

The

Post Oflag 64 Item

All the News That's
Been Geprüft

Nearly Everybody
Reads THE ITEM

“Get Wise – ITEM-ize”

1st Quarter 2024

Good Ole USA

Of Undetermined Worth

Editor/Printing and Mailing

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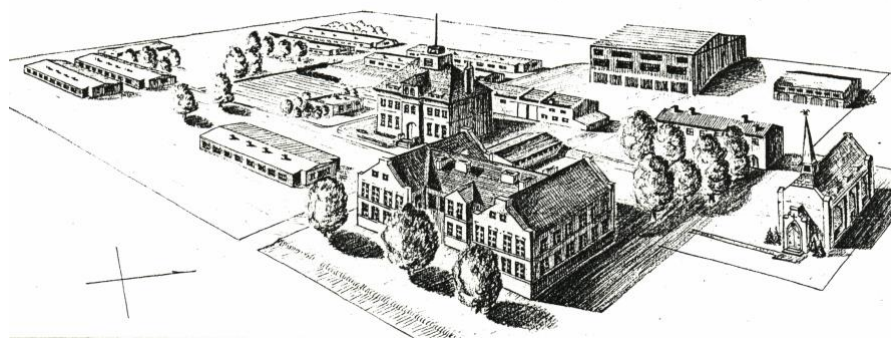
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Contributors to this issue

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We apologize to any others
we may have overlooked
and thank all who have
contacted us.

*NOTE: The Oflag 64
Remembered website and
the Post Oflag 64 ITEM are
independent entities and
do not operate under the
auspices of any other
organization.*



Drawing by Jim Bickers, shown without barbed wire fences or guard towers

How Did Your Kriegy Stay Involved While At Oflag 64?

We've learned over the years that our Kriegies kept themselves busy in various ways. Some arrived at the camp in already established professions, others developed new skills and became proficient at “new professions” while in captivity.

According to the March 2, 1944 Oflag 64 ITEM, of the 300 or so men who resided at the camp at that time, there were 7 doctors, 12 engineers, 7 lawyers, 5 chemists, 5 newspapermen, and 9 professors. Of the other men there, some had quite unusual professions such as professional fund raiser, fingerprint classifier, broker, Commandant of Cadets, jeweler, cotton merchant, golf pro, winter sports instructor, YMCA secretary, oil rig builder, and fire insurance inspector. Additional fields represented included: 7 business managers, 3 machinists, 11 accountants, 2 aircraftsmen, an instrument maker, a pay master, 3 steel workers, a statistician, 3 railroad men, a restaurant operator, and two petroleum engineers. About a quarter of the men were listed as students, clerks, salesmen and farmers.

Over the months that followed, hundreds more men arrived at the camp, each with his separate skill or profession. We would like to know what your Kriegy did while in captivity and if he continued in his present or “new profession” following the war. Please contact us at the email addresses below.

Best to you,
Elodie Caldwell, ITEM Editor, elodie@oflag64.us
Bill Caldwell, Webmaster, webmaster@oflag64.us



Oflag 64



A Little Company Business

Many Thanks

We wish to express our continued gratitude to Minuteman Press for their ongoing excellent service in printing our ITEM each quarter. The quality of their printing and the timeliness in which the ITEM is printed is very much appreciated. Thank you Mike Vorse, Nate Howe, and Samantha Lemire!!!



And MANY THANKS to Ric Kolseth, our POW Database manager, for uploading the updates we send. Please check the website POW Database page to make sure your Kriegy's information is correct and email us any changes at:

elodie@oflag64.us

Postage Fund Contributions

There is now more than one way to contribute to Oflag 64 related funds.



For contributions to the Postage Fund only (which not only covers the cost of printing and mailing the ITEM to our remaining Kriegies or their widows, but also pays for running the Oflag 64 website), please make your checks payable to Oflag 64 Postage Fund, and send them to:

Bret Job

2801 SW 46th St
Cape Coral FL 33914-6026

OR

Elodie Caldwell

2731 Terry Ave
Longview WA 98632-4437

Postage Fund Contributions

**George Patton "Pat" Waters
Anne Hoskot Kreutzer**

Museum Contributions

Please make your check payable to and send to:

Friends of Oflag 64, Inc.
12768 Turberville Lane
Oak Hill VA 20171-2214

OR

donate ONLINE at:
www.friendsofoflag64.org

You can also access the donation page on the Polish-American Foundation website at:
<https://bit.ly/3Gx2JfZ>

These funds are separate from the Postage Fund and will be used to help support the future Museum in different ways.

