

EX-POW BULLETIN

the official voice of the
American Ex-Prisoners of War

501(c)3 Veterans Service Organization

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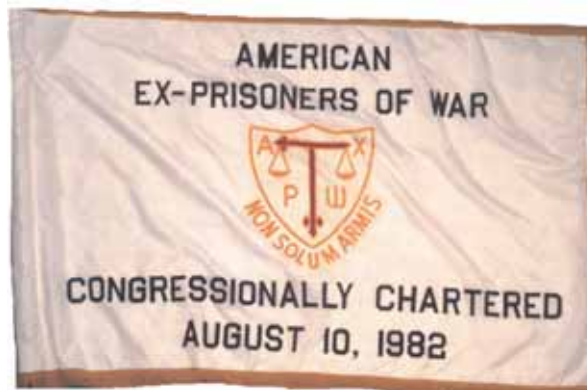
July~August~September 2023

Gold
Transparency
2023

Candid.



We exist to help those who cannot help themselves



American Ex-Prisoners of War Congressional Charter

50th Anniversary of Vietnam POWs Homecoming Richard M Nixon Presidential Library



July-September 2023

table of contents

Officers/Directors	4
National Commander	5
CEO	6
Andersonville	7
Medsearch	8
NamPOW	12
POW/MIA	14
Civilian	15
Branson	20
Unwavering Chap 3	22
Application	30
Contributions	31
Taps	32
Voluntary Funding	34

September 15, 2023 is National POW/MIA Recognition Day. Across the country, local POW/MIA ceremonies are encouraged throughout POW/MIA Recognition Week, culminating with a countless number of events and the national ceremony in Washington, DC, on Recognition Day. Support for Americans missing and unaccounted-for in wartime, and their families, is deeply felt. America's POW/MIAs can be honored and recognized, but not memorialized.

Front Cover: Forty-seven years after families banded together to help their loved ones who had been captured in World War II, the American Ex-Prisoners of War finally received their Congressional Charter. It was a hard-fought battle, convincing Congress that the organization begun by families should remain with the families. No auxiliary. We're proud that we held fast to our roots and our convictions throughout the decades.

Public Law 97-234 — August 10, 1982

Federal Charter

American Ex-Prisoners of War

UNITED STATES CODE TITLE 36

PATRIOTIC AND NATIONAL OBSERVANCES,
CEREMONIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

SUBTITLE II - PATRIOTIC AND NATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS PART B - ORGANIZATIONS

CHAPTER 209 - AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF
WAR

§ 2101. Recognition as corporation and grant of Federal charter American Ex-Prisoners of War, organized and incorporated under the Washington Nonprofit Corporation Act (Wash. Rev. Code Ann. 24.03.005) of the State of Washington

NOTE: Marsha, Jan and I have been working our way through our database for the past month. We have found that the majority of those still on our membership rolls are now deceased. It is very sad that we were not notified of these deaths. We are asking you to please let us know when you hear of a passing so that we can properly honor them. Thank you. Cheryl

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Golden Anniversary Celebrations

In January 1973 the Paris Peace Accords were signed, ending the war between the USA and North Vietnam and providing for the release of prisoners of war on both sides of the combat. From mid-February to the end of March 561 POWs were flown to freedom from the dungeons of Hanoi.

In February of this year, eight of us (Bill Shankel, Ed Hubbard, Wayne Waddell, Ric Molinaire, Tom Hanton, Robert Certain, Dave Drummond, and Pete Camerota) along with family and friends, spent three weeks touring Vietnam and Cambodia, including a few days in Hanoi visiting the Hao Lo (Hanoi Hilton) prison museum and the ruins of the Son Tay prison to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of our Freedom. On March 4, two of our travelers, Ed Hubbard and Wayne Waddell, left the Hanoi Hilton to fly home to the US – exactly 50 years since they left during Operation Homecoming.



In May we gathered again to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our welcome home dinner at the White House. We were hosted by the Nixon Museum in Yorba Linda, California. Almost 150 of the NAMPOWs were able to attend, along with about 300 of our family members. Our first visit to the Museum included a guided tour of the new POW exhibit and an outdoor dinner featuring BBQ and In-N-Out burgers.

The next evening we donned our formal military attire (or tuxedos) and dined in the reproduction of the White House East Room. Clips of our 1973 dinner were shown, including Irving Berlin leading us in "God Bless America." A video address by Henry Kissinger, who turned 100 the next day, was also presented. On our last night in Anaheim, Tony Orlando put on a musical show highlighted by "Tie a Yellow Ribbon," the unofficial anthem of our return home after Vietnam.

The photo of POWs in military formation was taken in the Pig Sty courtyard of the Cu Loc (Zoo) prison on March 28, 1972, the day before we flew to freedom. We formed up like that because we (1) knew the Four Power Commission would be arriving, (2) the international press corps would be with them and (3) it would embarrass and irritate the prison commander. During our formal evening, the men who appeared in the photo had our picture taken in front of it.



Golden Anniversaries are always important times for us to reflect on resilience and longevity. For those of us who fought and nearly died, these opportunities have been times to share those memories with our wives, children, and grandchildren.

from the CEO



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This is our summer Bulletin and hoping a very enjoyable one for you and your family.

On April 22nd the National POW Museum celebrated its 25th anniversary. It was a great experience to attend the function. The Museum and entire park grounds looked amazing with all the flags flying on a bright and beautiful day. The National Park Service did a wonderful job preparing the site for the celebration, led by Superintendent Gia Wagner. The ceremony was highlighted by a number of key speakers to discuss the challenges in making the Museums a reality. There were so many challenges yet with the leadership and hard work by many, it was accomplished. For the EX-POWs, it is the center piece honoring and preserving the history of our nation's POWs. That statement in no way diminishes the honor and patriotism of Arlington National Cemetery and many others throughout the country for the final resting place of so many of our EX-POWs and their families.

Although the entire program was great, for me the highlight was Sally Morgan speaking about her experiences as a civilian detainee. Her way of telling her story brought us all back 75+ years ago, experiencing the fear, the unknown, the pain, hunger, and the relief of being liberated. Sally, thank you for sharing. I watched the audience and everyone was moved by your story.

For those of our readers who are EX-POWs, I encourage you to continue sharing your experiences. For the NOKs, family members, and friends, you also have a voice. I continue to challenge all of us to contribute in our own way of preserving the legacy of our EX-POWs.

Over the recent months there has been a lot of attention directed towards our federal government spending, budgets far exceeding tax revenues, raising the debt ceiling, raising taxes, and where cuts can be made. Government spending relative to tax revenues is out of control and it is selfish on our part as a society to overspend today so our children and grandchildren can pay for it tomorrow. We need to take the high ground and focus on what our country needs to maintain its position as a global leader, provide the opportunity to maintain or raise the standard of living for our citizens, and care for those in true need. The basics to establish the above starts with a strong country which means a well-staffed, well trained and well-equipped military. Our military is not the place to cut. Any cuts there compromise our current position as a world leader and threatens

to erode our ability to attract quality recruits in the future. One disappointing opinion was expressed by the Washington Post suggesting America balance its budget on one of the key programs for veterans. We need to remind our government officials that benefits for the veterans are earned benefits. The key word earned. Of all the government programs where checks are issued to citizens, veteran's benefits must be way down the list far below the social programs which are strictly government policy derived. There shall be no compromise.

Looking forward, the Department of Defense budget request for fiscal year 2024 which among many other areas includes funds to enable the U.S. to counter growing international threats. It also includes a 5.2% military pay increase. Although large by recent standards, it is not unexpected considering the high inflation experienced over the past two years. That coupled with the fact that our Armed Services is increasingly challenged in attracting recruits.

The world is an ever-increasing dangerous place and the strength of our nation is critical. As a country, our challenges are many, none more pressing than protecting our borders. Our government officials need to join hands and work together, objectively, to solve our problems. And yes, that is asking a lot of our elected officials.

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Greetings from Andersonville!



We just completed a very busy Memorial Day weekend with 5 events occurring over 4 days. On Saturday, nearly 300 scouts and volunteers from the community came to help us put a flag on each veteran's grave marker and The Dixie Crows provided lunch for everyone in attendance. Sunday was our usual Memorial Day ceremony with Retired US Army Col. Rob Choppa providing a very moving keynote speech. Congressman Bishop and Fred

Boyles also spoke. On Monday, the Knights of Columbus held a service with about 300 in attendance.



Help placing the flags for Memorial Day came from unexpected sources.

On Monday afternoon we had a funeral for the formerly MIA, Medal of Honor recipient from the war in Korea, Corporal Luther Story. Governor Kemp, a representative from the Korean embassy, the Deputy Director of the DPAA, Congressman Bishop, and 3 state Congresspeople were in attendance along with numerous news media. The full military honors funeral also included a flyover by 2 Blackhawk helicopters and Major General Tom Carden provided the eulogy. It was a very moving experience for the nearly 1200 in attendance.

The work of the DPAA is amazing and so vital to our military families. As a child, Luther grew up nearby and attended school in Plains and in Americus. We are grateful he is finally coming home after his death in combat during the Korean War nearly 73 years ago. The story of his bravery and selflessness at just 18 years old is remarkable.

Museum attendance has continued to grow as schools are back to regular field trip

schedules. Museum staff are working on Revolutionary War POW stories and programs and will likely be traveling to the National Archives in the coming months to conduct research.

In staffing news, we have received funding for 3 positions through the Inflation Reduction Act and we are hiring a Museum Curator and a Visual Information Specialist to focus on the museum collections and marketing the park and the National POW Museum. The other position will be focused on historic preservation of our structures, monuments, and historic trees. We are hopeful they will be in place by the holidays this year.

I hope each of you has a wonderful summer, we look forward to hearing from you. As always, the National Park Service is grateful for our wonderful partnerships with AXPOW and the Friends of Andersonville. You make our work possible, meaningful, and relevant.

Below: photo from our recent 25th Anniversary celebration at the National Prisoner of War Museum on April 22nd. Civilian POW Sally Morgan speaking

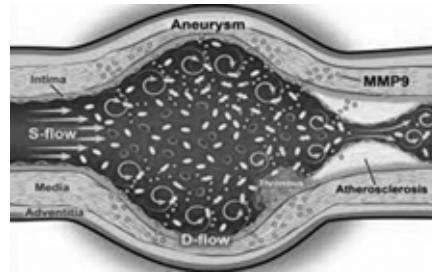


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Brain Aneurism



An aneurysm is a bulge in a blood vessel caused by a weakness in the blood vessel wall, usually where it branches.

As blood passes through the weakened blood vessel, the blood pressure causes a small area to bulge outwards like a balloon.

Aneurysms can develop in any blood vessel in the body, but the 2 most common places are:

- the artery that transports blood away from the heart to the rest of the body (the abdominal aorta)
- the brain

This topic is about brain aneurysms.

About brain aneurysms

The medical term for an aneurysm that develops inside the brain is an intracranial or cerebral aneurysm.

Most brain aneurysms only cause noticeable symptoms if they burst (rupture).

This leads to an extremely serious condition known as

a subarachnoid hemorrhage, where bleeding caused by the ruptured aneurysm can cause extensive brain damage and symptoms.

Symptoms of an unruptured brain aneurysm

A brain aneurysm rarely causes any symptoms unless it bursts (ruptures).

