even left the front to celebrate his wife's birthday. Because of Mother Nature, German naval patrols and air reconnaissance were nil.

Nevertheless, the Germans were not unprepared. Parts of the Seventh and 15th Armies were defending the Normandy beaches, while paratroop and Panzer divisions waited in reserve further inland.

Rommel had strengthened his beach defenses by demolishing his second defense line to utilize men and materials. Earlier he had initiated a program to install millions of mines and obstacles along the coast.

The assaulting forces would be greeted by fortified artillery batteries and pillboxes; underwater and beach obstacles designed to explode, disembowel, and upend craft and human cargo; and the tough Nazi soldier.

June 5 saw the huge Allied armada head across the Channel again. At 6:30 that evening the BBC broadcast the second part of a coded message to the French Resistance: "The fairies are on the carpet." This indicated to Resistance leaders that the invasion was to occur within the next 48 hours. There was no stopping the clock now.

H-Hour, the exact time infantry would hit the beaches, was 6:30 a.m. June 6, for the American task force. The British would strike an hour later, due to differing tides.

Between midnight and dawn, thousands of RAF bombers, Flying Fortresses and Liberators filled the sky between Cherbourg and Le Havre. In an eight hour period, 7,500 sorties flew, dropping 10,000 tons of explosives on coastal defenses, bridges, communication lines, and enemy tanks, thus preparing the way for the assault.

At 1:30 a.m., 822 C-47 twin engine planes dropped the 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions a little west of Utah Beach, and around Ste. Mere-Eglise. The British 6th Airborne Division was dropped near Caen.

Due to low clouds the American drops were widely scattered. Some planes flew too low for chutes to open. Some men were dropped at sea. Others found themselves with their 100 pound packs of weapons and equipment in farm fields that had been flooded by the enemy.

Despite these difficulties, individuals and small bands of men heroically engaged the enemy, destroyed communication lines, cut off German troops, and secured landward approaches to Utah and Omaha Beaches.

Thirty minutes prior to the beach landings, naval and air forces bombarded German batteries and pillboxes. Offshore, infantrymen with 70 pounds of gear scrambled over nets into small landing craft.

Not only was enemy fire a concern, but rough seas with four and five foot waves created serious problems.

Curtis Rainbolt's landing craft experience is deeply ingrained in his memory: "It was a sad thing because so many guys got killed trying to get in the boat. The seas were going up and down, and this little boat would come up and catch somebody and crush him. Or a guy would step up to get in one, and step into a swell..."

To the commanders of the invasion, everything taking place was part of a plan. But to the regular soldier in the landing craft, the assault seemed fragmented and chaotic. Many landings took place at mistaken locations. Fear and confusion, coupled with heroics and bravado, were the order of the day.

Rainbolt was wounded on Utah Beach. "I came off the boat (Landing Craft) and I didn't even know I was hit. I was that scared. Till somebody said "Hey, Sarge, You're bleeding." I said, "Where? I'm not hit. I don't feel anything." He put some gauze and sulfa on there (his left forearm) and kept going.

The U.S. Fourth Infantry Division on Utah Beach advanced quickly. At the end of the day, there were 23,250 men ashore, and less than 200 casualties.

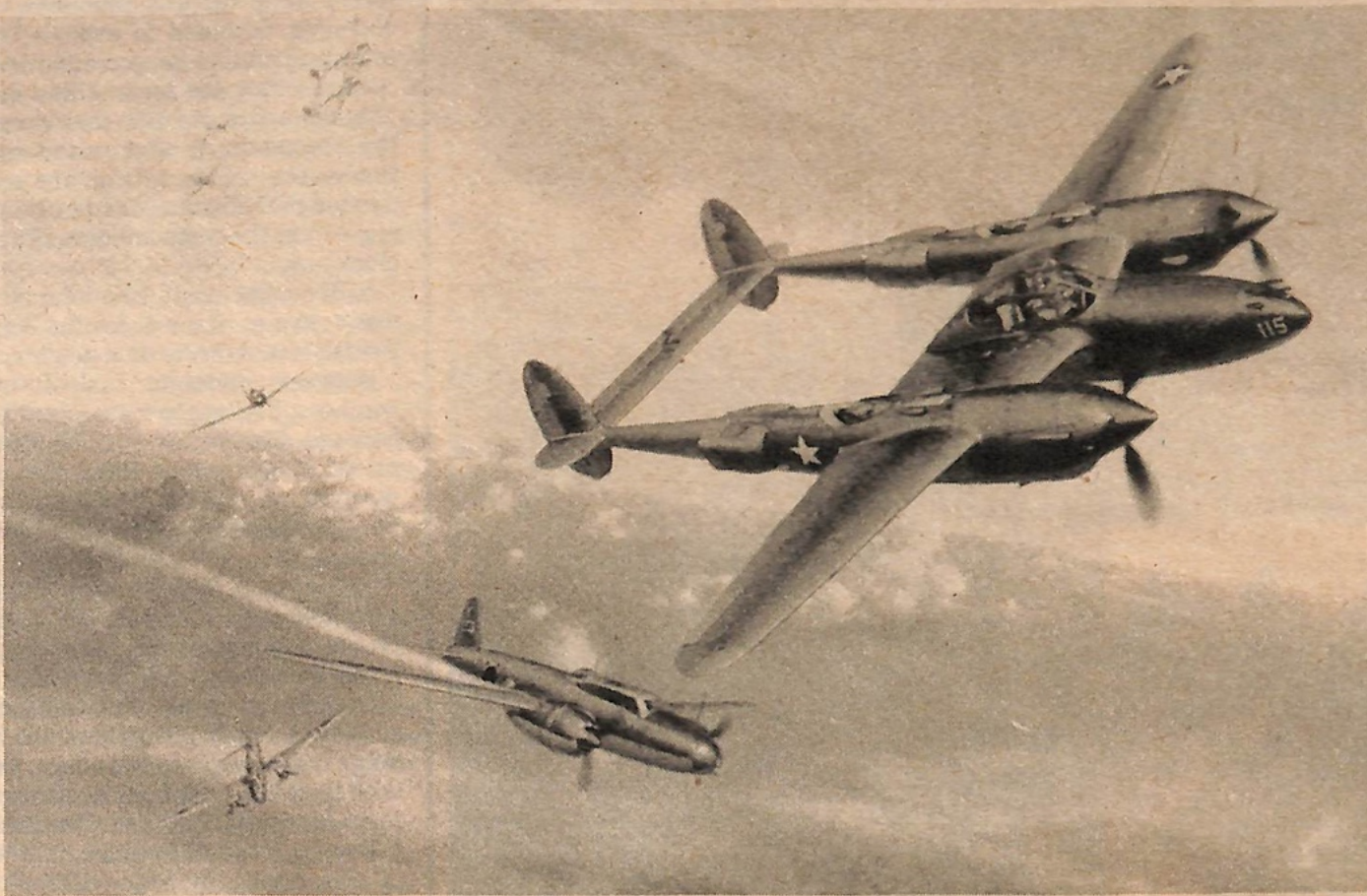
Omaha Beach, unfortunately, was quite a different story. 35,000 men from the First and 29th Infantry Divisions boarded their landing crafts too far out from shore (contrary to the advice and practice of the British). Amphibious tanks sank in the choppy waters in spite of their flotation devices.

Engineers, who were to clear the beach of obstacles didn't have the benefit of specialized armor which the British had developed for that purpose.

As the tide rose, incoming troops were held down at

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D-Day would be long, costly

A lot of residents of the British Isles were very happy when D-Day, the greatest military day in the American Army in World War II, came about.

They were happy because many had complained for some time that the G.I.'s based in Great Britain were "over fed, over paid, over sexed and over here."

D-Day in Normandy June 6, 1944, eclipsed one of the great events of World War II. The U.S. Army, which had fought and died so gallantly in North Africa, Sicily and Italy, had finally captured the first Axis capital, Rome, on June 4, two days previously.

They got the accolades and headlines for almost two days before the big show was pulled off up north.

Their first report was that the Marines had landed in France with two rifles — one for their own use and the other one to give to the native Frenchmen who were willing to join them in battle.

As is often the case, it was a false rumor. But at least we had landed in force and were there to annihilate the German Army with the help of the Russians, British, and Free French warriors.

History somewhere does record a total of six Marines who served in the European theater — with the Navy in Naples.

The invasion was a success, in part because Allied commanders had learned joint military warfare in the costly but effective landings in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy. The awful toll in lives had long been eased by time and victories.

Fortunately for the Allied landing force the boss of the German defenses, General Erwin Rommel, had gone home to Bavaria to celebrate his wife's birthday. And Hitler had mistakenly anticipated, along with many of his military commanders, that our forces would land in the Calais area.