THANKS to all who donate to our various Oflag 64 funds.

* * *



Do You Have Any....

Oflag 64 artifacts to donate to our museum? We are always looking for artifacts that will help tell the story of our Kriegies while in captivity. For more information and a copy of the donation form, please contact Dave Stewart at:

dslvtx@gmail.com



Veterans History Project

If your Kriegy participated in the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress, we would like permission to use his video interview and/or transcripts as we help prepare for displays for the museum. Please click on this link <https://bit.ly/3Cbv7Sk> and enter your Kriegy's name in the search bar at the top of the page to see if he participated. I entered my father's first and last name with the word "collection" after it and his interview came right up. See the last page of this ITEM for the Consent to Use Materials form. Please use the same form if your Kriegy participated in any other similar project.



We are looking for grant opportunities as we continue our museum project efforts. If you are aware of an organization or foundation that provides grants for worthy causes such as ours, please let Nancy Wyatt know at:
wyatts26@hotmail.com

Nancy is the Chairman of the Friends of Oflag 64, Inc. Strategic Planning Committee dedicated to supporting the mission of the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin.



MAIL CALL



It's always a great pleasure hearing from our Oflag 64 families. Thanks for keeping us in "your" loop and for sending information. We love reading about how and what you are doing. Please stay in touch!

JOAN CALLAHAN, daughter of the late Kriegy Francis C. Callahan – has been corresponding with us for a while. At the beginning of the year, she wrote that she had just been to see the movie “The Boys In The Boat”, a 1930’s story centered on the University of Washington’s rowing team, from their beginnings to winning a gold medal at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. It reminded her that her dad brought back 1936 Olympic pins that he “found” at the Baron’s estate where he stayed after escaping from the long march. (See the Kriegy News and Information section.)

DI FRANCESCO GIRLS, Rosa Lee and Pat Bender, daughters of the late Kriegy Vincent “Doc” Di Francesco – wrote to let us know that they enjoy receiving and reading the ITEM and thanked us for our work with Oflag 64.

BRET JOB, son-in-law of the late Kriegy Ray E. Holmquist – sent word that he had just received separately two Postage Fund checks. (Thank you Bret for taking such good care of our funds.)

WARREN JONES, son of the late Kriegy Charles L. Jones – wrote at the beginning of January with greetings and best wishes for the new year. He said that he enjoyed the last ITEM containing information and photos of his dad and thanked us for the work we do.

ANNE HOSKOT KREUTZER, daughter of the late Kriegy Nathaniel R. Hoskot – wrote that she thoroughly enjoyed reading the last ITEM and seeing the pictures of Frank Maxwell. Frank was repatriated the same day as her dad. Anne also sent a thoughtful and generous contribution to the Postage Fund. (Thanks so much Anne.)

DAVID LINDEE, grandson of the late Kriegy Robert Blatherwick – wrote to say that he and his family would be traveling to Poland and would like to visit the “camp”. He was referred to Mariusz Winiecki, President of the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin, who would be the best person to answer any questions about the site and remaining buildings.

DAVID LITTLE, grandson of the late Kriegy Thomas H. Wingate – has been doing a lot of research for the Kriegy Research Group (KRG) and recently found a great article from the Tampa Bay Times, written in 2001 about a couple of our Oflag 64 Kriegies, Gerry Searle and Robert Keith. Check this link for the story: <https://www.tampabay.com/archive/2001/06/02/a-story-of-wartime-survival/> He also sent several groups of labeled photos of his trip to Europe to retrace his grandfather’s experiences during WWII. (See the Kriegy News and Information section for some of those photos.)

PAT WATERS, son of the late Kriegy John K. Waters – sent a thoughtful and very generous contribution to the Postage Fund. (Thanks so much Pat.)