Unruptured brain aneurysms occasionally cause symptoms if they're particularly large or press against tissues or nerves inside the brain.

Symptoms of an unruptured brain aneurysm can include:

- visual disturbances, such as loss of vision or double vision
- pain above or around your eye
- numbness or weakness on 1 side of your face
- difficulty speaking
- headaches
- loss of balance

- difficulty concentrating or problems with short-term memory

You should see a physician as soon as possible if you experience symptoms of an unruptured brain aneurysm.

Although most aneurysms will not rupture, it's important to get it checked in case treatment is necessary.

Ruptured brain aneurysm

Symptoms of a ruptured brain aneurysm usually begin with a sudden agonizing headache. It's been likened to being hit on the head, resulting in a blinding pain unlike anything experienced before.

Other symptoms of a ruptured brain aneurysm also tend to come on suddenly and may include:

- feeling or being sick
- a stiff neck or neck pain
- sensitivity to light
- blurred or double vision

medsearch, cont'd...

- sudden confusion
- loss of consciousness
- fits (seizures)
- weakness on 1 side of the body or in any limbs

Medical emergency

A ruptured brain aneurysm is a medical emergency. Call 911 immediately and ask for an ambulance if someone's experiencing symptoms of a ruptured brain aneurysm.

Diagnosis

A brain aneurysm is usually diagnosed using angiography.

Angiography is a type of X-ray used to check blood vessels.

This involves inserting a needle, usually in the groin, through which a narrow tube called a catheter can be guided into one of your blood vessels.

Local anesthetic is used where the needle is inserted, so you won't feel any pain.

Using a series of X-rays displayed on a monitor, the catheter is guided into the blood vessels in the neck that supply the brain with blood.

Once in place, special dye is injected into the arteries of the brain through the catheter.

This dye casts a shadow on an X-ray, so the outline of the blood vessels can be seen and an aneurysm can be recognized if one is present.

Occasionally, angiography may be done using scans instead of X-rays. These scans are called magnetic resonance angiography or CT angiography.

Magnetic resonance angiography (an MRI scan) is usually used to look for aneurysms in the brain that haven't ruptured. This type of scan uses strong magnetic fields and radio waves to produce detailed images of your brain.

CT angiography is usually preferred if it's thought the aneurysm has ruptured and there's bleeding on the brain (subarachnoid hemorrhage).

This type of scan takes a series of X-rays, which are then assembled by a computer into a detailed 3D image.

In some cases, a ruptured aneurysm is not picked up by a CT scan. If a CT scan is negative but your symptoms strongly suggest you have a ruptured aneurysm, a test called a lumbar puncture will usually be carried out.

A lumbar puncture is a procedure where a needle is inserted into the lower part of the spine to remove a sample of the fluid (cerebrospinal fluid) that surrounds and supports the brain and spinal cord. This fluid can be analyzed for signs of bleeding.

Screening

There's no routine screening program for brain aneurysms and it's unlikely that one will be introduced in future.

Screening is only recommended for people thought to have a significant risk of having a brain

aneurysm that could rupture at some point in the future.

This would usually only apply to you if you had 2 or more first-degree relatives (father, mother, sister or brother) who experienced a subarachnoid hemorrhage.

If this applies to you, contact your GP. They'll be able to refer you to a specialist clinic for further assessment if needed.

Discovering you have an aneurysm unsuitable for surgical treatment can cause worry and distress, even though the risk of it rupturing is small. Some people have reported regret at getting screened.

There are no right or wrong answers, but it's important you discuss the potential implications of screening with the staff at the clinic.

Screening may also be recommended if you have a condition that increases your chances of developing a brain aneurysm, such as autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease.

How brain aneurysms are treated

If a brain aneurysm is detected before it ruptures, treatment may be recommended to prevent it rupturing in future.

Most aneurysms do not rupture, so treatment is only carried out if the risk of a rupture is particularly high.

Factors that affect whether treatment is recommended include your age, the size and

medsearch, cont'd...

position of the aneurysm, your family medical history, and any other health conditions you have.

If treatment is recommended, this usually involves either filling the aneurysm with tiny metal coils (coiling) or an open operation to seal it shut with a tiny metal clip (surgical clipping).

The same techniques used to prevent ruptures are also used to treat brain aneurysms that have already ruptured.

If your risk of a rupture is low, you'll have regular check-ups to monitor your aneurysm.

You may also be given medicine to reduce your blood pressure and advice about ways you can reduce your chances of a rupture, such as stopping smoking if you smoke.

There continue to be debates about screening for cerebral aneurysms because of the expense. Further, there is a significant debate on the ideal management of a small intracranial aneurysm. Most experts agree that once an aneurysm reaches 7 mm or more, treatment should be undertaken.

Why brain aneurysms develop

Exactly what causes the wall of affected blood vessels to weaken is still unclear, although risk factors have been identified.

These include:

- smoking
- high blood pressure

- a family history of brain aneurysms

In some cases, an aneurysm may develop because there was a weakness in the walls of the blood vessels at birth.

Who's affected

It's difficult to estimate exactly how many people are affected by brain aneurysms because they usually cause no symptoms and pass undetected.

Some experts believe it could be as high as 1 in 20 people, while others think the figure is much lower at around 1 in 100 people.

The number of aneurysms that actually rupture is much smaller.

Brain aneurysms can develop in anyone at any age, but are more common in people over the age of 40.

Women tend to be affected more commonly than men.

Preventing brain aneurysms

The best way to prevent getting an aneurysm, or reduce the risk of an aneurysm growing bigger and possibly rupturing, is to avoid activities that could damage your blood vessels.

You can't always prevent brain aneurysms, but you can lower your risk by not smoking and by reducing high blood pressure.

Smoking

If you smoke, stopping can significantly reduce your risk of developing a brain aneurysm.

If you're committed to giving up smoking but don't want to be referred to a stop smoking service, your GP should be able to prescribe medical treatment to help with any withdrawal symptoms you may have after quitting.

High blood pressure

Having high blood pressure can also significantly increase your chance of developing a brain aneurysm.

You can help reduce high blood pressure by:

- eating a healthy diet – in particular, cutting down on salt and eating plenty of fruit and vegetables
- moderating your alcohol intake – men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week
- maintaining a healthy weight – even losing just a few pounds will make a big difference to your blood pressure and overall health
- exercising regularly – being active and taking regular exercise lowers blood pressure by keeping your heart and blood vessels in good condition
- cutting down on caffeine – it's fine to drink tea, coffee and other caffeine-rich drinks as part of a balanced diet, but it's important these drinks aren't your only source of fluid.

Patient Education

Patient education about cerebral aneurysms is critical as 10% die before even reaching the emergency department.

National Library of Medicine
8600 Rockville Pike
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PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITIES

Public Law 97-37

by William Paul Skelton, III, MD
F.A.C.P.

All ex-POWs should keep these. Whenever you open your claim, take them with you and make sure the adjudication officer sees them and have him read them! Make sure he knows all about them. Tell him your own story as it relates to your problem.....

1. ARTHRITIS, TRAUMATIC

Also known as articular trauma.

2. AVITAMINOSIS

The total lack of vitamins in the diet.

3. BERIBERI

Caused by a severe lack of vitamin B1 (thiamine) in the diet.

4. DYSENTERY, CHRONIC

A disease characterized by frequent and watery stools, usually with blood and mucus, and accompanied by rectal and abdominal pain, fever, and dehydration.

5. FROSTBITE

The actual freezing of tissue.

6. HELMINTHIASIS

Infection with any type of worms that parasitize the human.

7. MALNUTRITION

Merely means bad nutrition.

8. PELLAGRA

It is caused by a virtual lack of vitamin B3 (niacin) in the diet.

9. ANY OTHER NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCY

The lack of protein and calories in the diet generally produces no lasting side effects.

10. PSYCHOSIS

A generic term for any of the insanities.

11. PANIC DISORDER

Characterized by discrete periods of apprehension or fear.

12. GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

13. OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

This may be either obsessions or compulsions.

14. POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

The re-experiencing of a trauma of a past recognized stress or that can produce symptoms of distress.

15. ATYPICAL ANXIETY DISORDER

This is a category that is used for diagnosis when the affected individual appears to have an anxiety disorder that does not meet the criteria for entry into any of the other known anxiety disorders.

16. DEPRESSIVE NEUROSIS /DYSTHYMIC DISORDER

Characterized by depressive periods in which the patient feels sad and/or down and has a loss of interest in the usual activities that cause pleasure or involvement in usual pastimes.

17. PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Literally Greek for the suffering of nerves outside of the brain and spinal cord.

18. IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common disorder of the intestines that leads to crampy pain, gas, bloating, and changes in bowel habits.

19. PEPTIC ULCER DISEASE

A peptic ulcer is a sore or hole in the lining of the stomach or duodenum (the first part of the small intestine).

20. CIRRHOSIS

Scar tissue replaces normal, healthy tissue, blocking the flow of blood through the organ and preventing it from working as it should.

21. STROKE & COMPLICATIONS

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is suddenly interrupted or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, spilling blood into the spaces surrounding brain cells.

22. HEART & COMPLICATIONS

Heart disease includes atherosclerotic heart disease, and hypertensive vascular disease (including hypertensive heart disease, and hypertension).

23. OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis is a disease in which bones become fragile and more likely to break.

Disability compensation is a monetary benefit paid to Veterans who are determined by VA to be disabled by an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during active military service. These disabilities are considered to be service connected.

To be eligible for compensation, the Veteran must have been separated or discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

Monthly disability compensation varies with the degree of disability and the number of eligible dependents. Veterans with certain severe disabilities may be eligible for additional special monthly compensation (SMC). Disability compensation benefits are not subject to federal or state income tax.

FROM ENEMIES TO FRIENDS

Robert Certain



On February 17, fifty-nine Americans and six Canadians met in Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) Vietnam for an excursion through Vietnam and Cambodia. The group included eight men who were POWs in Hanoi during the war along with their families and friends. Three of the men spent over 2,000 days each in captivity and were subjected to horrendous conditions and torture. The other five were held less than a year, including three of us from the Linebacker II bombing of Hanoi, which resulted in the signing of the Paris Peace Accords and the release of all of us in the winter and spring of 1973.

We began our sojourn with a day exploring the bustling city of Saigon before boarding the Uniworld River Cruise's *Mekong Jewel* for a cruise up the Mekong River. Our first stop was to tour the Cú Chi Tunnels and to view not only samples of various booby-traps used to maim or kill our troops, but also several examples of B-52 bomb craters. As we cruised up the river, we saw lots of commercial river traffic, multiple patches of water hyacinth, and small

tributaries into little villages we were able to visit via sampan.

On February 22, we left Vietnam and entered Cambodia. On our first stop, we visited a local village to observe the weaving of traditional Khmer scarves. The next day we stopped in Phnom Penh, toured the city via tuk-tuk (a small carriage pulled by a motorcycle), visiting the presidential palace and other sights in this very busy city. February 24 was perhaps the most profound and memorable experience of the entire journey – visits to S-21, the former high school that Pol Pot and Khmer Rouge turned into a prison and torture facility and now serves as their Genocide Museum. While there we met one of the seven men who survived the experience before traveling out to the Killing Fields where thousands of Cambodians were buried in mass graves. In both places we saw monuments to the horror of Pol Pot stating "Never will we forget the crimes committed during the Democratic Kampuchea Regime." Modern Cambodians have learned the lesson taught by George Santayana, "Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it."