A General Look

Wendell Phillippi

Winston Churchill, who had sent the ill-fated Canadian force in an invasion of Dieppe in 1942 without adequate preparation of firepower, had resisted America's desire to hit the Germans head on, and wanted to continue to attack the soft underbelly of Europe.

He had told Generals Dwight Eisenhower and Mark Clark when they came to England after the Dieppe disaster, that the ball was now in the American court and he could not bleed his country's young as had happened in World War I.

One has to give Winnie credit for his position to sit back and with our token forces harass the enemy, while the German and Russian forces bled themselves to death.

His foresight at times was amazing — just as when he almost stood alone in his fight to make his fellow countrymen recognize Hitler as a menace to the peace of Europe — only five members of Parliament supported him.

How different would the world be today if Churchill had gotten his wish for the Germans and Russians to paralyze themselves!

As a result, although British General Bernard Law Montgomery was ground commander, his troops failed for 30 days to conquer their D-Day target — Caen and its airfields and surrounding territory.

This delay dented the Allied hope for a large invasion base and an early thrust into the heart of Nazi Germany.

In defense of the British troops, it must be admitted they were on the left, or east, closest to the German objective. They had held the same landing position to the left of the American forces in Salerno, Italy,

where the enemy was expected to put up his strongest defenses, in this case to defend Rome. In France it was the defense of Paris and its entire position.

But two American corps, the V and VII under Generals Leonard Gerow, who had studied with Eisenhower at Command and General Staff School, and J. Lawton Collins, who had fought in the Pacific and would become one of the greatest military leaders in Europe, landed their forces with great victories on a broad front. Many thought the end of the war was in sight.

Ironically, Adolf Hitler, the German dictator, was one of our greatest allies at Normandy. Though having total control of his reserves, he refused to commit them in time to threaten our beachhead. He often gave orders directly to subordinate unit commanders when he decided to counterattack. Often it was too late and too little.

Of course, by 1944, we had control of the skies. It was hard for the tired, battered and battle scarred G.I. from other campaigns to realize that enemy air action was not nearly as dangerous as in other campaigns.

One of the tragic events of the Normandy landing was the crossing of the English Channel. Our Navy men —

gallant as they were — were prone to stop short of the beaches. As a result many men, who had been seasick during crossing the wicked channel, jumped into the water too soon and drowned.

Far away in Hawaii, still reeling from the Pearl Harbor attack, Bernard Clayton, a war correspondent in the Pacific, entered into his diary on Decision Day: "The great day has come. The Allies have landed in France. It's something we have been waiting for, planning for and praying for months and months... all the tension that has been building up for weeks heralding the invasion was suddenly gone and we felt weak... too shocked to speak... we shed a couple of silent tears."

Tears were shed around the nation as bullets whizzed on the beachhead, but the G.I., Rosie the Riveter and millions of Americans could see the light at the end of the tunnel for the first time.

Little did they realize, however, how long and costly it would be until victory came after the celebration of D-Day was over.

Phillippi, former managing editor of The Indianapolis News, is a retired Army major general.

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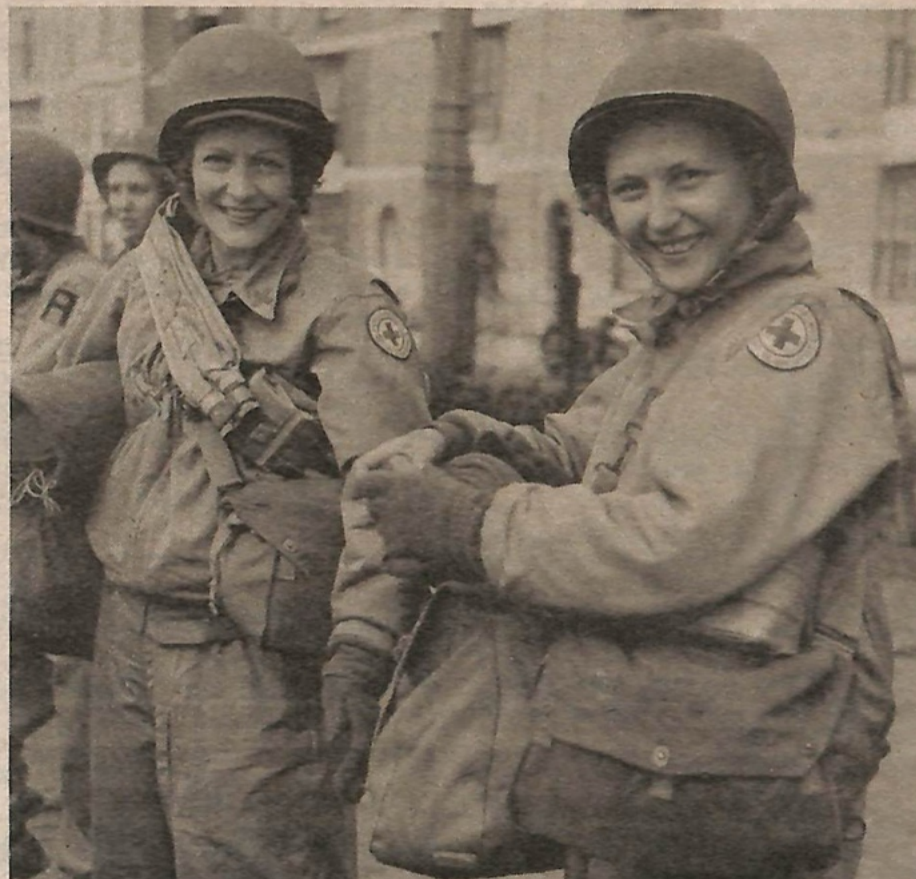
War-weary G.I.s, who had expected shipment to the Pacific break out in cheers in front of "Rainbow Corner" Club in Paris

American Red Cross

America's sweetheart



Brownie Phin, left, Red Cross Hospital Worker from Waukomis, OK, prepares to board ship for France.



Brownie teams up with Catherine Ertle, Bentonia, Mississippi, to head for the U.S. beachhead in France shortly after D-Day.

Don Sandstrom

Wherever U.S. military forces advanced during World War II, the American Red Cross was rarely far behind.

Japan's surprise attack at Pearl Harbor brought volunteers and blood donors by droves to Red Cross chapters.

Amazed Red Cross officials saw their first national fund drive easily exceed its \$50 million goal.

As casualties mounted on the battlefields, the Red Cross quickly extended its services to the armed forces. Nurses were recruited, social workers provided, and canteen workers trained to serve both the military and civilian needs.

By the time the Marines stormed ashore at Guadalcanal in August 1942, Red Cross volunteers numbered over three million people, whose activities ranged from home nursing to civil defense. This impressive number would double by 1944.

Prisoners of war constituted a special responsibility of the American Red Cross. Weekly food packages were sent to 115,000 American POWs and 1.3 million Allied POWs, mostly in the European theater.

Unfortunately, Japan rarely permitted this service because it had never ratified the Geneva Convention of 1929 which guaranteed protection of POWs. Thus, few Red Cross packages were permitted and brutality and disease took a heavy toll of life.

Red Cross workers received 82 decorations, including three Silver Stars for gallantry in action.

Richard M. Day, a war correspondent with the Red Cross, gained a Silver Star posthumously for bravery in the Pacific. Taking over the steering wheel of a landing craft from a dead Navy coxswain, Day managed to get the vehicle on the beach before he was killed by machine gun fire.

In 1942, the American Red Cross added another responsibility to its numerous missions of mercy. It set up in foreign countries service clubs, recreation centers, and "leave hotels," where servicemen could enjoy homelike comforts.

Since the largest body of U.S. troops was in Britain, the Red Cross concentrated its first efforts there. Other clubs operated along similar lines were located in Australia, China, India, North Africa, New Caledonia and Iceland. Designed to alleviate homesickness, the clubs offered American girls to talk to, American newspapers to read, American food to eat, and a hospitable atmosphere.

By year's end, there were 64 clubs scattered across England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

The Clubmobile, written and edited by Marjorie Lee Morgan, records personal accounts of Red Cross workers who served near the front. Some accounts come from wartime diaries of



A G.I. on a Liberty Ship about to leave for Normandy reaches for an American Red Cross girl on the dock.

American Red Cross

women workers.

Eliza King told of her Clubmobile unit serving one of the infantry divi-

sions training for the Normandy invasion in June 1944. She wrote proudly of the toughness and sensitivity of the

men as they prepared for one of the war's epic events.

"No one," she wrote, "except those who have actually experienced it can know what they were thinking or feeling, but we were close enough to understand that searching look in their eyes, that desire for reassurance that all would be well."

The Clubmobile and "Donut Lady" were welcome sights to weary bomber pilots and their crews.

One worker, Elza "Flip" Frame, was never forgotten by members of the 97th Heavy Bomb Group. This unit gained fame as the original 12 o'clock high bomb group of book, movie, and television. It flew 483 missions in the B-17 "Flying Fortress" and Flip was on hand to meet the returning crews 325 times.