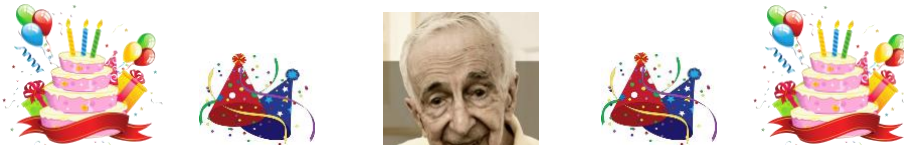
JEFF WILSON, grandson of the late Kriegy Robert L. Aschim – has been corresponding with us and has agreed, along with his mom, to write his grandfather’s bio. He mentioned that his grandmother had put together a scrap book of various things that help detail his experiences. They’ll be working on that soon.

Kriegy News and Information

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

....and best wishes to our great KRIEGY PATRIOT AND HERO

Robert Levin – 104 years
April 30, 1920



* * * * *

Wikipedia Pages

Dave Stewart, son of the late Kriegy Donald B. Stewart, recently created a Wikipedia page for his Kriegy dad. There is a process, and Dave will be creating a template soon to help others create pages for their Kriegies. Please let us know if you would like to create a page for your Kriegy and/or if you would be willing to help others through this process. Also let us know if your Kriegy already has a Wikipedia page. Our Kriegy dads were true heroes and patriots. Wouldn't it be amazing to see pages created for each of them?

Donald B. Stewart

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Donald Boyle Stewart (March 17, 1915 – May 8, 1983) was a career *United States Army* officer. He graduated from the *United States Military Academy* in 1940, fought in North Africa with *II Corps (United States)*, and was captured during the *Battle of Sidi Bou Zid* on Valentine's Day February 14, 1943. While a captive of the Germans, Stewart and fellow POW Lieutenant Colonel *John H. Van Vliet Jr* were selected to attend the *Katyn Commission* investigation into the Polish officers found murdered in the *Katyn Forest* near *Smolensk, Russia*.^[1] Stewart and Van Vliet Jr were U.S. Registered Code Users who sent coded messages from *Oflag 64* to *MIS-X* in *Fort Hunt*^[2] New Jersey which identified the Soviets as the perpetrators of the massacre. After their liberation, they testified before the *United States House Select Committee to Conduct an Investigation of the Facts, Evidence, and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Massacre* about their experiences at the *Katyn Commission* exhumations.^[3]

Biography [edit]

Early life [edit]

Stewart was born on March 17, 1915, in *Detroit, Michigan*. He graduated from *Cooley High School* in early 1931, and attended *Wayne State University*. He joined the U.S. Army as an enlisted man in 1934 and was enrolled in the *West Point Preparatory School* at *Fort McPherson* located in *Atlanta, Georgia*. After being nominated by Michigan Congressional *George Anthony Dondero*, Stewart entered *The United States Military Academy* located in *West Point, New York*, in 1936, and graduated on June 10, 1940, with a commission as a *Second Lieutenant* in the *Artillery*. His interests while a cadet at *West Point* were photography and marksmanship. He was an active member of the *West Point Camera, Pistol and Rifle Clubs*, qualifying as an expert marksman with both the pistol and the rifle.^[4]