Killing Fields Memorial

After that dark and sober experience, we continued our cruise up the Mekong to visit a school where children were eagerly learning English, the stopped at a Buddhist temple for a water blessing. We then arrived at Siem Reap and checked into the Sofitel Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort.



Angkor Wat

After enjoying a city tour, we were off to visit the ruins of the Angkor Wat Temple. The following day we toured the Angkor Thom Temple ruins and the ruins used to film the movie *Tomb Raider*.



B-52 Museum, Hanoi

On March 1 we flew from Siem Reap Cambodia to Hanoi Vietnam for a three-night stay in the Intercontinental Westlake Hotel. In the fifty years since we left that city as newly-repatriated officers of the US armed forces, Hanoi (along with other parts of that nation) has become a very large city marked by high-rise buildings and modern industry. The next day we visited the John McCain marker located next to the lake where he was captured, the Kham Thein B52 Memorial and the Hanoi Hilton Museum – our bucket-list destination. Very little remains of the old Hoa Lo Prison other than the front wall, which is accurately topped by broken glass bottles and electric wires.



Hanoi Hilton

Inside the front gate is a small visitors' center and along inside of the street wall are artifacts of the prison as it was used by the French to house and abuse Vietnamese prisoners. Very little reference is made of the way the

Vietnamese treated American prisoners, though I did find my name and photograph in several places, both in the Hanoi Hilton and the B-52 Museum. We completed our visit to Hanoi with a bus trip to the vestige of the Son Tay prison camp where an effort was made to rescue the POWs held there. March 6 marked the 50th anniversary of freedom for two of our travelers – Ed Hubbard (2420 days) and Wayne Waddell (2070 days). They had their photo taken at the prison gate, then joined their wives to board their flight home on Vietnam Airways.



At our farewell dinner, we were joined by a retired Vietnam Air Force MiG-21 pilot who shot down a USAF pilot (who was rescued) and was later shot down by another USAF pilot. He has visited the USA multiple times and developed friendships with both men. His observation was that "during the war, we were fighting for our countries; after the war we have no need to be enemies." It was clear to me that there was no animosity toward Americans among the many people we met in both Vietnam and Cambodia. Part of that is attributed to their Buddhist culture, and part of it to the youth of the population in both countries. Since the Clinton presidency, Vietnam has been a significant trading partner with the US, and they are now building electric vehicles in California under their VinFast brand to compete with Tesla and other EVs.



The Military Officers Association of America sent along a reporter for the trip and his article will appear in the June issue of their magazine. Once we arrived in Hanoi another reporter (whose father flew two B-52 missions during Linebacker II) joined us to gain insight for his article, which will appear in the November issue of *Smithsonian Magazine*. Both magazines will post their articles, photos, and videos on their respective websites.

The wives of us eight POWs have listened to our war stories for the last fifty years. We were all very pleased to have them with us on this journey to see the relics of our time in two of the prisons where Americans were held – as well as enjoying the company of travelers on the Mekong and in the capital city.



Linebacker II POWs. Robert Certain, the first captured, is in the nose

pow/mia

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“
Vietnam War End and Homecoming
remembered – 50th Anniversary

As in every time in the past where I have had the opportunity to meet with former POWs, or Medal of Honor recipients, I have been humbled by their stories, their humor, and their grace. While all are heroes in my eyes, many have restated that praise to note it was not them, but those that lost their lives or never made it home that are the true heroes.

No matter – I was honored to spend 5 days in California May 22-26, among my heroes. Anaheim, Yorba Linda and the Nixon Library hosted an extraordinary week of events to celebrate 50 years of Freedom for those Vietnam POWs that made it home in 1973. More than 150 POWs and their family members were present.

The joy was only tempered by the cancellation of several POWs who were ill, and the loss of 2 POWs just prior to the reunion, and one (not attending) during the reunion. Power point presentations

As of Feb. 28, 2023, the number of Americans Missing and Unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War remains at 1,579 .

There are 81,613 still unaccounted for US Military personnel since 1941.

ran all week in the Ready Room, noting all those that had passed after Homecoming.

From dinners, parades, vintage cars, and whole schools to tribute labeled bottles of “Fighter Pilot Red,” the events were emotional to say the least.

The wine came with a note that said “This wine is named in honor of those courageous aviators who have put themselves in harm’s way – you truly have a flavor for life the protected will never know. Enjoy!” from Smoot and Healey at the Bella Luna Estate Winery. BTW – they offer “Rotor Head Red” too.

I can tell you – patriotism is not dead. Seeing blocks of red white and blue dressed Patriots, waving flags, with their dogs dressed in bow ties to match the occasions, school kids lining the sidewalks waving hand-made signs thanking the POW returnees, was enough to take your breath away as tears swelled – and I was just a guest in a bus, watching the parade from an amazing view as it crawled past blocks of people – there for the POWs in the bus.

The formal dinner, at the Nixon library, had a menu that mirrored “that which was served at the White House 50 years ago on May 24, 1973.” It included “Seafood Plate ‘Neptune,’ Roasted Filet of Beef, and Strawberry ‘Frazier.’” VIPS attending included Jim Byron, President and CEO of the Nixon Library Foundation; Ross Perot Jr; Ambassador Robert O’Brien, as well as Medal of Honor recipient Bob Patterson with video remarks by Dr. Henry Kissinger and Senator Tom Carper

I hope that every returned Prisoner of War has had a chance to be welcomed home with flags and parades, hugs and tears of joy, and wishes for a happy, long life as I witnessed again with this group of fine men. Each has earned it, and can never be thanked enough, or even often enough, for their and their family’s sacrifice.

Coverage of the 50th Anniversary of the end of the War and our POW’s return was extensive across the nation. Once again, a somber motorcycle rally was held in Washington D.C. advocating for those left behind, as well as for the problem of Veteran’s suicides over the Memorial Day holiday. Hundreds of thousands of bikes rode in a public display of support, making sure these issues are “not forgotten.” This year’s ride was organized by AMVETS, as “Rolling to Remember.” As always – you could hear the “thunder roar” as they rode thru D.C.

Several States hosted “Rolling Thunder” rides locally. North Chicago had a 54 mile run across Illinois, with Rolling Thunder Chapter NC-5 riding near Jacksonville and Florida Chapter 1, road near Brevard with a B-52H flyover.

pow/mia cont'd...

Meanwhile, excavations and remains identification continue at a snail's pace. Since January 1, 2023, five from WWII have been identified, three from the Korean Conflict, and two from Vietnam. Identifications for FY 2023 show 51 from WWII, 25 from the Korean War, zero from the Cold War and 3 from the Vietnam War.

DPAA notes several family meetings are still scheduled for 2023 - June 29-30, Washington, DC (Nam) August 17-18, Arlington, VA (Korea/Cold War), and November 04, Kansas City, KS.

Earlier family meetings saw 252 attending in February in Orlando, with 162 family members coming for the first time. Dallas in March had 367 family members, with 197 attending for the first time. WWII families attending were 177, Korean War families numbered 83, Cold War just 1, and Vietnam had 33.

The answers cannot come fast enough.

Civilian

STIC Signature Songs (and Sources) by Martin Meadows

Music in a WWII Internment Camp
Permission from philippineinternment.com

Introduction. "Music is the art of arranging sound. It is one of the universal cultural aspects of all human societies" ([Wikipedia](#)).

Similarly, music is also a key element — interestingly, perhaps oddly — of internment-camp life, although that is not always fully acknowledged, or even recognized. As such, music is one component in such camps of what I call the Diversion Factor. The latter encompasses those activities that can serve at least two important functions: acting as a unifying element for camp prisoners; and offering them distractions from the burdensome reality of captivity. The concern here, in other words, is only with those activities that can unify and/or be enjoyed by a camp's inmates as a whole, as distinguished from their purely personal or group pastimes/distractions (card games, chess, reading, etc.).

The next section will trace the nature and scope of the Diversion Factor in a particular internment Camp, to provide context for examining that Camp's musical component (Camp is capitalized to distinguish it from the generic internment camp). But to begin with, three points of clarification relating to the title are in order. First, for anyone unfamiliar with the subject, the acronym STIC refers to Manila's Nipponese-controlled Santo Tomas Internment Camp (a.k.a. Manila Internment Camp). STIC's 4,000 or so civilian inmates — Allied-country nationals, mostly Americans — endured over three years of privation (1942-1945), culminating in



starvation rations, during World War II (WWII).

Second, the term "Signature Songs" refers to those musical works I consider to be the most reflective and representative of everyday Camp existence, and thus in a sense also of Camp history in general. In effect, the four compositions I have selected as Signature Songs are the equivalent of Camp theme songs, even anthems, and as such their study can provide insights, for former internees and especially for non-internees alike, into the nature of Camp life. Rephrased to drive the point home, this survey of the most noteworthy STIC-related music seeks to portray its role in and significance for Camp life — as based, again, on my own judgment.

Third, this study aims to ascertain the sources — meaning the composers and the recording artists — of the four Signature Songs. For this account goes beyond simply identifying and describing the songs in question. The fact is that information about sources — aside from being worthwhile (to some) for its own sake — can provide additional insights into Camp history. Last (and surely least), the very process of seeking such information (regardless of success) serves to satisfy my personal interests, including my sense of order. But enough of preliminaries; we now turn to the substantive portions of this STIC-music retrospective.

The STIC Context. STIC's four Signature Songs will be discussed after presentation of some essential context. Based on personal experience, it is a simple matter to discern the major components of the Diversion Factor in STIC, of which there were four. Granted, some might propose others, such as that of education; but that affected segments of the Camp separately, and not the Camp as a

whole. Nor is it plausible to believe that most non-adult students viewed the educational process as a pleasurable diversion rather than as an inevitable fact of pre-adulthood. Regardless, the first two components, of the four to be examined, provided by far the most popular Camp diversions, as indicated next.

(1) Indisputably one of the two most popular of the Diversion Factor's four components — easily ascertained by audience turnout — was the entertainment provided by motion pictures. During the first two years of STIC's existence (actually, mostly during the second year), there were 24 screenings of pre-WWII U.S. movies. Often those movies were preceded by Nipponese propaganda films; to put it charitably, in effect the latter served as (unwelcome) substitutes for the "selected short subjects" — newsreels, cartoons, etc. — that were commonplace in that era. [Note: It should be pointed out that movie-sourced music was ineligible for consideration as Signature Songs.]

[Sidebar. Should there be any question as to their number, I have a list of those 24 movies — on which, for example, the first title is *The Feminine Touch*, a 1941 film that starred Rosalind Russell and Don Ameche. Coincidentally, during the nearly two months between liberation and my family's departure from STIC, the U. S. military also showed 24 movies (much more recent ones, of course), whose titles I also recorded. Note: I penciled in both lists in a parallel row on the back of page 8 of a neatly-penned pre-WWII Santo Tomas U. chemistry exam, which I scrounged after class one day on the fourth floor of the Main Building.]