The small huts where she made coffee and donuts were affectionately named by the men "Flip's Flying Fortress." Given a place of honor at the head table when the 97th celebrated its 400th mission, Flip was introduced with these words: "Flip Frame is more than just part of the 97th Bomb Group; she IS the 97th."

But the story does not end there. In 1979, Ped Magness, pilot of the famed "Arkansaw Traveller," and his close friend, Don Hayes, began a search for their "Donut Lady." It took two years for them to find her in Tampa, Florida.

One writer referred to the Red Cross during the war as "America's Sweetheart." Many veterans would agree.

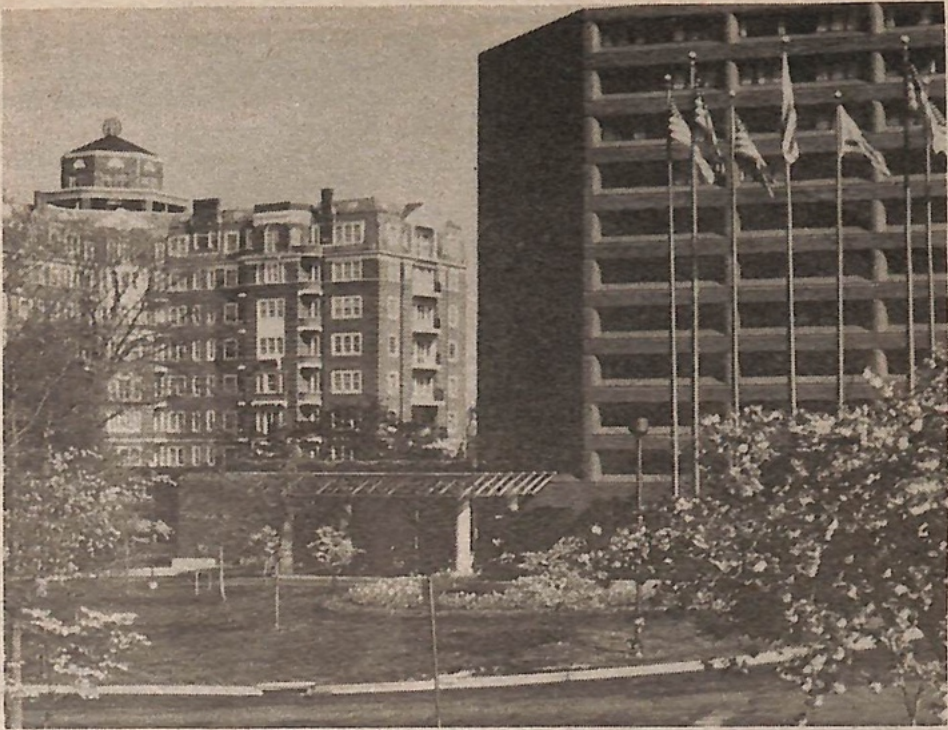
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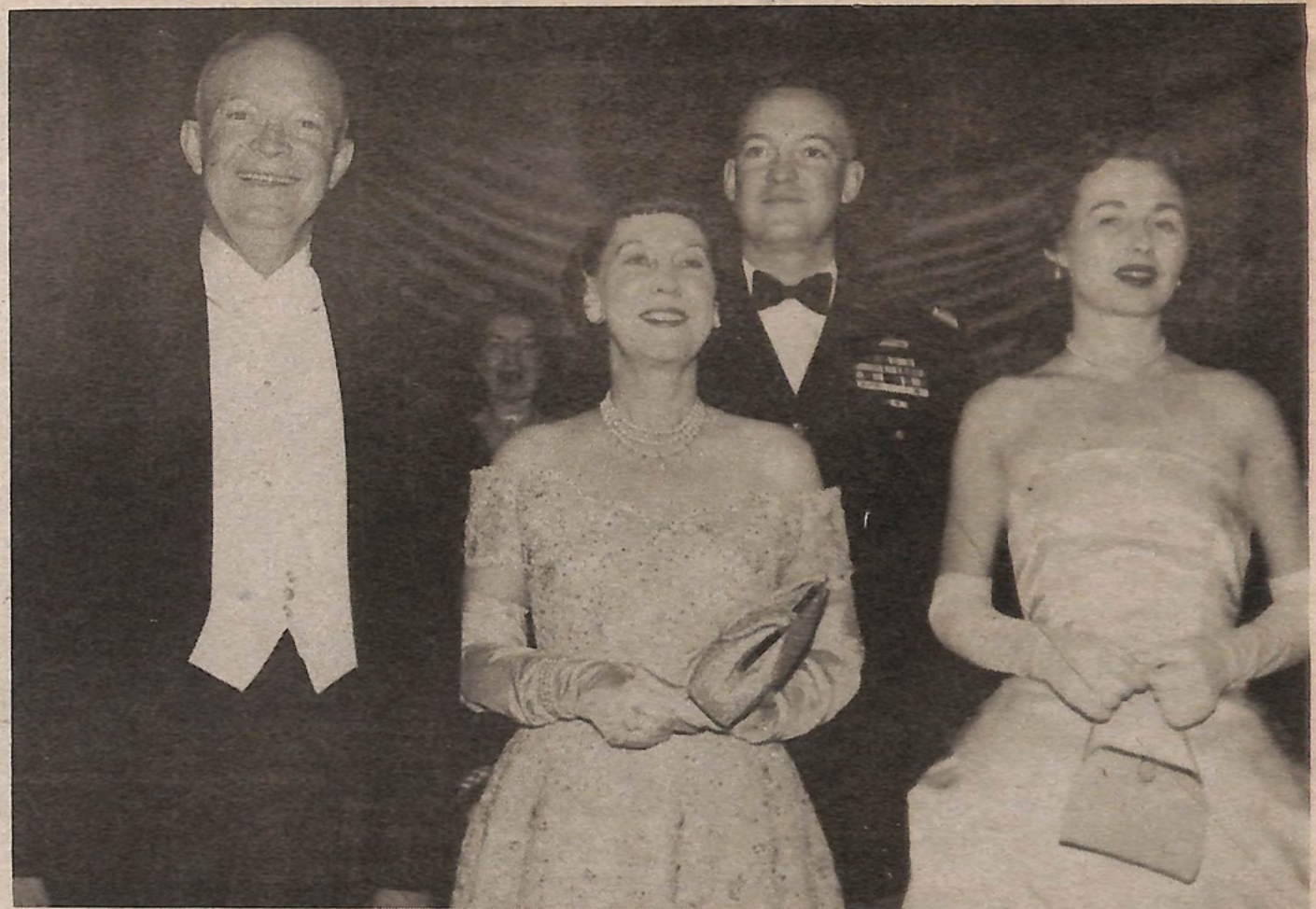
Sheraton launches Big 5-0



**Sheraton says,
"Be our guest,
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At the 25th annual awards dinner given by the Washington Touchdown Club, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Arleigh Burke chats with Associate Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark.



President Eisenhower with his family at one of his inaugural balls, 1953.

There's a 50th anniversary party billed for historic Sheraton Washington Hotel, Friday, June 9.

Co-sponsored by Sheraton Hotels of Northern Virginia and Sheraton Washington, the event marks the kick-off of Sheraton's plans to celebrate and commemorate the 50th anniversary of World War II. There will be a military history symposium during the day and an old fashioned "Stage Door-Canteen" that evening.

The guiding force behind the ambitious program is Bill Masciangelo, a retired lieutenant colonel, USMC, who heads up the Military Markets Division for Sheraton Hotels of Northern Virginia.

Masciangelo has successfully planned, coordinated, and implemented over 240 meeting events of all types throughout the United States. He has also worked with international executives representing 47 countries, small educational associations, and the Presidential Inaugural Task Force.

Tapped by Masciangelo to organize the symposium is Elbert Watson, publisher of the World War II Times. He is assisted by members of the Indianapolis based "World War Round Tables of America."

Attendees at the program will find the Sheraton Washington one of the city's outstanding convention centers. A thoroughly modern facility numbering 1,600 rooms, its numerous services place it among Washington's memorable attractions.



There's glitter and excitement when the Sheraton plays host to Washington's Performing Arts Society Ball.



The Bob Lewis Orchestra will play great hits of the Big Band era at the Stage Door Canteen.

My D-Day in Britain

Helen Jeffrey

Helen Jeffrey joined the Women's Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in 1943. Assigned to the European Theatre of Operation, she took a rare day off from work one day to attend a session of Parliament.

It was June 6, 1944.

Today Helen is a member of the Board of Directors, Women in Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc.

My day off. Went to the English Speaking Union at 1015 and to my amazement learned that the invasion has started early in the morning.