Donald B. Stewart

Stewart circa 1948

Born March 17, 1915
Detroit, Michigan

Died May 8, 1983
San Antonio, Texas

Occupation *United States Army*

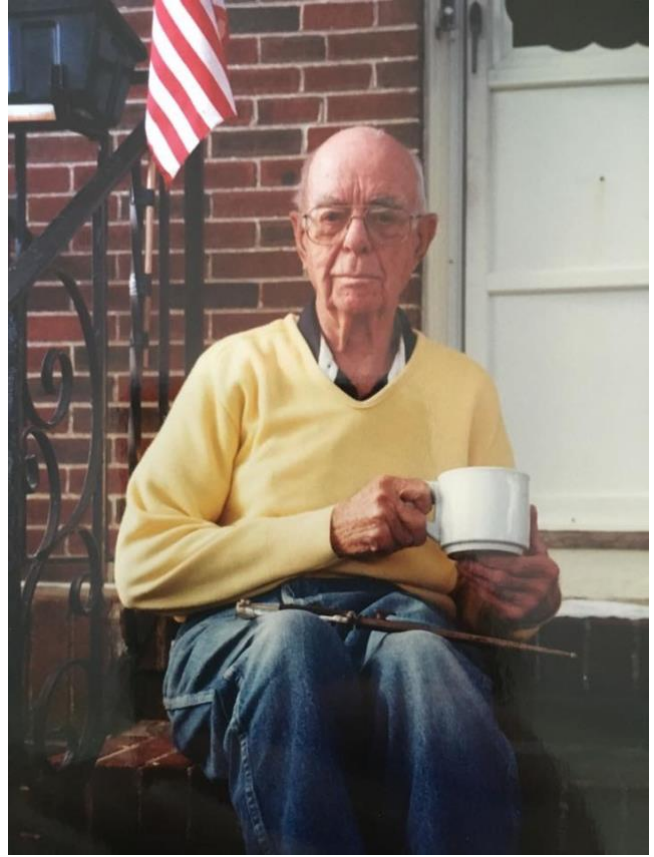
Spouse *Mary Louise Hoch Stewart*

Children *Monica M. Stewart Bishara, Robert D. Stewart, David A. Stewart, Mary K. Stewart Herrera, and Barbara A. Stewart*

At left is what you see when you go to [Wikipedia.com](https://www.wikipedia.com) and put in the name Donald B. Stewart. There are many links within his page that will give you more information. This is a great example of what can be done for your Kriegy.

* * * * *

The following photos were sent by Joan Callahan, daughter of the late Kriegy Francis Charles Callahan. The first shows him during war years, the second is of him holding a German mug that he brought back with him from Oflag 64. The last is of the two 1936 Berlin Olympic pins he "found" at the Baron's estate.



The Tin Store

As you are undoubtedly aware, efforts have been underway for quite some time to establish a POW museum in Szubin Poland at the site of the former Oflag 64 prison camp. Over the last year or so, much has been accomplished to make that happen. The newly created museum, called the **Tin Store**, is housed in one of the original buildings at the camp, formerly called the Tin Store, interestingly enough. Information and photos below, including design photos, have been taken from the website of the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin. If you click on the following link, you can find more information about the camp and also follow updates to the museum as they're posted. <http://www.szubinpowcamps.org/en/> Thanks to all who have donated artifacts. There would be no museum without them. Stay tuned for information about the grand opening.

Place

In 2022, the Foundation renovated an original camp building, the POW Tin Store. The POWs had used this modest building to stockpile and ration a portion of the lifesaving food tins that came in their Red Cross parcels. Today, the renovated Tin Store will provide a premier exhibit space for small exhibits and events.

The three-month renovation project--led by the Foundation, with support from the town of Szubin and the school on whose grounds the building is located--was made possible by generous donations to the U.S. Friends of Oflag 64. Improvements included structural repairs, new HVAC and security systems, lighting, a new bathroom, and a new tile floor. The approximately 600 square-foot space will store and exhibit our artifacts in a secure and comfortable venue.

One day we hope to also renovate the last remaining brick barracks in Szubin. For now, however, the combination of our current exhibit space and our artifacts collection will make the POW Tin Store Museum a unique destination. The Tin Store is a gem. The high quality of the building renovation, its furnishings, and the exhibit space create a perfect first step in commemorating the history of the POW camps of Szubin.

Exhibition

The permanent exhibition will follow a chronological and thematic layout. It will begin with Szubin and the surrounding territories, focusing on the outbreak of World War II, and the German occupation of the area. The exhibits will introduce the establishment and development of the German POW camp network in the Polish lands which were incorporated into the Reich.

The middle (and largest) part of the exhibition will be devoted to the Szubin camps and the imprisonment of those held there. It will be divided into thematic sections related to nearly all aspects of life, work, and death behind the barbed wire.

The final part of the exhibition will deal with the final months of World War II, the post-war memory of the camps, as well as the activities of the individuals and associations responsible for establishing the Museum.