(2) At least as popular as the movies, if not more so, were the Camp's much more frequently-

presented stage shows. (These were a.k.a. floor shows, variety shows, and — by F. H. Stevens — vaudeville shows.) These productions of course relied exclusively on internee talent. There were many kinds of programs — plays, sketches, comedic skits, quiz contests, concerts, etc. They were organized primarily by a pre-war professional entertainer, the widely beloved David Harvey MacTurk (sometimes misspelled McTurk). Known almost exclusively by his professional name of Dave Harvey, he headed the Camp's Entertainment Committee, among other things (more on him below, and in a future article).

[Sidebar. At first, stage shows were held in the cramped quarters of the West Patio within the Main Building. Eventually both the stage shows and the movies were presented, respectively, on the platform and on the screen that internees constructed on the west end of the plaza in front of the Main Building. That location came to be known as "The Little Theater Under the Stars." It was around the plaza that many internees (often including me) would assemble before they were allowed to place their chairs on the plaza itself; they gathered early in order to be able to reserve the most favorable spots for viewing the evening's entertainment.]

(3) A third component was that of sports activities, some of which often attracted relatively sizable audiences. These included most of the so-called major sports (and others as well), including basketball (with leagues for both males and females, further divided into age groups); baseball; softball; soccer; football (I recall teams called Packers and Bears, named after U. S. pro teams); and even boxing (males only — that was long before female boxing entered the sports scene). [Note: I have a complete

Civilian, cont'd...

list of the starting five players on all the basketball teams in the age-group league in which I participated.]

[Sidebar. Sports events were held on the spacious front grounds of the Camp — basketball southeast of the Main Building (on an earthen court), and field events to its southwest. Boxing was staged in the evenings in a location called “The Starlight Arena,” south of the Main Building, surrounded by trees. According to my copy of a “Boxing Program” for 26 March 1943 (“program price 10 centavos”), the weight categories of the participants that evening ranged all the way from atomweight (40-49 pounds) through electronweight, paperweight, fleaweight, gnatweight, antweight, mothweight, junior flyweight, flyweight, bantamweight, and junior welterweight; categories ranging up to heavyweight were not scheduled that evening.]

(4) The fourth component — at last we cut to the chase — was music, which served as a Camp-wide diversion through two major sources. One involved the aforementioned stage shows, which are self-explanatory as a source of music, especially via the many concerts — both choral and orchestral — that were presented, in addition to the other kinds of entertainment listed earlier. The other major source of music was the Camp’s public-address system, which was hooked up to an array of strategically-located loudspeakers. This source was important enough to merit additional attention.

The public-address system served at least three major functions: (a) disseminating Camp news, announcements, and orders, from both Nipponese and internee leaders; (b) presenting various kinds of entertainment, including 90-minute evening recorded “concerts” (more on that later); and (c) arousing the Camp every morning, by playing a musical number (about which also more later). And in addition, the public-address system came to be used in a much more interesting — musically interesting — manner, as described next.

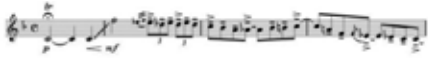
During the third year of internment, as U. S. forces drew closer to the Philippines in 1944, internee disc jockeys employed a clever musical method to inform internees about the war in a way that the Nipponese would not understand. As F. H. Stevens explains in his indispensable book *Santo Tomas Internment Camp: 1942-1945*, “The title[s] of the records played called attention to some news topic[s] of the day.” He provides a number of examples of such records as they related to both Camp and non-Camp developments, the latter dealing entirely with the war.

[Note: here is a link to Stevens’ lengthy bio, on Tom Moore’s website: <https://cnac.org/emilscott/stevens01.htm> .]

[Sidebar a. Stevens’ examples include: when it was rumored that Hitler had been killed, “The Wicked Witch Is Dead”; when American planes began bombing in the Manila area, “Pennies From Heaven”; when there was a lull in the bombing, “Lover Come Back to Me”; when the Nipponese military took full control of the Camp, “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf”; when internees were ordered to turn in all of their money, “I Got Plenty of Nothing”; and “There’s Something In the Air” when an American pilot dropped goggles into the Main Building’s East Patio, with the famous attached note indicating that liberation was close at hand.]

[Sidebar b. There are three versions of that famous note’s message that I know of. All versions agree that the note said “Roll out the barrel,” and they agree that there was a second sentence (that may or may not be true; I did not see the note). But they disagree as to what it said — “The gang’s all here”; “Santa Claus is coming Sunday or Monday” (it turned out to be Saturday night); and “There’ll be a hot time in the old town tonight.” As a result of this apparently unresolved issue, whenever I refer to the note I simply cite its first — perhaps its only? — line (as I did in a short piece, “Santo Tomas Liberation,” which Cliff Mills reproduced, from the *Amcham Philippines Business Journal*, on his *Philippine Internment* site.)]

But while outwitting their captors in the manner Stevens describes certainly helped to boost internee morale, obviously the cited records, played only transiently as they were, cannot validly be regarded as a significant part of STIC history. But this study seeks to show that four compositions in particular do meet that criterion and thus qualify as Signature Songs. Of those four, moreover, in my opinion at least two indisputably would merit inclusion in a hypothetical STIC Hall of Fame (musical or otherwise). I also believe (without evidence) that most STIC alumni would agree (or would have agreed, had they been asked) on those two songs. They also might even agree on the other two songs — depending, of course, on how persuasive their ensuing coverage is. Regardless, a reminder is in order before we proceed — all such judgments are purely personal, based on my own assessment of the historical record. Now on with the (musical) show.



Signature Song #1. The first of the four songs is the only one that was written and composed entirely by STIC internees. Moreover, its two creators clearly intended it to serve as the equivalent of a STIC anthem, as its title "Internee Song" indicates. Thus it would seem to be an exemplification of a Signature Song, which is why it is included herein and why it is the first of the four to be discussed. On the other hand, how, if at all, do the preceding statements square with the fact that, as best as I have been able to determine, until as recently as 2013 "Internee Song" had been virtually unknown to — and in any case unmentioned by — STIC alumni?

To deal with that problem requires answers to three basic questions, as follows: (1) What circumstances enabled "Internee Song" to emerge from obscurity and (re)gain recognition in 2013? (2) How and why did a composition now deemed to be a Signature Song happen to lose — or, perhaps more accurately, fail to gain — recognition in the first place (as claimed above)? (3) Who were the individuals — in other words, the sources — primarily responsible for both the song's creation and its revival? These questions will be answered in turn.

(1) As noted, "Internee Song" was virtually unknown anywhere, including the U.S., until 2013 (for reasons explained below). Undoubtedly it would have remained in limbo had not an Australian digital publication, *Come the Revolution*, published an article on 26 April 2013 entitled "War camp mass has Aussie premiere." Written by Alex Mitchell, it included background on STIC, accounts of the two creators of the Mass (of whom more below), and also the lyrics of "Internee Song" (which

could have implied a connection between the two compositions, as discussed further below). The occasion for the premiere was that it was the 70th anniversary of the first and only previous performance of the Mass, which took place on 25 April 1943, in the Fathers Garden adjacent to STIC grounds. Shortly thereafter, "Internee Song" debuted at a Camp concert on 22 May 1943. (The Australian angle is explained below.)

Yet despite the publicity it received in Australia, "Internee Song" might well have continued to languish in obscurity in the U. S. — except for one noteworthy development. Cliff Mills, while doing research on another subject in 2015, fortuitously came across the Mitchell article. He thereupon posted a report of his discovery, entitled "The STIC Internees' Song," on his *Philippine Internment* site on 11 March 2015. Yet despite what I considered to be its obvious significance, I observed no online reactions whatsoever to Cliff's post. That fact — the import of something that did not happen, somewhat reminiscent of Holmes' dog that did not bark — could be interpreted (and I choose to so interpret it) as consequential: in this case, as confirmation of the song's former obscurity.

[Sidebar. Cliff's post on [Philippine Internment](#) is reproduced below. The STIC Internees' Song by Cliff Mills

While researching the background of Santo Tomas internee Blakey Borthwick Laycock, who was executed by the Japanese in 1942, I came across a 2013 article titled *War camp mass has Aussie premiere* about a song for the internees written by entertainer Dave Harvey and composer Mario Bakerini-Booth. According to the article, "It was absolutely predictable ..." [Read more of this post](#)

Cliff Mills | March 11, 2015 at 2:54 pm | Categories: Articles, Internee stories | URL:<http://wp.me/p49RCb-mD>
 (2) Once "Internee Song" had been rediscovered, another question almost inevitably arose: if that song indeed had been little-known or unknown among former internees, as appeared to be the case, how is it possible to explain such an apparently puzzling situation concerning a composition explicitly intended to be the STIC anthem? Following are some plausible reasons.

- (a) First, as already noted, it can be inferred from the aforementioned Mitchell article that "Internee Song" had religious origins or was religion-related in some way. Whether or not such a perception was correct, it could have worked against — as well as for — the song's general acceptance.
 - (b) Regardless of the presence of any such perception, the humorless and relatively somber tone of "Internee Song" likely did not mesh with the natural preference of many if not most internees for livelier and more upbeat musical fare.
 - (c) That leads directly to a related factor: "Internee Song" did not appear on the scene until 22 May 1943; whereas more than a year earlier, on 24 March 1942, a stage show had introduced an amusing and far more entertaining composition — one which is now Signature Song #3. The future #3 completely overshadowed "Internee Song" when the latter debuted, and it continued to do so.
 - (d) Finally, and perhaps most important, the predominance of #3 was reinforced when, after the debut of "Internee Song," any and all of its further performances were prohibited, which thus helped to prevent it from gaining broader acceptance among internees.
- (3) Turning to the question of sources, this one is easy to answer.

civilian, cont'd...

The co-creators of "Internee Song" — Dave Harvey (lyrics) and Mario Bakerini-Booth (music) — were extensively involved in Camp entertainment activities and thus were very well-known among internees.

□ (a) As noted earlier, Harvey was a professional entertainer before WWII. He had performed throughout Asia, and he continued as a performer when he arrived in the Philippines (probably in 1939) for good. In view of his background, therefore, it was virtually inevitable that Harvey became the Camp's Mr. Entertainment. Among other things, he was head of the Entertainment Committee, and he performed in several capacities on his stage shows, in addition to serving as MC. He needs no introduction to STIC alumni.

□ (b) Dave Harvey's good friend in STIC was a musician named Mario Bakerini-Booth (hereafter cited as MBB). An Italian who became a British citizen, he organized a dance band which performed throughout Europe during the 1930s. The start of WWII forced the band to leave Europe, whence it headed for Asia, where it eventually ended up in Shanghai. Later, with WWII approaching the Pacific, MBB and his wife left China, but the Pearl Harbor attack forced their Singapore-bound ship to detour to Manila. Being British citizens, they were interned by the Nipponese. In STIC, among other things his work with Harvey — in addition to "Internee Song" — involved the presentation of a number of concerts. After liberation he and his wife moved to Australia, which explains why the previously-described premiere of his STIC Mass took place there. [Note: There will be more about MBB in a future article on Dave Harvey.]

Justifiably or not, we will now proceed on the basis of two related assumptions: that the three questions raised earlier have been adequately answered; and that those answers explain the selection of "Internee Song" as a Signature Song. If those assumptions are incorrect, that is chiefly attributable to the song's early history as well as to its subsequent lengthy tenure in the ranks of the forgotten. As those factors do not apply to the same extent, if at all, to the other three Signature Songs, it should not be as difficult to explain their selection (though dealing with the issue of their sources is a different matter entirely).