A group of us was to go to the House of Commons this morning but it was a toss up as to whether we would be able to get in because Winston Churchill was expected to make a speech. Our party started out — four officers, the guide and me.

While waiting in the lobby for our guide, Mrs. Hall, to get us tickets, the Speaker of the House, powdered wig and all, walked very slowly through the hall with attendants holding the tails of his coat. The Speaker is very old which made it seem that much more impressive.

Two officers and I got in, but I don't know if the others made it or not. In addition to presenting the ticket, I had to sign in the Ladies Gallery Book in order to gain admittance.

The Ladies Gallery was up several flights of steps where we waited in a queue until the attendant opened the doors. The Gallery was behind the Speaker's Platform so it was quite difficult to see what was going on.

The session started with members asking questions. A copy of the questions had previously been passed out to the spectators so it was easy to follow the course of discussion.

Then came the most interesting part of the session. Winston Churchill gave his speech on the morning of the eventful day. He spoke highly of the English (Montgomery) and the American (Eisenhower) Armies and of the progress they had made.

He announced that the invasion had started with troops landing in France — over 4,000 ships and other smaller craft. He didn't speak very long but informed us that the public would be kept well informed of the course of events.

After the Prime Minister's speech, Sir Stanley opened a discussion (debate) on the Colonies. He discussed it from the economical standpoint rather than the political but stated the latter must not be forgotten. About



Helen and her brother at Eiffel Tower, 1944.

1:30 p.m., I left because of other plans for the afternoon.

Sitting near me was a Scot lady who hoped to become a member of the

House of Commons. She had been "warming the bench" since 1937, but they had not had any elections since that time.

She explained the setup which made this experience interesting. Her husband spent most of his time in the West Indies and had contacts with the Americans so was quite familiar with our ways.

We went downstairs to the lunch room and had coffee, buns, sausage roll (for which the English are famous) and cake. She insisted upon paying for the meal.

We had been sitting there for just a short time when a member and his wife came and sat at our table. She introduced us. The Scot lady asked about the non commissioned ranks in our Army, and whether it was true that in Washington at a certain place the colored people had to get in the back of the bus. (She probably meant when they reached the Virginia line).

The House of Commons is now held in the House of Lords building because their own was partially destroyed by a bomb. Red cushioned benches line both sides of the room with the platform under the Ladies Gallery and the members entrance on the opposite side — the side I was facing.

On one side of the room sat the Government members and on the other side sat the Conservatives. The Government members greatly outnumbered the Conservatives. There was one Communist member (the only one) and several women members.

A white line ran perpendicular to the benches and on the end opposite the platform; until the members crossed this line they were not considered to be in the House of Commons. Each member bowed when entering and also when leaving the room. I did manage to see the Prime Minister when he gave his speech, but the side seats in the gallery give a much better view of the whole room.

Next to me sat a little girl whose Dad is a member of the House, and next to her sat the Scot lady who hoped to some day become a member. It was amazing to see how many members the little girl knew and how much she understood what was going on.

One famous member brought to my attention was Lloyd George — one of the Big Three of the last war. He didn't partake in any of the discussions. I believe he is in his eighties and has snow white hair. He looked well in spite of his advanced age.

One thing I especially noticed was the fact that the members did not rise when Churchill came into the room — unless he had been sitting somewhere in the room where I could not see him.

The members and spectators were very attentive throughout the speech and the only sound was the affirmative murmurs when Churchill praised both Armies (English and American) for the progress they made. (Also praised the other Allies).

Questions raised about 'Indianapolis' sinking

Raymond B. Lech, **ALL THE DROWNED SAILORS**, Military Heritage Press, 1982. (207 pages with pictures.)

The sinking of the cruiser U.S.S. Indianapolis by a Japanese submarine in the last days of the war was an embarrassment to the U.S. Navy that could only be satisfied by trumping up a court-martial for the ship's captain, Captain Charles B. McVay.

The ineptitude of shore-based intelligence, operations and communications people which led to the loss of 880 lives was ignored in the scapegoat-manufacturing efforts of the Navy. Such efforts led all the way up to, and included, CNO Ernest J. King.

There is much more to this book than the tracking of the humiliating and tragic court-martial of McVay. Author Lech writes a tight account of the last voyage of the ship with excruciating details of the period when the men were in the water and their ultimate rescue. There were 1,196 men on board. Approximately 400

Book Shelf

William Rooney,
Review Editor



went down with the ship. Of the 800 or so men who safely abandoned ship, only 316 survived.

Lech tracks the journey of the Indianapolis from San Francisco to Tinian, where it delivered parts of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. From Tinian, the ship was ordered to Guam, from whence it set sail for Leyte Gulf to join the Pacific fleet. Midway there, on a Sunday evening, it took two torpedos from Japanese sub-

marine I-58. The ship was never reported missing and survivors floated in the water until spotted by patrol planes on Thursday. This, in spite of the fact that the ship was due in port in the Philippines Tuesday morning.

The agonizing days that the men floated in the ocean in groups and alone are detailed with accuracy and restraint by the author. A reader is

tempted to page forward while reading to see how many more pages of agony there are before the men are mercifully rescued. This reviewer must insert, for the record, his own experience interviewing aircraft crew members rescued from the sea after 36 hours, to document the effective job Lech has done in telling the story of the suffering these seamen endured.

There is a rapid denouement to the story after the rescue. The details of McVay's court-martial are kept tight and short. There remains the heart-breaking story of the demise of Captain (retired Rear Admiral) McVay, which closes out the book as if it were a finely written short story.

The loss of the Indianapolis and the large number of crew members is regarded by some Navy types as the major combat loss by the Navy in the war. There are plenty of arguments to the contrary, but Lech has dealt with this story as if it were the Navy's worst. He could be right.

William A. Rooney

Book focuses on the 135th Seabee Battalion

George A. Larson, **THE ROAD TO TINIAN**, Taylor Publishing Company, 1988 (140 pages with "then and now" pictures.)

To bomb Japan, the B-29s had to have a platform from which to operate. This is the story of the 135th USNCB — U.S. Navy Construction Battalion, the Seabees — that built that platform, the four parallel runway North Field and the runways in mid-island known as West Field.

In addition, the Seabees constructed all of the support facilities for the four Air Force wings that flew from Tinian to "The Empire."

The author has put together this book as a sort of tribute to his father, George W. Larson, a member of the 135th. This would be an insignificant book except for two things.

For one, it tells, without hype or exaggeration, the incredible feats performed by the Seabees in transforming Tinian into a formidable fighting platform.

Secondly, with the same quiet understatement, it tells of the regard the men of one service had for those of another service. Specifically, it tells of the regard, even awe, the Seabees had for the B-29 crews whom they would see take off and possibly crash into the ocean off the runway's end. Or, fly their mission and return with plane battered with wounded or dead on board.

Conversely, members of one combat crew named their plane after one of the Seabee organizations. Some Seabees "adopted" a combat crew and found ways to make their lives more comfortable — food from the Seabee's mess, a floor for a tent, etc.

Author Larson tells about the Seabee construction of a facility at the

southeastern end of Tinian, built to provide 1,000 hospital beds as well as a morgue and a crematorium. This was in anticipation of the casualties that would be handled on just Tinian when the invasion of Japan began. It should give the fatheads, who now decry the dropping of the atomic bomb, occasion for thought. The 135th Battalion built the housing, special facilities and workshops for the 509th Composite Group, the unit that dropped the atomic bombs.

Early on, air raids flown by the Japanese from nearby islands and Iwo Jima were causing annoying interruptions of runway construction resulting in the Seabee unit falling behind schedule. The 135th's Commander Gillette ordered that, unlike other units, the 135th's men were to eat on the move to make up for lost time.

In true MBA fashion, Gillette stated, "Take five minutes out of every man and you think in terms of work days lost, not minutes." To that, an enlisted man, Thomas F. Stringer replied, "Commander Gillette, think of the other 12 hours these men can use, when not working, to invent ways to get even." The eat-on-the-move order never went into effect.

No matter how onerous the work, nothing could dampen the entrepreneurial spirit of the Seabees. One member made a tidy sum developing and printing film. The paint shop cut stencils of the Seabee emblem and spray-painted it on towels. In true Luther Billis (out of "Tales of the South Pacific") fashion, one member

set up shop making stainless steel watch bands to replace the leather and fabric bands the weather destroyed in a few weeks. This Seabee took home \$30,000 at war's end.

What happened to this platform from which the B-29s took the war to "The Empire?" Starting on October 1, 1945, after a severe typhoon struck the island, wrecking much of it, the Seabees went on to wreck the rest. They bulldozed everything into piles, loaded the piles onto dump trucks and dumped everything into the ocean.

What has become of the mighty four-runway North Field and West Field and the coral surfaced roads on the island? They are still serviceable and, in some cases, are in use more than 40 years after. A tribute in itself to the quality of work performed by the Seabees of Tinian.