0107

EXHIBITION IN SZUBIN



Littera
expo design



FLOOR PLAN



0106

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expo design

EXHIBITION IN SZUBIN



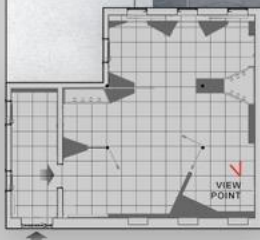
FLOOR PLAN



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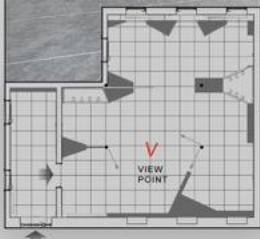
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EXHIBITION IN SZUBIN



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EXHIBITION IN SZUBIN

The ITEM Archive Page

The following is a partial screen shot of the Oflag 64 Remembered ITEM Archive page. To find it, go to Archives, then click on The ITEM Archive and there you are. If you have other original documents that were printed between June 1943 and January 1945, please let us know at elodie@oflag64.us. We would love to include them in our Archives.

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← Back to Archives

The ITEM Archive

The 1943-1945 issues of the Item in this archive are copies of the actual newspaper printed in Oflag 64 during captivity. All documents are in PDF format.

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MIS-X: The U.S. Escape and Evasion Experts

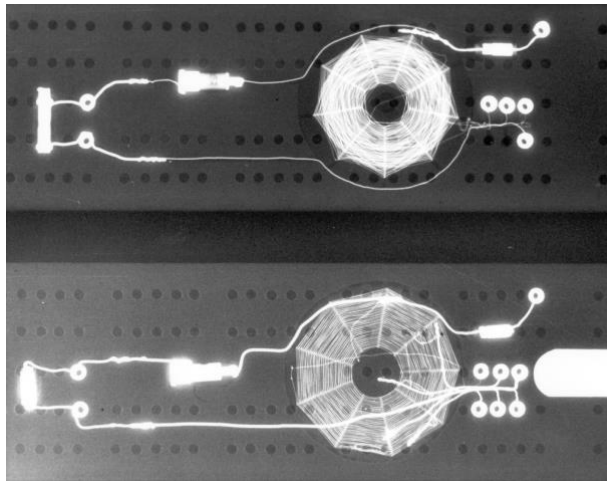
What do you know about the MIS-X project? On the website of The National Museum of the United States Air Force, the following explanation is given: <https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Visit/Museum-Exhibits/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/197474/mis-x-the-us-escape-and-evasion-experts/>

"Modeled on the British escape branch M.I.9, the top-secret MIS-X (Military Intelligence Service-X) organization gave U.S. service personnel formal training and special tools for escape and evasion. Their efforts helped those airmen who were evading and those who had become POWs.

MIS-X craftsmen modified common items found in POW aid packages to conceal hidden maps, radios, saws, compasses, and money, among other things. MIS-X also employed the help of several companies, which inserted material as part of the manufacturing process. To avoid compromising genuine aid societies, MIS-X sent these items to POWs in parcels shipped under the cover of fictitious aid organizations.

MIS-X aided several of the 737 U.S. military members who successfully escaped from German POW camps during WWII. Perhaps more importantly, MIS-X maintained contact with U.S. POWs at 64 German camps, both giving and receiving useful and timely information from the so-called "barbed wire front."

At the end of the war, the War Department disbanded MIS-X and most of the material related to this highly secret organization was destroyed."



Radio parts smuggled inside a cribbage board

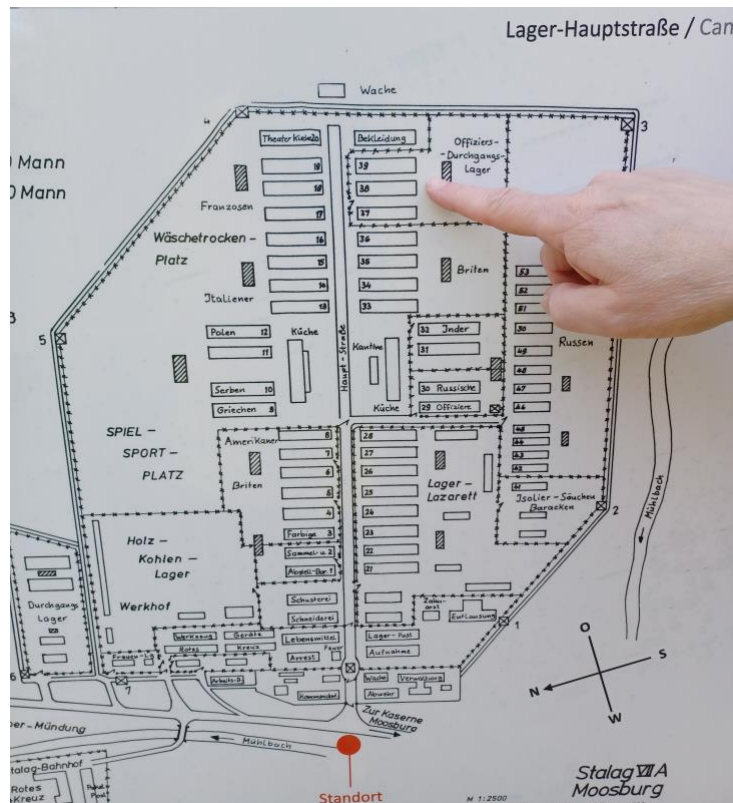
At Oflag 64, this project was fully operational. In addition to escape aids, codes were devised, code writers and readers assigned and trained, and a system of secret communication was put in place.