Signature Song #2. This is one of the two songs (along with #3) that, as mentioned earlier, without question STIC alumni would vote (or would have voted) into a STIC Hall of Fame. But there is a major difference between them: votes for #3 would reflect its popularity, whereas that would be unlikely for #2. That is because #2 was played frequently over the public-address system to arouse internees (at 6:30 a.m. during the third year, according to Stevens). As many readers may have surmised by now, Signature Song #2 is the appropriately-titled (if ironically so for internees) "Good Morning, Good Morning" (hereafter cited as GMGM). It is also the only one of the Signature Songs whose source remains undetermined (as detailed below).

In the latter regard, note the difference in the treatment here of the first two Signature Songs. The coverage of "Internee Song" deals mainly with issues involving its name — indeed, its very existence — which had been largely unknown until recently, whereas its sources/creators were well-known. The situation is reversed with GMGM, for both the song and its

name always have been well-known (only too well-known, some would say), whereas its source — meaning the name of the band that recorded the version played in STIC — is still unknown. As a result, the following discussion centers on the source issue, a subject that may be of little interest to many — most? — readers. Regardless, onward we go.

The resurrection of "Internee Song" in 2015 led me to consider surveying the topic of STIC-related music in general. And, as a collector of pre-WWII jazz and pop music, my attention initially centered on GMGM. Unlike some former internees, I have always liked that song, and I thought it would be interesting to see whether reminding STIC alumni of GMGM would elicit any reactions. Thus on 2 April 2016 I sent links to my two favorite versions of GMGM (by the once well-known Abe Lyman and Jan Savitt bands) to Maurice Francis, who posted my email to his lengthy list of Gang members.

The ensuing responses were chiefly from Sascha Jansen (who usually would contribute to such exchanges) and Mary Beth Klee (who was then working on a novel about STIC). Their comments centered on the question of the source — the identity of the band — that had recorded the GMGM version played in STIC. Sascha thought that the STIC version was by the Horace Heidt band; she sought to find evidence for that, but was unable to do so. Mary Beth disagreed with the Heidt suggestion, and decided to attribute the STIC version to the Lyman band in her book (whose very title, *Leonore's Suite*, emphasizes the importance of music in her story); but her view was based on personal preference rather than on factual evidence.

2023



2023

BRANSON MISSOURI VETERANS HOMECOMING

<http://www.veteransshow.com/>

Nov 5th SUNDAY TIME CHANGE – FALL BACK
Travelling Wall Opening Ceremony, Lodges at Timber Ridge, 1984 Historic Hwy 165, Branson 10am

Sunday Worship Service with Barbara Fairchild, Baldknobbers Theatre, 645 HWY 165, Branson. 10am.

Opening Ceremonies, Americana Theater, 2905 W 76 Country Blvd, Branson, MO 5pm-6:30pm. NO admittance charge. Open to all veterans and their families. No reservations are required. For information, contact Dee at 870-421-3511.

Nov 6th MONDAY

Veterans Show Clay Cooper Clay Theatre 3216 W 76 Country Blvd, Branson. Veterans show will be in the afternoon after the Hot Rods & High Heels show. Tickets to the 10 AM Hot Rods & High Heels 1950's show will be \$20 each. That ticket will also reserve your seat for lunch and the afternoon Veterans Show. Seating for lunch and the afternoon show is not guaranteed if an advance ticket is not purchased. Reservations 417-879-6060

Vietnam Veterans Reunion, NEW VENUE- AmericInn by Wyndham Branson, 275 Tanger Blvd, Branson, MO 4pm – 6pm Hot meal, entertainment, door prizes, and lots of time to talk. RSVP Dee at 870-421-3511

Nov 7th TUESDAY

Sandbox Partv. Mel's Hard Luck Diner, 2800 W 76 Country Blvd Branson, MO 8:30am-10am --- Mel's Hard Luck Diner in the Grand Village is providing breakfast for those who've served in the Gulf War or after. NO admittance charge. RSVP Dee 870-421-3511.

Homefront Hero's (Spouses) Salute, NEW VENUE - AmericInn by Wyndham Branson, 275 Tanger Blvd, Branson, MO 1-3pm --- Join us for entertainment, door prizes, hot meal. RSVP by calling Dee at 870-421-3511 or online at <http://www.veteransshow.com/>

PIZZA RANCH. BRANSON FUNDRAISER, 1464 State Hwy 248, Branson, MO, 4PM-8:30PM. All tips and 10% of sales will benefit the POW Network to pay for all OUR events and activities Nov 5-11 during Homecoming. Bring the family or a friend!

Nov 8th WEDNESDAY

POW/MIA Service of Remembrance. Lodges at Timber Ridge, 1984 Historic Hwy 165, Branson, MO, 8am
 Outdoors at Vietnam Memorial Wall, weather permitting - will move inside if weather is extreme. No admittance charge, public welcome. Information 417-336-4232.

Women Veterans Rose Petal Ceremony. Stone Castle, 3050 Green Mountain Dr, Branson, MO 11:30am. Women vets free, Adults \$10, Children 4-12, \$5. For more information call 417-332-3557 or email Becky_jewsbury@wgresorts.com.

CALENDAR IS NOT ALL INCLUSIVE OF EVENTS

Nov 8th CONT

WWII and Korean War Veterans Mini Reunion, NEW VENUE - AmericInn by Wyndham Branson. 275 Tanger Blvd, Branson, MO 2pm-4pm No admittance charge. Coffee, dessert, door prizes. Kathy/Mac, 417-230-1282.

Nov 9th THURSDAY

14th Annual Tribute to the Veterans Show. Mansion Theatre, 189 Expressway Ln, Branson, MO, Branson, MO 8:30am-11am

The pre-show will start at 8:30 a.m. with the show starting at 9:00 a.m. The event will be co-hosted by the incredibly talented Barbara Fairchild and Roy Morris again this year!

Lunch following at NEW VENUE - BRANSON SPORTS CLUB, 418 Buchanan Rd, Branson, MO 11:30am-1:30pm.

For more information call Dee at 870-421-3511 or visit <http://www.veteransshow.com/>

Nov 10th Friday

11th Annual Navy Memorial Service. Grand Pavilion at the Westgate Resort, 2201 Roark Valley Road, Branson MO 8:30 am

Public bell tolling ceremony to honor the lives and service of Naval shipmates. Please join us at 8:30 am for coffee and entertainment, followed by the service, which will begin at 9:00 am. For information call Becky at 417-332-3557 or email Becky_jewsbury@wgresorts.com

Medics, Nurses, and Combat Vets Mini Reunion, Grand Pavilion at the Westgate Resort, 2201 Roark Valley Road, Branson, MO 2pm-4 pm --- Join your brothers and sisters in arms for a time of bonding and fellowship. For more information contact Becky_jewsbury@wgresorts.com or 417-332-3557.

Nov 11th Saturday

Veterans Day Sunrise Service, College of the Ozarks, Point Lookout, MO - 7:00 a.m.

Annual Veterans Day Parade – Downtown – 11am
 VVA 913 417-294-0030

November 12th SUNDAY



27th Annual Military Gala & Banquet
Chateau on the Lake
 415 N State Hwy 265, Branson, MO
 5pm-11pm

All branches, all wars welcome, public invited. Dinner, USMC Birthday Cake Cutting, DJ/Dancing, Fireworks, Entertainment. Business attire, after 5, Uniforms, Mess Dress, formal wear. Reservations required 417-336-4232. Tickets \$69 each.

Dee - 870-421-3511 or online at <http://www.veteransshow.com/>

P.O.W. Network – 417-336-4232
https://www.pownetwork.org/branson/Branson_99.htm

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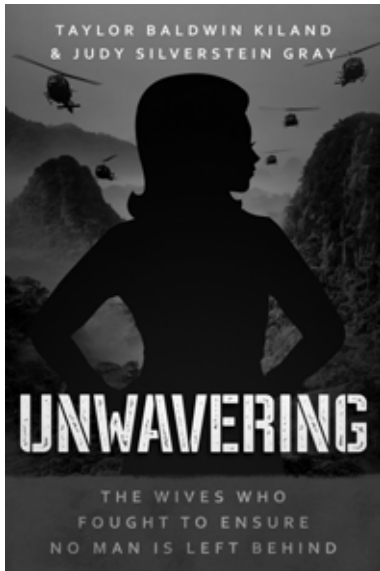


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Disclaimer: Events noted are not all inclusive. Those noted are events the P.O.W. Networks, funds, supports, works, or covers all/part of expenses.



During the month of May, we celebrate Military Spouse Appreciation Month, Memorial Day, and Mother's Day. And right on schedule, our newly released book chronicles the unfathomable obstacles overcome by spouses and families during the Vietnam War. Credit for the book's idea goes to CAPT. Richard Dick" Stratton, affectionately known as "The Beak".

Unwavering: The Wives Who Fought to Leave No Man Behind details the plight of American POWs and MIAs. We tell the story of their most ardent champions, their wives, and families. In the corridors of power and the crucible of public opinion, many gutsy women moved heaven and earth to help their husbands; in the process, they crafted a landmark legacy

Alice Marie Stratton was a social worker and mother of three young boys when her husband went missing in January 1967. Marshaling her inner reserve, she – and others went on the stump, ensuring awareness of the plight of America's missing

men. Although her own situation was cause for concern, Alice was a skilled social worker. Turning tragedy into triumph, she dedicated her life's work to understanding and meeting the needs of military families. In 1973, her husband returned home, and Alice remained focused on that deeply personal and motivating topic.

In 1985, in another trailblazing move, Alice became the first Deputy Secretary of the Navy focused on family matters, serving until 1989. Today's military families owe her a debt of gratitude for landmark work to improve conditions for military members and families. And they owe their gratitude to the wives and families of Vietnam-era POWs and MIAs. Because of their work, no expense will be spared as we strive to *leave no man behind*, Rick Atkinson, the Pulitzer Prize winner, describes the book as "powerful and deeply moving ... a war story like no other."

Visit unwaveringbook.com for more information and watch our book trailer: <https://tinyurl.com/m7drxba7> Available wherever fine books are sold.
Judy Silverstein Gray

Chapter Three— Premonitions, Proof, and Policy Changes

Proof of Life (April 1967)
Barely able to contain themselves, Alice Stratton and her friend Pat Foy enter the corner market in Palo Alto. Alice is on a mission. Instantly, they

spot the magazine rack, zeroing in on the familiar black and white cover of *Life* with its signature red logo. The headline on the April 7 issue blares, "North Vietnam Under Siege." Snatching a copy, the two impatiently flip through the magazine. It falls open to a large photograph of Alice's husband, Navy Lt. Cdr. Richard "Dick" Stratton, in Hanoi.

"Oh my!" Alice says, in her taciturn way. This is the first visual proof she has that Dick is alive. Struggling to calm her racing pulse, she tries processing the idea that this image of her husband is in a magazine in grocery stores, drugstores, and bookstores all over the country. Her emotions have been seesawing for hours and she is exhausted. She cannot stop looking at the photograph. It is horrifying—an image that will continue to haunt her. Pat fishes thirty-five cents from her purse to pay for the magazine. The two dash back to the car, heading back to the Foy home, Alice clutching the magazine to her chest.