William A. Rooney

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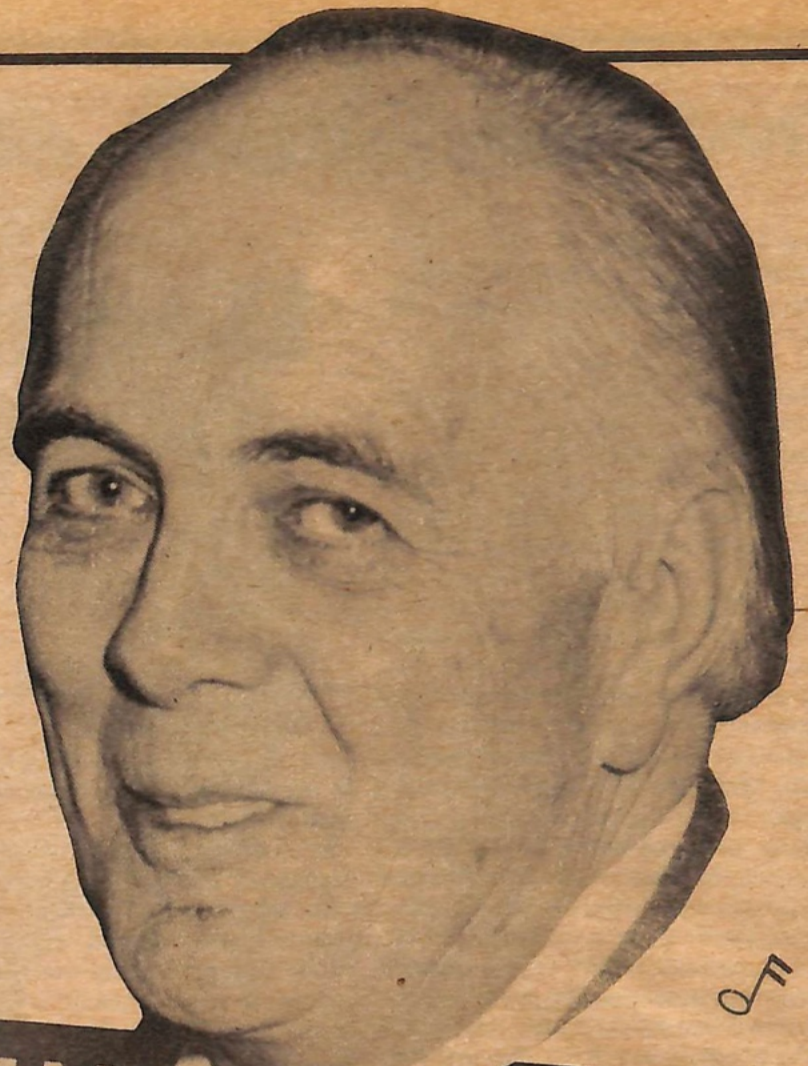
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My Big Band Daze



Warren Durham



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Big Band put me in a daze back in 1944 about the time I went off to war. Maybe that's why today I host a national cablevision program "Big Band Days." Once you get hooked by Big Band you never look for substitutes.

Radio fascinated me by the time I was a high school freshman in 1939. Fortunately, I had a fairly mature

sounding voice, so was able to get some announcing work after school at all three Spokane, Washington, stations: KFPY, KGA, and KHQ.

I moved around during the pre-war years and did some miscellaneous jobs: morning shows, agriculture reports, interviews -- even play by play sports announcing.

My big break, so I thought, came in 1944 while I was a Naval midshipman

at Columbia University. That's when I started doing Big Band remotes from the New York area stations and networks.

Oh that sound! And the great artists of that day! Moments never forgotten.

In March 1945, I headed out to the South Pacific aboard the USS PINE ISLAND as assistant communications officer. We earned a battle star for

one engagement.

With the war over, I got back into my Big Band remotes, this time with CBS radio in Spokane. Then I went through a period of putting several stations on the air, owning an ad agency, and learning the techniques of early television.

For the most part, those were heady times for a young man who thrived on new and innovative projects.



Skitch Henderson recalls Big Band days.

Best of all, I met and married Lucy Fleming of Spokane. Since our marriage in April 1950, she has been my life partner in every way.

In 1978, I built and operated one of the first cable channels in Spokane. Although I sold the station after a few years, I gained valuable insights into how cable could help resurrect portions of the Big Band era.

That's when I started nosing around in old closets, dusty basements, and smelly attics, amassing a trove of classic black and white short films featuring Big Bands and entertainers of 40 years ago.

That material formed the basis for my weekly TV series called "Big Band Days," which reaches a potential 14 million homes over cablevision stations.

Those of you who came out of the World War II era know that those were the days when entertainment clubs were the center of the world, providing the stage for greats like Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, the Andrews Sisters, and many more.

Late in the Big Band era, some of these stars began making short films of themselves performing their hits. They were called "soundies," an early version of a video juke box.



Horace Heidt, Jr. talks about his famous father.

Coconut Grove, Edgewater Beach, and Meadowbrook are familiar names to most of us, aren't they?

The experiment failed, however, when TV came along and junked the video juke box. Those old films got buried or misplaced. My persistent search uncovered 900, most of which have been transferred to video tape.

It's a rich experience for me to share this rare film footage with my viewers. All of the great band leaders are featured on the programs, along with a variety of professional vocalists including Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Kate Smith, and the Meltones, to name a few.

In between film clips I interview

special guests who look back with me and recall moments of this significant American era.

With the 50th anniversary of World War II approaching, there's a big opportunity for those of us who were part of music's best era to bring back some of the great sounds.

To get "In the Mood," what do you say we mix a little "Moonlight Serenade" with "Sentimental Journey?"

Before you know it, we'll be on the "Chattanooga Choo Choo" heading for "Tuxedo Junction" and "Twilight Time."

That's what Big Band sounds will do to a person.



Guy Pastor discusses the great bands of his father's era.



Stan Irwin, first producer of "Tonight Show," drops by to chat.

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The Saturday Evening Post, with perhaps the richest heritage of any American magazine, is interwoven with our country's history. First conceived by Benjamin Franklin in 1728 as the Pennsylvania Gazette, the Post was soon recognized as the best-known periodical of the Colonies.

The Post knows a lot about "Post" duty. During the American Revolution it was suspended twice by British armies. The Civil War saw its pages treated weekly with art work, war stories, and cartoons.

As the clouds of World War II began forming, the Post faithfully informed its readers of events and issues. By 1941, the magazine usually carried two war stories each week and lively editorials about America's role in the

At their POST

spreading conflict.

Strangely, almost the entire focus was on events in Europe. Rarely was the situation with Japan mentioned.

Since the Post was not a news magazine, the articles largely dealt with issues of the European war. Well researched and written, these lengthy stories gave the reader a detailed analysis of the international situation.

A sampling of articles in 1941 looked like this:

*"England's War at Sea," Vincent Sheenan (July 12) said that the British Navy was certain of ultimate victory, and carried no thoughts of defeat.

*"And After Hitler," Demaree Bess (September 13) predicted England would expect America to police Europe once the Nazis were defeated.

*"Put up or Shut-up," Demaree Bess (November 22) accused the British of fighting a defensive war which "does not lead to victory." England's grand strategy, Bess concluded, was to let the United States figure out a way to win the war.

Editorially the Post was a strong and sometimes a prophetic voice. On August 9, the magazine called

prepared several issues in advance of publication, the magazine was slow getting into the Pacific War. It was not until January 3, 1942, that reference to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor appeared...and the magazine did not mince words:

"When the Yellow Serpent struck on our Western side, there were released in the veins of liberty the terrible compounds of avenging wrath. It is a wrath that not only will destroy Japan, as an aggressive power in the world; it will destroy Hitler as the Serpent's mentor, and Hitlerism as a principle of evil."

One of the Post's finest contributions to the war effort was the colorful, well designed covers. Drawn by top artists of the day, they dealt with all phases of the war: combat, home front, music, civilians, etc. Only a few covers were photographs.

One cover (August 1, 1942) reflected the tragedy of war. Photographed

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was a young Marine, Corporal Stanley Narkon, 22, of Hempstead, New York. His picture introduced an article describing the training of shock troops and paratroops at the Marine Corps base at New River, North Carolina.

In September, Narkon landed with the Marines on Guadalcanal. By November 3, he was a fatal casualty of war.

In April 1942, Ben Hibbs took over as editor of the Post. More color was added, the headlines became bolder, and the articles, in general, were more up-beat and less austere.

One article, "Meet the Girls Who Keep 'em Flying," Frank J. Taylor (May 30, 1942), saluted the mechanics in "fancy work clothes" who would be doing 60% of the nation's airplane construction at war's end.