We are currently aware of a number of Oflag 64 Kriegies who participated in this project, and we learn of more on a regular basis. Various code letters have been found and have been decoded by experts. The Oflag 64 Kriegy Research Group (KRG) is in possession of some of them and is working to learn more from them as more are being decoded.

REQUEST: If your Kriegy participated in this project, we would like to include him on our list, and if he sent coded postcards or letters, we would like to have scans of each of them. If your Kriegy had any of the devices sent to aid in escapes, we would love to know what he had and how he used it. Please contact Dave Stewart at dslvtx@gmail.com if you have any of this information to share.

POW Camps Our Kriegies May Have Stayed At or Passed Through

Stalag VIIA in Moosburg has several German local historians trying to preserve history. I [David Little] think the use of signage has helped tell the story.



The videos [and photos] of the last remaining original barracks are interesting. It happened to be a transit officer barracks, so any of our men who transited thru this camp on to Oflag 64 likely were in and around this barracks.



Stalag IIIA in Luckenwalde is forested now. Only the main road paths remain. The city was basically left intact, and some of our men at this camp likely visited the town after liberation. Some US Army trucks circulated in the town and area as well picking up Americans on 6 May 1945.



The Hildesheim airfield was massive. A glider and paratrooper training ground as well as Luftwaffe use. The pictures do not do it justice. Clear that many transport planes could land here to deliver supplies and evacuate our men and wounded to France. The men from Luckenwalde who were healthier came here from Barby bridgehead. The men who were sicker went to the airfield near Magdeburg instead.

The Barby town on the Elbe river was the site of the Truman pontoon bridge the US Army threw across. This is still a ferry crossing location.



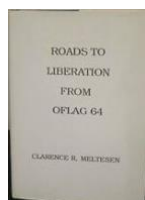
Publications

We're always looking for a hard copy of books written by or about our Kriegies and their experiences during the war.

Currently we're looking for **The Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly**, volume 1 (#1-3), volume 2 (#1, 2, 4), volume 3 (#4), volume 4 (#1), volume 12 (#2). If you have any of these issues and would be willing to donate them, please let us know.

Are you looking for these? Please contact.....

Vic Kanners' Diary "Horseshit and Cobblestones" is available through [Marilyn Kanners Beckham](#) (Vic's daughter). You can write to her at: 3608 W BRADFORD DR, BLOOMFIELD HILLS MI 48301-3353. New email address is: marilynbeckham@gmail.com



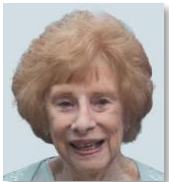
Lynne Meltesen, daughter of the late Kriegy Clarence Meltesen, has sent us a few more copies of his fantastic resource book, "**Roads to Liberation**". If you would like a copy, please contact [Elodie Caldwell](mailto:ElodieCaldwell@oflag64.us) at elodie@oflag64.us. The book is available at no charge but you are asked to pay for S & H. (Thank you, Meltesen family, for providing these books.)



Pat Waters, son of the late Kriegy John Waters, has made available several copies of the "**John K. Waters Story**" which can be purchased by contacting [Cindy Burgess](#) at cindyburgess92@gmail.com. The price of \$15.99 includes S&H. (Thank you, Pat, for providing these books.)