A study in contrasts, Pat is blonde, short, exuberant, and athletic, exuding an air of confidence. The two have been friends since Alice moved west in 1958 and began working in San Mateo County. Alice is measured, tall, lanky, and bookish, with a wry sense of humor. Their bond is unshakable. She has been through the wringer lately, and Pat is worried. She watches her friend out of the corner of her eye, as Alice pores over the magazine with Pat's husband, Tom. All three sit in stunned silence.

In the dark and grainy full-page photograph, Dick is wearing vertically striped prison pajamas, white socks, and slippers. Alice would know that profile anywhere: Dick's call sign is "The Beak." Yet something is off kilter. His hands are cupped at his sides, and he is bowing deeply. Tilting her head and the magazine, Alice tries to understand the grainy photo, but she is stymied. Dick appears more subservient than his spirit suggests. But after three months of agonizing uncertainty, she is thrilled to see proof that her husband is alive. The trio reads and re-reads the description of the press conference where the photo was taken. The title, "U.S. Prisoners and an Eerie Puppet Show," is frightening. Journalist Lee Lockwood minces no words in his description of a North Vietnamese officer barking orders to Dick as bright lights bathe the room.

"Like a puppet, the prisoner bowed deeply from the waist toward the audience without changing expression." Once to the east, once to the west, once to the north, and once to the south. The command is issued again. Dick repeats the somber and mechanical, yet seemingly choreographed, movements. And again. "Then, with a final sharp command from his captors, Dick stands upright, does an about face, and shuffles through a curtain and out of sight." Alice and the Foys are perplexed: Is he drugged? Brainwashed?

Several days prior, Alice was startled by a radio broadcast purported to be a taped statement given by her husband. The announcer said that Dick confessed to war crimes. Alice wasted no time calling Cdr. Bob

Burroughs, her Navy contact, who was unaware of the tape. Later that day, he phoned her back, confirming the voice *was* Dick's. He also told her that a *Life* reporter had just returned from Hanoi, and that he had seen Dick, *alive*. She did not pay attention when he told her to brace herself for the photos that would be published in the magazine.

Conditions are worse for POWs than suspected.

Even-keeled Alice has been distracted since her husband deployed to Vietnam, even more so since he went missing three months ago. Nearly everything in her world feels discombobulated, and her sense of humor is missing in action. Yet she has managed to maintain her calm demeanor. It is a deep-seated survival technique she has relied upon since childhood, when her father's depression caused him to withdraw for several years. It has been helpful since her husband's plane was shot down. Not much was known about Lieutenant Commander Stratton after he was forced to eject from his A-4E Skyhawk attack aircraft somewhere over Thanh Hoa Province in North Vietnam.

The past three months have tested Alice in ways she could never have imagined. She has tried to be patient about the lack of information from the Navy, fighting off the gnawing feelings of hopelessness.

Dick and Alice had made plans for such a predicament. Together, they decided that if something happened to him, Alice would move closer to the Foys in Palo Alto, where they would be her safety net. Their kids were the same ages, the school system

was solid, and nearby Navy bases offered medical care and a commissary. The two families could attend church services at Our Lady of the Rosary together, and the Foys would include Alice and the boys in social outings. Palo Alto was familiar territory for the Strattons, who had lived there while Dick was earning his master's degree at Stanford University. The Foys offered rock-solid support and friendship. Alice and Pat had met at work in 1958 and knew each other well. Living near one another in Palo Alto again would allow them to settle back into their familiar friendship.

Alice has grown tired of the sadness enveloping her life. Living among other naval aviator families near Naval Air Station Lemoore, she is constantly reminded of Dick's absence. She needs a fresh start. Her children do, too.

On this first weekend in April, with signs of spring everywhere, Alice and her three young sons have had a good visit with the exuberant Foy brood. For two days, the Strattons enjoy a sense of normalcy. Alice sets aside her worries, basking in the joy of adult conversation and the comfort of friendship. She savors the pleasure of her boys giggling while playing with their friends.

Then a ping pong table falls on her middle son Michael. A trip to the emergency room sets Alice on edge. Her three-year-old has a femur fracture requiring traction. It means the Strattons must remain in Palo Alto for two more weeks, throwing a monkey wrench into their schedule. Once again, the Foys step in and step up, offering the Strattons an extended stay and their unwavering support.

Unwavering, cont'd...

The next day, Alice remembers it is her wedding anniversary. She tries remaining stoic but can't. Biting her lower lip, the tears flow. "I exposed, once again, the Foys to my discomfort, my painful hurting, and they gave me the soothing balm of their support and friendship...."



Alice Marie Robertson and Richard Allen Stratton on their wedding day, April 4, 1959, at Naval Air Station Alameda. (Photo courtesy of the Stratton family.)

Widespread media coverage of Stratton's robotic behavior at the press conference sparks national and international revulsion at Hanoi's propaganda ploy. Journalists and government officials suspect that Stratton's bizarre appearance is the result of prolonged torture. *Time* magazine refers to the spectacle as "Pavlovian" and "Orwellian."

State Department officials are uncertain how or if to respond: they fear public criticism might worsen treatment of POWs, but worldwide outrage forces their hand. "The Stratton Incident" cannot be ignored. President Johnson's POW point man, Ambassador Averell Harriman, writes a letter of protest to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam issuing a statement to *Life*

magazine for its April 7 issue. His rebuke is restrained but pointed, "...it would appear that the North Vietnamese authorities are using mental or physical pressure on American prisoners of war.... Without such independent verification, North Vietnam's professions of 'humane treatment' cannot be accepted."

While bureaucrats and politicians deliberate the Stratton Incident, Alice is glued to the grainy photograph of her husband. Longingly, she gazes at Dick's profile. Has it only been *three* months?



Sitting near the family Christmas tree, in their Palo Alto, California home, Alice Stratton reads a letter from her captive husband, circa December 1971. (Photo courtesy of the Stratton family. Originally taken by the Palo Alto Times.)

The Black Sedan (January 1967)



The Stratton family in front of their Hanford, California home, summer 1966, prior to Dick's Western Pacific deployment. From L to R: Michael, 3, Charlie, 10 months, Patrick, 4 1/2. (Photo courtesy of the Stratton family.)

At first, Alice does not see it: the black vehicle parked by the curb. She is unwinding from her day. A social worker, she patiently coaxes and guides challenged young clients. At a time when few women of her generation worked, Alice continues her career after marrying and while raising her three boys.

Helping others imbues her with a sense of purpose. Her family says it is in her DNA to help others. Perhaps she learned early in life to be nurturing and resourceful, watching her mother who worked as a nurse. Presciently, Dick had always considered her income good insurance, in case they lost his.

Alice relishes time to herself during her commute and the anticipation of arriving home to the babysitter and her boys who are usually playing in the yard with other neighborhood children. She enjoys their enthusiasm and energy. Charlie, the baby, is one year old; Mike, three; and Patrick, four and a half.

Catching up with neighbors completes her day. Alice is an empathetic listener and her front yard is a welcome gathering spot. Dick has been deployed to Vietnam for three months, and Alice and the boys have established a solid and satisfying routine, which sometimes includes macaroni and cheese dinners and watching "*Hogan's Heroes*" and "*Mission Impossible*."

Steering her station wagon into the driveway, she is thinking about dinner. She sets the hand brake and switches off the ignition. Exiting the car, two men in Navy uniforms jump out of the black sedan, walking briskly toward her.

Unwavering, cont'd...

Like a raven, the dreaded black sedan is the harbinger of grim news for military families. Wives and kids stop in their tracks and hold their breath when it circles their neighborhood, praying it does not land in front of their home. On this day, it is here for Alice.

Fear shoots through her body. Is it a mistake? She feels a pressure in her chest. Respectfully removing their uniform covers, the two naval officers solemnly tell her that Dick's aircraft had been shot down. He is missing in action. Overcome by the news, Alice covers her mouth, darting inside the house. The men follow. Patrick watches the scene unfold: "My mom got a horrific look on her face. It was as if everything suddenly stopped."

Sinking into an easy chair, Alice is only able to muster enough energy for one question: "Is he dead?" She can only digest bits and pieces of their response. Everything moves in slow motion. A good parachute had been spotted. Dick had sent an emergency radio signal. He has not been seen or heard from since. Presumably, he has been captured. But the men sitting in her living room do not seem certain about much.

Alice wants desperately to turn back the clock by one day. *Tick, tock*. She tries to listen as the officials, in hushed tones, offer their sympathies and a promise of more intelligence when they receive it. *If* they receive it. But she hears only the *tick, tock* of the living room clock.

Friends whisk her children into the kitchen. There must have been a half a dozen women scurrying around her, working in unison, cooking, feeding and bathing her children, washing dishes, answering the phone. Alice cannot budge. She needs a good cry, but thinks she has to hold it together. She shakes her head. *No, I'm not hungry. Yes, the kids will need to get to bed.* It is going to be a long and cool January night at her home in the San Joaquin Valley. Friends sit with her. Her hands are stiff from gripping the armchair. She is holding on for dear life. *Tick, tock*. The clock reminds her that time is suddenly irrelevant. At some point, she calls the Foys. They promise to drive down the next day.

A doctor arrives. "Here, take this. It will help you sleep." But it does not. She cries most of the night, memories of Dick flashing through her mind. Alice remembers his scent, his great big bear hugs, his work ethic, and his earnest opinions. Dick has an intensity about him, but when he laughs, his entire face lights up and his dark eyes dance. Now, her Quincy, Massachusetts, man with his thick and unmistakable Boston accent is missing.

The couple met on a blind date in December 1958 at a Christmas party thrown by Alice and her roommates at their San Francisco flat. The duo instantly discovered shared interests. Both were intellectuals and conversation came easily. She showed him framed photographs of her family in Michigan, and digging into his bulky leather wallet, Dick shared photos of his family taken during a visit to Mt. Vernon, George Washington's home. Not recognizing the landmark, Alice mistakenly assumed he hailed

from a wealthy family with an impressively large home. That first impression turned into an often-told story that always made them laugh.

Dick had completed six years in the seminary, planning to become a priest before rethinking that decision and joining the Navy. Yet he and Alice shared a deeply rooted faith. Both were private and thoughtful, and Alice enjoyed Dick's philosophical musings. A self-described noisy, independent Irishman, Dick was a gentleman, but louder and more direct than Alice, which she found amusing. When he said he was a pilot, Alice assumed he worked for the airlines. He was neither wealthy nor an airline pilot, but she did not mind one bit.

Unlike Dick's childhood in New England, Alice was raised in Michigan. Her mother was a farm girl and Alice inherited her rugged determination, steadfast work ethic, and devout Catholicism. Her mother's nursing career modeled empathetic listening skills and a lifelong concern for others. Alice's early childhood was a happy one, ice skating with siblings on Lake Michigan and putting on plays on the stage in their Grosse Pointe basement.

Her father was a quiet and hardworking chemical engineer until debilitating depression following an allergic reaction to penicillin had made getting out of bed a struggle. His illness had required patience at a time when mental health was poorly understood and rarely discussed. Eventually, he received shock treatments that cured his depression. Like her mother, he too, found religion, converting to Catholicism. The family's deep faith provided solace and strength during those challenging times.

Unwavering, cont'd...

Growing up in a close-knit family that survived adversity may have strengthened Alice's compassion and self-reliance. Those lessons would now serve her well.