By spring of 1945, the Post began running provocative stories about winning the peace as well as the war. "What it Takes to Rule Japan," Major Harold J. Noble, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve (September 29, 1945), offered interesting insights into Japanese thinking about their country losing the war.

The article explained fundamental differences between the occupation of Germany and that of Japan. Germany was left with no government, while in Japan the government remained intact, giving the United States an opportunity to rule through the existing political machinery. Major Noble suggested the use of 500,000 men at most, during the occupation period.

A series of "Road to Tokyo" articles by Richard Tregaskis (August 18, 1945 to October 26, 1945) took a different approach. Tragaskis, a Post



Dr. Cory SerVass, publisher.



Post's modern cover.

war correspondent and author of *Guadalcanal Diary*, vividly described America's bloody march across the Pacific in his hard hitting stories.

Tragaskis's final installment "Have We Given Japan Back to the Japs?" suggested that peace terms were much too lenient to the Japanese.

Major blame for this turn-around was placed on General MacArthur, who as Supreme Commander maintained almost unlimited authority. At MacArthur's behest only a skeleton force (less than 200,000 troops) would remain in Japan and the machinery of government would remain virtually untouched. "It appeared that expediency was the guiding policy."

Though understanding that the American people were tired of war,

he concluded that the "road to Tokyo (had) an ending we had certainly not expected. Many men had

died and many more had been crippled and billions of dollars had been expended to build this road to "Tokyo."

Who could fault MacArthur's policy of expediency, he asked, if the American people didn't "want to send more boys and more dollars to go out and police the world; at least not until another war came along!

Today's Post links the worthwhile traditions of the past to the vitality of contemporary thought and life. Purchased in 1970 by Beurt and Cory SerVaas of Indianapolis, the magazine is an articulate voice for and about middle America.

Dr. Cory SerVaas, editor and publisher, in her role as medical doctor, focuses on articles about better health, nutrition, and medical breakthroughs. Articles are positive, upbeat, and people oriented. Fiction, a Post tradition, is still carried, as are lively cartoons.

Thus, the Post remains at its "post" as an American institution.

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French Follies

The night G.I.s saw Paris



Home to my girl

Tom Banks

The time is August 2, 1945.

"Pilot to Navigator, over."

"Go ahead, Pilot."

"How far are we from the Japanese coast?"

"About 90 nautical miles."

"Better recheck, Navigator. We must be closer than that. Come up front and look."

I the Navigator quickly calculated the position of our B-29, which had been flying in darkness for more than five hours after taking off from our base on Tinian in the Mariannas. Confident that we were indeed 92 miles from Tokyo, the target of tonight's fire raid, I made my way forward to the glass nose of the B-29.

As I knelt between the Pilot and the Copilot in the glassed-in cockpit, the Pilot without speaking described an arc with his finger from far to his left to far to his right.

The earth was on fire.

No one spoke. I finally managed to mumble, "We're still 90 miles away."

"OK, Navigator. Give me a time to descend to our bombing altitude."

"Roger."

I returned to the Navigator's position behind the Pilot to refine my calculations on time and distance to the point of descent — time, distance, and compass heading to the target — and the blessed compass heading that would take us home if we survived the nightmare ahead.

As we approached the Japanese mainland, we could see that Hell had been made real on the face of the earth. The ground below and everything on it was consumed by fire.

At that moment I wasn't debating the radical change in policy of the 20th Air Force — from high-altitude missions against strategic military and industrial targets to low-level fire raids. The objective now was simple: burn everything — plants, businesses, housing — and people.

The war was lost but the Empire must be brought to its knees to preclude the need to invade Japan at an incalculable cost in lives and material.

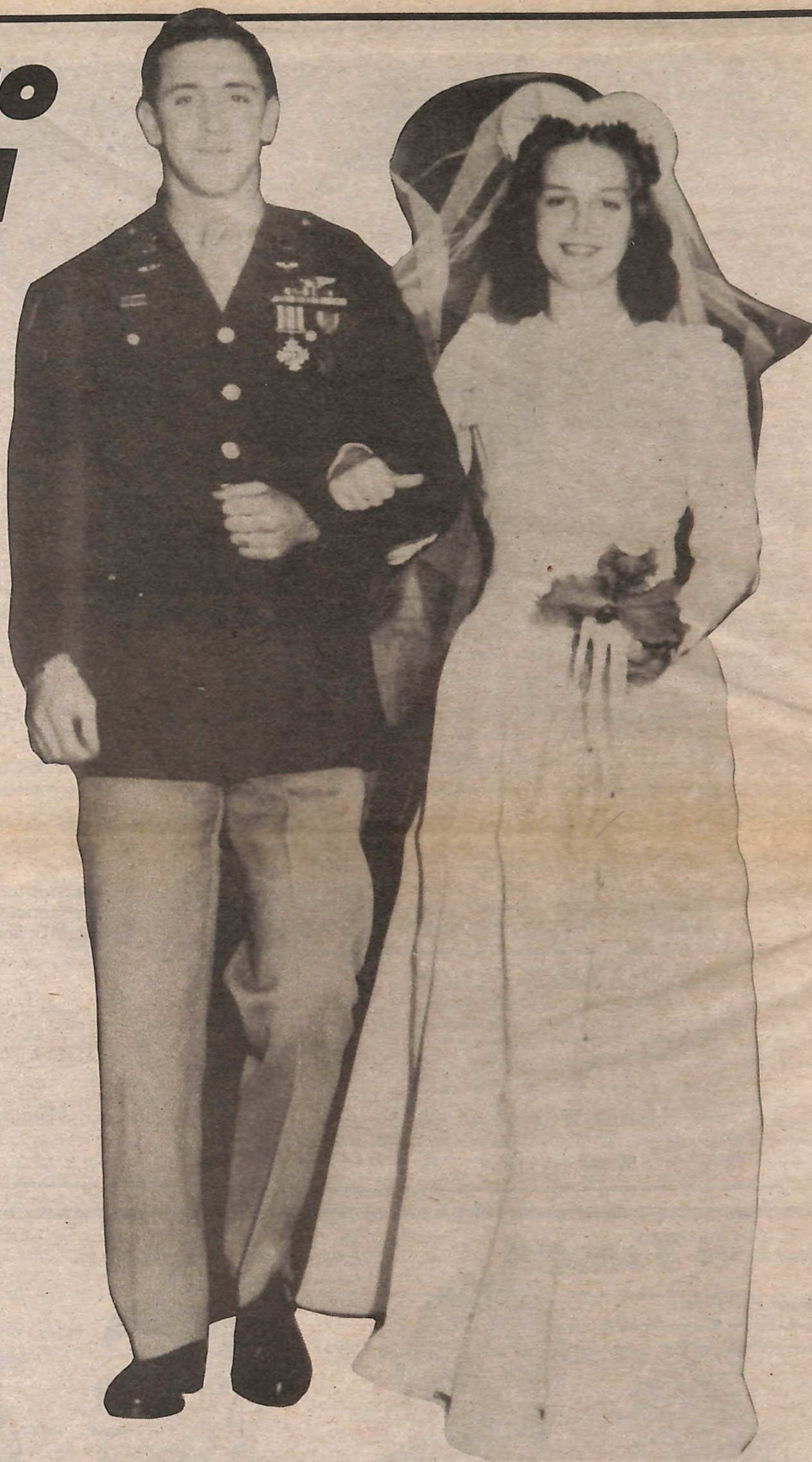
As I glanced out my window I was awed by the unimaginable magnitude of the fire storm raging below. Nothing was distinguishable but col-

ossal flames and boiling smoke. I put out of my mind any thought of what was happening to the human beings so far below.

My mind this night centered on one driving thought: This is "it" — this is the one — the last one — my 35th and last mission. I prayed silently, "Please

get me home to Tinian, Dear God, because I want to go home to Atlanta."

Our airplane, an immense engine of



Myra, the girl back home, was waiting for her navigator hero.

war, was now being buffeted by boiling air rising from the intense heat of the flames. Our two pilots struggled to maintain the aircraft reasonably level as our Bombardier sought to identify his assigned bombing area.

Finally, the Bombardier said, "My aiming point is in the middle of a huge fire — it's already been hit."

"Bombardier," the Pilot ordered, "Pick out a spot somewhere and start a new fire. Let's get rid of these bombs!"

And so it was that the Bombardier took control of the aircraft through the Norden bombsight and deposited 20,000 pounds of phosphorus bombs onto an already raging inferno. When his "Bombs Away!" sounded over the ship's intercom, the response from all 11 voices on board was the traditional and heart-felt "Let's get the hell out of here!"

And Hell it was. Fire, smoke, explosions, and boiling air that threatened to flip over the giant B-29. And we were not alone in that boiling air — we caught glimpses of other objects — some may have been rockets or Japanese night fighters — search lights — and one huge arc of flame was probably a stricken B-29.