Kriegy Wives

Carlene Levin 1928 ~ 2023



Carlene Levin, loving wife of Robert Edward Levin and devoted mother, died on Oct. 18 in Southern Pines, NC. She was 95.

Gloria Carlene Hardy was born on Feb. 28, 1928, in Danville, VA. It was there that she met her husband-to-be on a blind date. They were married on Oct. 22, 1948, at her home. Her death came days short of their 75th wedding anniversary.

Carlene Levin was the quintessential Southern girl who went north, leaving Virginia in 1954 for Massapequa, NY. For the sake of her family, she learned to ice skate, sled, and drive in the snow. The move also produced her distinctive speaking voice, a Southern drawl with a Long Island accent!

Among her passions were gardening, traveling, and cooking (even for picky children!). She was always well-dressed, never giving in to the tracksuit styles of advanced age. She valued her vast collection of shoes, even if there was no room in the closet for her husband.

She was the mother of two - daughter Linda Kaye (married to Neal Vitale) and son Robert Edward Jr. (Diane Fournier Levin). She could be a worrier when it came to the kids (and grandkids), but she always wanted the best for them, even when it meant confronting her own fears or insecurities. She was a role model of kindness, caring, and support.

Carlene Levin was a petite lifelong redhead. Though considered sweet by her friends and

caregivers, her family remembers when her temper occasionally matched the color of her hair. Card playing, another long-term favorite pastime - especially bridge - could often be where this behavior was manifest. (Bob, why did you bid that? You should have led a spade!)

She also enjoyed her philanthropic activities and was always willing to help a friend in need. She was an active member of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, an organization that supports educational opportunities for women worldwide. After moving back to the South, to North Carolina in 1985, she volunteered at Sandhills/Moore Coalition for Human Care.

Mrs. Levin is survived by her husband, [Kriegy Robert E. Levin, Sr.] her children, and their families - three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life was held at 11am on Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024, at the Belle Meade Chapel, 100 Waters Drive, Southern Pines.

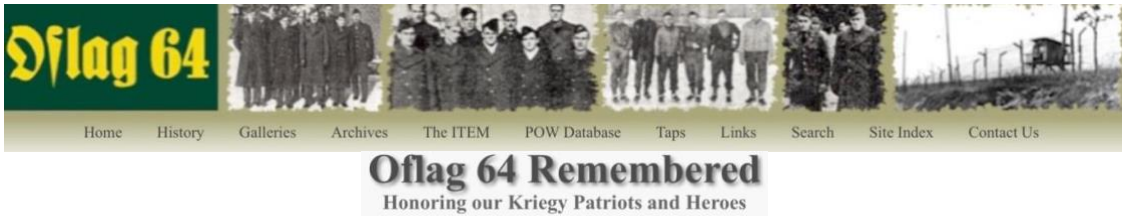
Services were entrusted to Boles Funeral Home of Southern Pines.

Carlene's obituary can be found at:
<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/2986505/carlene-levin>



We have not been made aware of any Kriegies, Kriegy widows or Kriegy Kids who have passed away during this quarter

If your Kriegy participated in a WWII history project of any kind, we would love to have permission to use the contents of his interview or report or other project. Please fill out the following form and return it to one of the people whose addresses appear at the bottom of the form. US Mail and email both work well.



Consent to Use Materials

I, (please print name) _____, authorize the entities checked below to release videos, transcripts, and any other POW-related information pertaining to the following named individual (please print name) _____ to the publishers of the *Oflag 64 Remembered* website, to the *Oflag 64 Kriegy Research Group*, and to the *Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin*.

The materials may be used by the parties mentioned above to create a history of Oflag 64 POWs as they work to create a new museum in Szubin, Poland where the POWs were interned during WWII. (Please check at least one.)

- Hometown Heroes
- Oral History Project/National WWII Museum
- National Home Front Project
- New Oral History Project/Smithsonian Magazine
- The Memory Project
- Veterans History Project
- Veterans Testimonial Project
- Witness to War Project
- WWII Oral History
- Other (please specify) _____

These permissions shall remain in effect until revoked in writing, and notification made to Oflag 64 Remembered, Saving the Memory of Oflag 64 Kriegies research group (addresses below).

Signature _____
 Address _____
 Phone(s) _____
 Date _____

Please return this signed Consent by email or U.S. Mail to:

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