During her college years, Alice spent summers working at a University of Michigan Fresh Air camp and later in the school system, while earning her master's degree in social work. For one year after graduation, she worked at a psychiatric hospital for children before moving to San Francisco with two friends, who were also coworkers.

Alice was reserved and thoughtful, but Dick appreciated her ribald sense of humor. Four months after they met, they married at a 1943 vintage white stucco chapel at Naval Air Station Moffett Field, where he was stationed. Their traditional ceremony was celebrated with a small group of fifty family members, friends—including Pat Foy—and Navy colleagues, followed by a reception at the Officer's Club. Dick's squadron allowed him time off from standing watch, giving the newlyweds three full days to celebrate their honeymoon at the Highlands Inn in Carmel overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Like a movie reel, images from those happy days play continually in Alice's mind.

The morning after receiving the news of Dick's disappearance, she wakes up feeling exhausted and alone. She will need patience and resilience to survive. Is she a widow? Beseeking, she prays. Why, God? Why me?



Charlie Stratton's drawing for a second-grade school assignment. He was asked to draw his "wish." (Photo courtesy of the Stratton family.)

Momentum (May 1969)

Early on a Monday morning, Sybil Stockdale is getting her kids ready for school when the phone rings. A Pentagon secretary asks her to hold the line. Impatiently, she checks her watch. Dick Capen and Frank Sieverts are on the other end, and they sound elated.

Capen, a former naval officer and publisher for Copley Press in San Diego, is a thirty-five-year-old political appointee recruited by President Nixon's new secretary of defense to work on the POW issue. Sieverts is Capen's counterpart at the State Department.

"We wanted you to know that here in Washington, in just a few minutes, the secretary of defense is going to do the thing you've been wanting him to do for so long. He's going to publicly denounce the North Vietnamese for their treatment of our American prisoners and for their violation of the Geneva Convention. We know you've been working long and hard for this day, and we wanted you to be the first to know."

Three years earlier, Sybil first raised her voice in protest to the government. It was a lonely task: government leadership has been almost mute on the topic. Few others had spoken publicly about the issue—much less protested vehemently.

Until now, the vexing POW and MIA issue has been the sole purview of the State Department. Back in 1966, President Johnson chose Ambassador Harriman as his point man. Harriman was old school. A seasoned diplomat and politician, he had been tapped repeatedly since World War II to manage thorny foreign policy issues. Surely, he could find a diplomatic solution to the growing number of POWs. Although in his seventies, his energy was legendary, even if he was hard of hearing.

Harriman prefers working behind the scenes, in a "diplomat-to-diplomat" style, using familiar "quiet diplomacy" to negotiate with the North Vietnamese for better treatment and an early release for American captives. Sybil met him in 1966 and 1967, pleading with him to do more, to publicly rebuke the North Vietnamese for mistreatment of the POWs. "When I sharpened the tone of my questions with Ambassador Harriman, he didn't appear to pay any attention. It

Unwavering, cont'd...

was almost as if he were giving a monologue." Patronizingly, Harriman assures her that the State Department's efforts on behalf of her husband are extensive, but classified. The women and their families need to trust him and to keep quiet, he said. But Harriman's callous rebuffs leave Sybil feeling helpless and irritable.

A new administration has brought a new secretary of defense: Melvin Laird. He is determined to change the status quo.

Laird did not seek this challenge. Content serving as a congressman from Wisconsin for nine terms, he turned down President Nixon's offer at first, calling the position "the political kiss of death." But when Washington Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson rejected the offer, Laird reluctantly reconsidered. Feeling a sense of duty, he pledged to serve four years and not one day longer. That is, after Laird extracted a promise from President Nixon not to interfere with his appointments.

As a member of Congress, Laird met with several POW and MIA wives. He heard their anguish firsthand. With more than 1,000 men missing or captive in Southeast Asia, Laird has become disillusioned with the State Department's strategy to solve the

Unwavering, cont'd...

vexing POW issue. He is convinced that the Defense Department must take on a stronger advocacy role for the POWs—and a more public one. *He believes the POWs have become the unmentionables.*

Quiet diplomacy has been an abject failure. Laird scratches his head at Harriman's reticence to challenge the enemy's specious claims of humane prisoner treatment. Harriman's strategy has not allowed a steady flow of mail, has not enabled neutral inspectors into Hanoi's prison camps, and has not accounted for the missing. The North Vietnamese are winning the war of propaganda and feel no pressure to abide by the Geneva Convention. The wives in Sybil's troupe know it. Their long-simmering wrath and impatience bursts forth at family briefings that Capen and Sieverts hold around the country in the spring of 1969.

They protest the government's inaction, loudly. At a meeting in San Diego, one wife smashes a painting to symbolize what she thinks of the Air Force's commitment to take care of its people.

Sybil is dismayed. "Our government still had no reason to believe that keeping quiet was not the best way to proceed and still hoped our men were being treated humanely. I marveled at the detached, casual attitude...."

Why *not* call out the North Vietnamese on their violations of the Geneva Convention? They could then be held responsible in the court of public opinion. Laird advises the State Department that quiet diplomacy from the Pentagon will be discarded for a new strategy called "Go Public." And, in shaking up the status quo, he hopes to turn the POW and MIA wives into allies.

Rumors of Laird's impending policy change fire up Ambassador Harriman. Making a rare trip across the Potomac to the Pentagon, he spends nearly an hour trying to persuade Laird to stay the course and *keep quiet*. Laird is aware that President Nixon and his national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, also want him to back down. All three are afraid that adding POWs in the mix at the negotiating table will make diplomatic efforts more difficult. Kissinger later says: "I probably thought that to make too big a public issue [of the POWs] weakened us; it didn't strengthen us." But Laird is unwavering. The policy *must* change. Exposing mistreatment and torture will produce a different outcome at the Paris peace negotiations. In the process, it might shame Hanoi into better treatment of the men.

Laird asks Capen to review intelligence about treatment of American prisoners and build his case for a change in policy. Capen consults sources at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), the National Security Agency (NSA), and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

The findings Capen presents to Laird and the secretary's executive team are grim. Torture, starvation, lack of medical treatment, solitary confinement, and beatings were buried in documents tucked away in file cabinets. Harriman's diktat to remain quiet and fear of upsetting the stagnant peace negotiations in Paris prevented the three-letter intelligence agencies from disclosure.

Unwavering, cont'd...

Laird is horrified: "By God, we're going to go public." Scheduling a press conference for May 19, 1969, he and Capen and their staff scramble to develop a comprehensive publicity campaign that will engage the press corps, American Red Cross, United Nations, foreign leaders, the American people, and POW and MIA families. This is a chance to wrest control of an issue that so far, has been managed by the enemy.

Over the objections of Harriman and Kissinger, and with no endorsement from President Nixon, Laird strides into the Pentagon briefing room.

"Good morning, ladies and gentlemen." Reporters, expecting a low-level official, are surprised. Small chat ceases as all eyes turn to the new secretary of defense.



Andrea Rander and Pat Mearns with the Secretary of Defense Mel Laird at a press appearance. He inscribed the photo: "To my friend Pat Mearns with my pledge of support and understanding - Mel Laird." (Photo courtesy of Department of Defense.)

Laird gets right to the point: "The North Vietnamese have claimed that they are treating our men humanely. I am distressed by the fact that there is clear evidence that this is not the case." The

announcement is a departure from the previous five years. This is not the usual bland assurance the media is used to hearing.

Laird states that some American POWs have been held longer in this conflict than any during World War II or the Korean War.

Behind the secretary of defense there are posters with statistics about prisoners and missing men. Laird outlines the list of Geneva Convention rules that the North Vietnamese have violated: refusal to deliver mail to prisoners, denial of independent inspections of the prison camps, the use of the prisoners in propaganda films, and failure to provide a comprehensive list of those being held. That must change, he insists. The press corps takes notice.

Capen is up next, providing excruciating detail about the torture American POWs have endured. Reporters hang on his every word. Capen passes out dozens of still photos obtained in North Vietnam. Haggard, malnourished American prisoners, some with untreated wounds.

Laird's press conference infuses Sybil with hope. The lobbying of the last few months has paid off. "One military official in the Defense Department told me that they knew they'd better join us, or we were going to mop up the floor with them."

The event receives only modest media coverage, but the Go Public message is heard in Paris and in Hanoi. North Vietnamese chief negotiator, Xuan Thuy, announces that his government will *never* reveal a list of prisoners "as long as the United States does

not cease its war of aggression and withdraw its troops from Vietnam." Hanoi has a new problem. Their aggressive propaganda campaign will now be matched by the U.S. Government.

Cold Hard Truth (Summer 1969)

Navy Lt. Robert Frishman minces no words. On stage at Bethesda Naval Hospital in front of a large audience of reporters, his injured elbow hangs at his side. He is one of three POWs granted an early release by Hanoi, on August 5, 1969. The North Vietnamese are hoping to generate good will. The gesture backfires.

Frishman is indignant and emphatic. "All I'm interested in is for Hanoi to live up to their claims of humane and lenient treatment of prisoners of war. I don't think solitary confinement, forced statements, living in a cage for three years, being put in straps, not being allowed to sleep or eat, removal of fingernails, being hung from a ceiling, having an infected arm which was almost lost, not receiving medical care, being dragged along the ground with a broken leg, or not allowing an exchange of mail to prisoners of war are humane."

Frishman talks about Navy Lt. John McCain, a POW since October 1967, who has been in solitary confinement for a year and counting, despite multiple fractures. The reporters scribble furiously. Although he has never spoken to Dick Stratton, Frishman describes how Stratton was tortured, "...tied up in ropes to such a degree that he still has large scars on his arms from rope burns, which became infected."

Unwavering, cont'd...

On stage with him is Navy Seaman Doug Hegdahl, a young POW captured when he was blown overboard into the Gulf of Tonkin by the blast of his ship's five-inch gun. Initially, the Vietnamese were convinced Hegdahl was a spy. He threw them off track by convincing them that he was illiterate and incapable of following instructions. His strategy worked. The North Vietnamese abandoned hope of forcing a written confession from Hegdahl.

But Hegdahl was hyper-literate and had an eidetic memory. He committed the names of 260 POWs to memory in a ditty he recited like an auctioneer, information that would prove invaluable to U.S. military officials. Cellmates for several months, Hegdahl and Stratton forged a tight bond in captivity. A junior enlisted sailor, he looked up to Stratton, a seasoned naval aviator. In turn, Stratton was impressed with his uncanny memory. When Hegdahl refused Hanoi's offer of an early release—the American POW Code of Conduct forbade it—both Stratton and Stockdale order him to accept, with a strategy in mind. Stratton further instructed Hegdahl to contact Alice as soon as he was stateside. He shared quite a bit about his wife and their kids and wanted Hegdahl to deliver a personal message to them.

Hanoi announced on July 3, 1969, the release of three prisoners of war as a goodwill gesture to a group of American antiwar activists visiting Hanoi. Was it a potential response to Secretary Laird's new Go Public campaign?