As our B-29 made its way across the trackless Pacific back to Tinian, I

slowly relaxed and began to savor the joy of having completed my final mission. If I can find Tinian one more time. If those engines continue their steady drone. If our fuel supply holds out. If our pilots can nestle this monster safely onto the runway one more time. If.

And I thought about the horror of the fire raid I had just witnessed. I had participated in similar missions but this one was the most devastating and provided the most mind-boggling terror for me of any of them.

But my war was over. Thank you, God, Sweet Jesus, and all the Angels. I also reflected on the fact that we had reached the target area about midnight, and there had been a constant stream of B-29s that day over Japan — literally all day long the bombs had fallen — and the flames had consumed.

We arrived, were debriefed for the last time, and then there was a modest celebration for those of us who completed No. 35. Many Hallelujahs! (or equivalent) were sent heavenward that early morning.

There was a sad note, too. One B-29 from our group failed to return — Captain "Duck" Gay and his crew were missing. No report, no sightings, no indication of what had been the

fate of that B-29. Just missing in action.

More than 10 years later I ran across "Duck" while performing a reserve tour in the Air Force Reserve. And many years after that I met his Copilot, "Pug" Whitmire, at a reunion of the 58th Bomb Wing.

Their story was incredible — badly hit and on fire, they managed to crash land in a rice paddy. The Tail Gunner was killed in the landing, the Engineer was shot by the Japanese military with his own .45 pistol, and the rest spent several wretched months in a prison camp before being liberated. When each pilot told me his story, it was like listening to a far-fetched tale narrated by a ghost.

Four days after my last mission, on August 5, we heard vague reports about a new kind of bomb dropped on Hiroshima — an "atomic" bomb. From high school chemistry I recalled that atoms are very small particles of matter — and I wondered what the connection was. New bomb — big deal! I was going home!

And about a week later I was in Honolulu, enroute to the USA when the war — World War II — was officially declared over. I was sitting in the open-air movie theatre outside the Officer's Club at Hickam Field when

the Japanese officially surrendered. From across the bay the warships in Pearl Harbor opened up with flares, rockets, search lights.

And a three-day spasm of joyous pandemonium seized the area — here where the war had begun so badly for us almost four years before. Four years before, I was 17.

The war was finally over. I did reach home in Atlanta, home to family and friends. Home to my very pretty girl.

But my thoughts are often drawn back to mission No. 35 — When Hell visited Earth.

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Ninth Annual P-51 Mustang Pilots Assoc. reunion June 30-July 5, Hyatt Regency Tech Center Hotel, 7800 Tufts Ave. Denver, CO 80237 (303) 779-1234.

148th Ord. MOV. A. Co. WW II reunion Louisville, KY, Oct. 9-15, 1989. Contact Jerome K. Paulson, R.R. Wallingford, Iowa, 51365 (812) 867-4432.

44th Annual CBI Hump Pilots & Support Personnel reunion, Aug. 23-27, 1989. Sheraton Spokane Hotel North, 322 Spokane Falls Ct. Spokane, WA 99201-0165 (800) 848-9600. Contact Mrs. Jan Thies, 808 Lester St. Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 (314) 785-2421.

P-40 Warhawk Pilots Assoc. reunion Oct. 6-8, 1989. Quality Inn High Q. 5905 International Dr. Florida Center, Orlando, FL 32819 (305) 351-2100. Contact Bob Williams, 600 Valley Forge Rd. E. Neptune Beach, FL 32233 (904) 246-6093.

The 3rd Marine Division Assoc. family reunion July 12-16, 1989 at Down Town Marriott, Chicago. Contact: Bill Krueger, 7622 Highland St., Springfield, VA 22150 (703) 451-3844.

Contact: Joseph (Joe) L. Frank 3503 Clark Rd. Oroville, CA 95965 (916) 343-3667 re: reunion I Co. 9 Reg. 3 Marine Div. WWII—Oct. 1989.

U.S. MARINE CORPS DRILL INSTRUCTOR ASSOC. reunion Aug. 17-21, 1989. San Diego, CA, contact: GYSGT F. Michael Cline (619) 524-5041 or 224-2579.

Company E, 28th Marines Assn. Feb 22-25, 1990, Westpark Hotel, Arlington, VA. Contact Col. D.E. Serverance, P.O. Box 1972, La Jolla, CA 92037. 45th Anniversary of raising flag, Iwo Jima.

USS CHEW (DD106) Oct. 6-8, 1989 San Diego. Contact: J.E. Tuttle, 9285 Wister Dr., LaMesa, CA 92041.

24th Infantry Div., 5th RCT, 555 FA Bn. & 5th Tank Bn. Hyatt Regency, Fort Worth TX, Sept. 13-17, 1989. Contact: Kenwood Ross, 120 Maple St. Springfield, MA 01103-2278, (413) 733-3194 or FAX 3195. WWII and Korean veterans.

AACS Alumni Assoc. 13th annual reunion Oct. 19-22, 1989, Montgomery, AL. Contact: Alton E. Erdman, 3025 Pelzer Ave. Montgomery, AL. 36109. (205) 272-9130.

94th Bomb Group (H) WWII, 8th Air Force Eng. Oct. 11-15, 1989. Minneapolis Marriott City Center Hotel. Contact: 94BGMA, 433 NW 33rd St. Corvallis, OR 97330 (503) 752-1845.

8th Photo Recon Sqd. (5th Air Force WWII) Sept. 12-17, 1989. Dayton, Ohio. Squadron Memorial to be dedicated at Wright Patterson AFB. Contact: Andy Kappel, 6406 Walnut, Kansas City, MO. 64113 (816) 363-1261.

USS BELLEAU WOOD (CVL24) & all attached air groups, San Diego, Aug. 16-20, 1989. Contact Robert L. Ross 2732 S. US 23, Oscoda, MI 48750 (517) 739-2128.

USS IDAHO (BB-42) Reunion July 30-Aug. 6, 1989, Moscow, ID. Contact: David C. Graham, USS Idaho Assoc. P.O. Box 11247, San Diego, CA 92111.

USS HOPE (AH7) & 215th hospital ship compl. - Oct. 24-26, 1989. Las Vegas, NV. Contact: Rev. A. Wilson, P.O. Box 3613, Eureka, CA 9502.

101st Airborne Division Assoc. 44th reunion, Marc Plaza Hotel, Milwaukee, WI, Aug 10-13, 1989. Contact: I.G. Worrell, 101 East Morris St. P.O. Box 586, Sweetwater, TN 37874, (615) 337-4103.

188th Signal Repair Co. plan reunion Nov. 1989. Contact: Mortimer F. Lentz, 4905 Dolores Hidalgo Dr., Rio Rancho, NM 87124, (505) 892-0691 or Thomas Morreale, 2353 Sandstone Dr. Rio Rancho, NM 87124 (505) 892-2192.

USS ENTERPRISE (CV-6) reunion, members and crewman. August 15-20, 1989, Norfolk, VA, Omni International Hotel. Contact: Howard W. (Bill) Childress, 4143 Ewell Point, Virginia Beach, VA 23455 or call (818) 768-3376, Van Watts.

27th P-47 Thunderbolt Pilots Assoc. reunion May 12-14, 1989. Minneapolis Marriott City Center, 30 S. Seventh St. Minneapolis, MN 55042. (612) 349-4000. Contact Marvin Rosvold, 600 S. 13, Norfolk, NE 68701 (402), 371-6633.

The 3rd Marine Division Assoc. family reunion July 12-16, 1989 at Downtown Marriott, Chicago. Contact: Bill Krueger, 7622 Highland St., Springfield, VA 22150 (703) 451-3844.

62nd Troop Carrier Group, reunion Oct. 23-25, 1989, Holiday Inn, Oklahoma City, OK. Contact V.W. Preston, 1507 Aster Place, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45224-3211 (513) 681-1885.

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Two great films on flying these great twin engine medium bombers of WWII. In the B-25 film you will be in the cockpit as the checkout pilot takes you through checklist procedures, engine start up, taxi, takeoff, climb, stalls, single engine flight landings and much more. Everything you need to start up and go!

The B-26 Film is similar to the above except it has more of a story line as opposed to a technical narration.

A pilot is sent to be check out on the B-26 only to discover his instructor is an old friend. As they proceed with startup, taxi, takeoff, stall, etc. A crew member's mistake results in a real inflight emergency. Both pilots are now famous actors. See if you recognize them as they appeared over 40 years ago!

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THUNDERBOLT - FLYING THE P-51

When the Germans were driven out of North Africa and back to Italy, the Air Corps had the job of neutralizing their ground forces and fighter power as a prelude to the invasion of Italy.