Alice learns one of the three had been Dick's cell-mate at the Hanoi Hilton. *Would she like to meet him?* She wastes no time getting to Bethesda Naval Hospital. On an upper floor that is off-limits to the public, she gingerly enters Doug's room. Alice is surprised by how young he seems. At twenty-two, his boyish face makes him appear even younger. Pale and rail thin after losing sixty pounds in captivity, Hegdahl does not smile much, a ploy he practiced in prison to seem aloof and unfazed by the captors. An introvert, he is also embarrassed by the media attention. But Hegdahl is eager to meet Alice and fulfill his promise to Dick.

First, he sizes her up. Hegdahl thinks she looks sad. He knows Alice is desperate for any tidbits of news about her husband. Feeling protective and to break the ice, he offers her something to eat, but she declines. Then, he talks about life in the Hanoi prison—haltingly at first. Tapping into her maternal instincts and expert listening skills, Alice puts *him* at ease. Inside, she is a bundle of nerves.

Encouraged, Hegdahl pours out every detail he can recall. He tells her that her husband is in fair condition physically and mentally, despite inhumane conditions. Then, he carefully relays Dick's message: He loves her, her unwavering love sustains him; he never wants to be separated from her again; after the war is over, Alice will make the decisions for the family because his family is more important than his career.

Then comes the tough part, the truth about Dick's treatment as a POW, how he was shot down and captured, the forced confessions, the prolonged interrogation and

torture sessions, the starvation, and the solitary confinement. The picture he paints is horrifying. Sitting upright, Alice does not flinch. Poker-faced, she thanks Hegdahl for his candor and the information. "I remember walking out of that room and into an elevator in a total state of shock."

Now she knows. It had been easier when she did not.

Publicity in the United States has exposed the treatment of POWs in North Vietnam. Hanoi officials seem to be feeling the pressure. Six months after Secretary Laird's press conference, the North Vietnamese Communist Party Politburo issues a resolution with a new directive on the treatment of prisoners. It emphasizes the party's conviction that the war is undeclared and therefore, the men are not POWs. Hanoi is therefore not legally bound to abide by the Geneva Convention rules. Nonetheless, "we should apply the points of the Geneva Convention that are consistent with our humanitarian policies." Prisons must adequately feed, house, clothe, and medicate the prisoners; cells must be "clean and airy"; prisoners should be allowed to write one letter per month, attend regular religious services, and get exercise. The directive instructs prison leaders to ensure low-level prison employees implement these policies and "increase their spirit of responsibility." Finally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs "will study the possibility of allowing the Red Cross Associations of some countries to visit the prisoners."

By the fall of 1969, prison conditions improve significantly.



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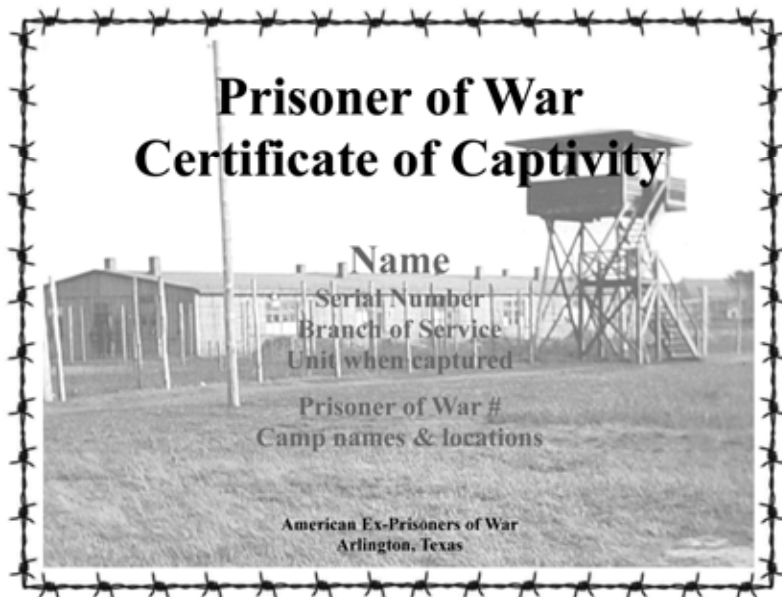
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A number of years ago, one of our members made the decision to establish a bequest to the American Ex-Prisoners of War. He felt strongly that he truly cared about our future and wanted to leave a legacy to us. He and his wife are now gone, but their generous gift enabled them to demonstrate in a very meaningful way their commitment to AXPOW.

You, too can take action today to help ensure that the American Ex-Prisoners of War remains through your will or living trust. This gift can be funded with cash or securities, mutual funds or other investments that are not serving your current needs. This special gift will benefit future generations as well as we continue our transition to a true legacy organization.

It's very simple to make a bequest to the American Ex-Prisoners of War. Simply share this sentence with your attorney or financial planner and they can add the following to your will or living trust:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the American Ex-Prisoners of War, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445, the sum of \$_____ or _____(named investment) or _____percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate."

Your generous support of our programs over the years has made a tremendous difference to ex-POWs and their families. Please take a few minutes of your time to help ensure our future. And feel free to contact CFO Marsha Coke at axpow76010@yahoo.com, or CEO Cheryl Cerbone at axpowceo@comcast.net. Phone #817-649-2979.

Thank You!

Contributions



please send donations to:

National Headquarters, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445. Checks must be made payable to AXPOW or American Ex-Prisoners of War.

GENERAL FUND

Give Lively Foundation, New York NY
John Bodner, Lakewood WA
Network for Good, Southfield MI
In memory of Joseph E McIntyre, by Sons of American Legion, Sqd 331, Brownsburg IN
In memory of Richard Jeffries, by Doug Hardman

VOLUNTARY FUNDING

Lynn Lindhurst, Sedona AZ
MaryAnn Kwiecinski, Virginia MN
Tom C Waller, Sierra Vista AZ

ESTATES

Jeaneene Palmer Nuccio estate, CA
John Pederson estate, CO



taps



Please submit taps notices to:
Cheryl Cerbone, 23 Cove View Drive, South Yarmouth, MA 02664

FLYNN, Rosemary Stagner, 95, passed away in Los Angeles, CA on November 26, 2022. She, along with her parents and three siblings, was a civilian internee in the Santo Tomas Internment Camp, Manila, Philippines during WW II. Of the interned family members, she is survived by a brother Frank. Rosemary and her late husband adopted four children, and later another individual. They were also grandparents to two siblings. Rosemary, kind and soft-spoken with a quick wit, loved spending time with family and friends. She had been a life member of AXPOW. She also enjoyed traveling, writing, painting. She lived a long and full life and will be missed.

GILLESPIE, Jeannette Ann, of Red Oak, IA passed away March 13, 2023 at the age of 96. She was the widow of Ex-POW Charles R. Gillespie (168 INF 34 DIV). She was active in a number of service organizations – Order of Eastern Star, VFW Auxiliary, AXPOW and

others. She is survived by 2 daughters, 5 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, 8 great-great-grandchildren and their families and a host of relatives and friends.

LEMONS, John Ray, 103, died February 7, 2023. John, and his wife, Jean, have been AXPOW life members since 1990. John served in the 8 AF 445 BG 702 BS, and was held POW at Frankfort, Luft 4, Stalags 13D and 7A. Before moving to Rogers, Arkansas, they were active members of the Dallas Metroplex Chapter, and played a vital role in hosting the 2004 National Convention in Arlington, Texas. John is survived by his wife of 64 years, Jean.

MARTIN, TJ, age 93, of York, SC passed away May 15, 2023 at Carolina Gardens of York. He was a proud veteran of the US ARMY having served in the Korean War and was a POW for 2 ½ years. TJ was active in state and local veterans affairs and a long-time member of AXPOW. He is

survived by his wife, Nelda Taylor Martin, 1 sister, and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

PORTARO, Benjamin "Benny", of Clarksburg, WV, passed away March 17, 2023 at the age of 102. He was a veteran of the United States Army serving during WWII; captured in the Battle of the Bulge. While on his free time he was an avid gardener and enjoyed teaching others how to grow their own gardens. He loved the mountains of West Virginia. He leaves 3 daughters, 2 sons, 2 sisters, 11 grandchildren, several great-grandchildren and a large, loving extended family.

UPDIKE, Wanda, 98, of Clarinda, Iowa, passed away March 24, 2023. She was the widow of EX-POW Russell "Joe" Updike. She was an avid collector and enjoyed gardening, yoga and her large circle of friends. Survivors include many extended family and friends.

In loving memory
Your presence we miss...
Your memory we treasure
Loving you always...



AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION

To honor a loved one or a former colleague

IN MEMORY OF: _____

DATE OF DEATH: _____

GIVEN BY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO BE SENT TO:




NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

DONATIONS TO BE SENT TO:

AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR, PO BOX 3445, ARLINGTON, TX 76007-3445

  <p>The National 4th (IVY) Division Association</p> <p>Formed at Camp Greene, NC, on November 17, 1917 for service in World War I. The "IVY Division" has a long and distinguished heritage that continues through World War II, the Cold War in Europe, Vietnam, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.</p> <p>Membership in the Association is open to all former Veterans and currently serving Soldiers of the 4th ID and attached units.</p> <p>Check our website at www.4thinfantry.org for membership and reunion information.</p> <p>"Steadfast and Loyal"</p>	 <p>The 106th Infantry Division Association</p> <p>Organized at Camp Lucky Strike 1945 active since 1946</p> <p>If you are a former 106th Infantry Division vet, were attached to the 106th, a relative of a 106th veteran, you are eligible for membership in the Association.</p> <p>The CUB Magazine is published three times per year. Published since 1946.</p> <p>Annual Reunions held yearly since 1947.</p> <p>Jacquelyn Martin, Membership Chairman 121 McGregor Ave. Mount Arlington, N.J. 07856 973-663-2410 E-mail: jsc164@aol.com</p>
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AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR VOLUNTARY FUNDING PROGRAM

The AXPOW Voluntary Giving Program parallels that of other VSOs, whereby the entire membership, including life members, is given the opportunity to contribute to the operation of our organization, based on ability and willingness to contribute. All contributions are to be sent directly to National Headquarters to be used for the operation of the organization. A complete accounting of contributors will appear in the Bulletin each issue.

I am enclosing my contribution to support the operation of the American Ex-Prisoners of War.

\$20.00 \$30.00 \$40.00 \$50.00 \$100.00 Other

Name
Address
City/State/Zip
Phone #

Please make checks payable to American Ex-Prisoners of War - Voluntary Funding
Mail contributions to: National Headquarters, American Ex-Prisoners of War
PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445



JEFFERSON BARRACKS POW-MIA MUSEUM
JEFFERSON BARRACKS POW-MIA MUSEUM

N is for Never Forget is a child-friendly book that takes readers on a compelling journey through wartime history. Poignant illustrations and stories capture key people, concepts, and memorials to help readers understand and honor the sacrifices endured by men and women prisoners of war and missing in action on behalf of freedom.

Proceeds from books purchased through JBPM, Inc. (501c3) go directly to restoring \ renovating the former 1896 Officers Quarters Building into the Jefferson Barracks POW-MIA Museum. \$21.95 including S/H. Contact Paul Dillon at rpdclw@sbcglobal.net; 314-609-9037.

Memorial Day 2023 Washington, DC





Challenge Coins

\$13.00 includes S/H/I



Bronze Grave Medallions

\$100.00 includes S/H/I

All orders for products sold by AXPOW, including dues/subscriptions should be mailed to: American Ex-Prisoners of War, National Headquarters, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445; axpow76010@yahoo.com

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