This is the story of P-47's based in the island of Corsica off the coast of Italy as they fly missions to bomb and strafe targets such as bridges, trains or anything that moves. The thunderbolts used not only gun cameras, but were fitted with cameras in the cockpits, wheel wells and tails. This early attempt of filming in color resulted in a somewhat grainy film as compared to today's standard. A great story of the day to day life of these pilots. How they lived and how some died. Narration by Lloyd Bridges. Intro by Jimmy Stewart.

FLYING THE P-51

Not the normal checkout film as in the P-47. In this film a test pilot straps on a P-51B and puts it through its paces for three officers who stay in the control tower. We listen in and watch as the three officers request stalls, loops and dives to over 400 mph, and hear the pilot report on each maneuver.

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Running Time: 1 hr., 15 min.

FIGHT FOR THE SKY - HOW TO FLY THE P-47 P-47 COMBAT OPERATIONS

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The next film "How to Fly the P-47" will give you the "nuts and bolts" on flying the famous "thunderbolt". Sensational photography of the '47. Dives, loops, stalls and much more.

The final film on this tape "P-47 Combat Operations". You will see five pilots with their gun camera footage tell their stories as only they can tell it. One of them made a mistake. You will find out who and what it was at the end. Maybe you can spot the mistake first.

Order Tape No. PB 26
Running Time: 1 hr., 22 min.

P-40 Warhawk and P-38 Lightning

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MEMPHIS BELLE + B-29 - CREW TRAINING

This documentary is one of the finest of the air war over Europe. Actual combat footage in color. Watch the repeated attacks by Messerschmitt & Focke Wolfe Fighters, throughout a relentless attack on the submarine pens at Wilhenshaven far into Germany.

B-29 Flight Procedures & Combat Crew Functions

This training film instructs pilots and the crew to operate the fastest & mightiest bomber built for WWII.

Order Tape PB-90
Running Time - 1 hr., 5 min.

Introduction to the P-39 Flying the P-39

This two part film introduces cockpit check, handling ground maneuvers, take offs, normal flights and landings, aerobatics, gunnery practice and combat action.

Order Tape No. PB 78 Running Time: 60 min.

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A full color film on pilot training. Learn to fly the B-24 Liberator. Complete instructions on how to taxi, run-up and take off.

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Ask the Colonel



Colonel Jim Shelton,
Indiana Wing,
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Q. During World War II, what was known as "Big Mamie"?

A. The USS Massachusetts, a great battleship which fought 35 sea battles and lost not a single man.

Q. Who was this man? U.S. Senator and Presidential candidate, pilot of B-24 "Dakota Queen" and part of the 455th Bomb Group, 15th AAF?

A. George McGovern of South Dakota who was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross.

Q. What famous group was the first ground troop unit from the U.S. to see combat in Asia?

A. Merrill's Marauders - the 5307th composite group. They were trained in guerilla warfare to fight the Japanese in Burma.

Q. Axis Sally was a female propaganda specialist, but where did Berlin Betty fit into the picture?

A. She broadcast in English to U.S. troops in North Africa.

854th Engineer Aviation Battalion, US Army WW II, Oct. 6-8, 1989 Holiday Inn, New Orleans West Bank, Gretna, Louisiana. Contact: James E. Bethell, 6805 Galax Ct. Springfield, VA 22151.

Marine/Navy WW II Paratroopers, Reunion El Tropicano Hotel, San Antonio, TX, Oct. 26-29, 1989. Contact Col. D.E. Severence, P.O. Box 1972, La Jolla, Ca 92038.

27th Troop Carrier Squadron, WW II, (CBI) reunion Quality Inn, Tucson, AR, Oct. 25-28, 1989. Contact Lester J. (Rip) Van Winkle 126 Rio jas Dr., Kerrville, TX 78028 (512) 995-2558.

USS FREESTONE APA167, WWII 1944-46 Reunion. Contact: Dave Nelson 2280 Baltic Ave., Idaho Falls, ID 83404.

12th DEFENSE BN. (WWII Woodlark Island, Cape Gloucester, Peleliu, Okinawa) 36th reunion, Seattle, WA July 20-23, 1989. Contact: Bill Floberg 2135 N. 52nd St. Seattle, WA 98103.

Q. During World War II what happened to the famous British actor Leslie Howard?

A. Howard, who played Ashley Wilkes in "Gone With the Wind," was killed when his BOAC flight from Algiers to London was shot down by German fighters over the Bay of Biscay in June 1943. Alfred Chenfalls, who doubled for Winston Churchill, was also lost on the same flight.

Q. Operation Flash was a code name of great importance - what was this big secret?

A. It was the conspiracy to assassinate Adolph Hitler and take over the German Government. It failed on July 20, 1944. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was implicated in the plan and committed suicide.

Q. As terrible as they were, what did the Germans consider as the model of concentration camps?

A. Dachau, founded in 1933 near Munich, was regarded as the third worst extermination camp. It was liberated by the Allies in April 1945.

40th Bombardment Group (B-29) & 28th Service Outfit reunion Sept. 14-17, 1989, Omaha, NE. Contact: Richard A. Veach, 1030 Palimino Rd. Omaha, NE 68154 (402) 333-4124.

82nd Airborne Division Assoc., Valley Forge, PA, August. Contact: Airborne Trooper, 5459 Northcutt Place, Dayton, Ohio 45414. (513) 898-5977.

Marines of MAG-61 interested in a reunion contact: M/SGT. H.A. Tucker, 2972 Carnation Ave., Willow Grove, PA 19090. (215) 659-9538 or M/SGT M. Roy, USMC (Ret.), 1019 Venetian Pkwy., Venice, FL 34292. (813) 488-6485.

Rocky Mountain Chapter of the 3rd Marine Division Assoc. looking for members. Contact: Tom Mandis, Box 96, Bellvue, CO 80512. 221-1547.

N.A.T.T.C. & N.A.S., reunion Norman, OK, Sheraton Hotel, Sept. 29,30 and Oct. 1, 1989. Contact: Francis Brandt, 1067 S.E. 42nd St., Loveland, CO 80537 (303) 669-6083.

Q. The Navy's first carrier (1922) was sunk by the Japanese February 27, 1942, off Java. What was given to this famous ship?

A. The USS Langley - was converted to a seaplane tender in 1937. After the original ship was sunk another Langley was commissioned in 1943.

Q. What was the first U.S. Army unit activated for overseas duty during World War II?

A. The 5th Army with Mark Clark as its leader. He was dubbed the American Eagle by Winston Churchill because of his prominent nose.

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D-Day

FROM PAGE 19

water's edge for much of the day.

General Omar Bradley observed the battle from the flagship *Augusta*. At one point he considered withdrawing his troops from Omaha to reinforce Utah. But at 1:30 p.m., he received a radio message: "Troops formerly pinned down...advancing up heights."

At the end of the day 34,250 men were ashore on Omaha, though less than one mile off the beach. Ninety percent of American casualties were suffered here. One thousand were dead and an equal number wounded.

Pointe du Hoc was another formidable assault location. Located four miles west of Omaha and 10 miles east of Utah, it was here that members of the U.S. Second and Fifth Ranger Battalions scaled 90 and 100 foot bluffs to knock out S/K German 155 mm guns which targeted both Omaha and Utah.

Rangers used rocket fired grappling hooks; ropes, and ladders to scale the cliffs against a barrage of grenades, gun fire, and boulders. The mission succeeded, but only 90 Rangers of 225 were still able to bear arms at the top of the bluffs.

The British and Canadians had a much easier time on Gold, Juno and Sword beaches. Success was due in part because of the configuration of the landing sites. By the end of the day, 75,000 troops were advancing beyond the beaches.

All told, D-Day was an enormous success for Allied Forces. Hitler's "Atlantic Wall" had been breached and casualties were less than expected. The stage was set for the final act — the emancipation of Europe and the destruction of Hitler.

No free man's life is untouched by the significance of June 6, 1944. This is especially true for today's youth. "It was the young people who had to go make history," Curtis Rainbolt reflected. All battlefields are the same — "Young people dying. High school kids dying because they believ-



Troops splash ashore — the beginning of a long tortuous road to final victory.

ed in a free way of life."

When Normandy becomes as ancient to us as Gettysburg or Valley Forge, the cause of freedom will still need protection. The flame that burned in the hearts of ordinary soldiers then, must be transferred to the keepers of our future.

The hallowed memory of D-Day is best conveyed in the thought: Greater love has no one that this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Dona Taylor is a free lance writer and lifelong resident of Indianapolis. A graduate from Indiana University with a degree in Criminal Justice/Public Affairs, she spent several years as a marketing representative for paging equipment and building supplies.

Dona's father, Dr. Victor J. Vollrath, and four uncles are all veterans of World War II. Her hobbies include military history, antiques, gardening, and Christian folk music for guitar.



The Eyes of the World are Upon You. The Hopes and Prayers Of Liberty-Loving People Everywhere March with You.

—General Dwight D. Eisenhower.
Order to His Troops for D-Day
June 6, 1944

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