

# THE EDGE



## OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE



WW2 Veterans Morrie Reinke (B17 Pilot) with family and Colonel Bill Haeflinger (B17 Pilot) (Page 19)





WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



Marines Penetrate Leaden Hail  
Two Days to Capture Tarawa  
PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN



WW2 Veteran Elwin Hart (2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division) meets with re-enactors and Sharon's Pictures (Page 33)

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**WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.**



WW2 German Army Veteran Wolfgang Cloth (2<sup>nd</sup> Panzer)

**This issues is dedicated to ALL Veterans  
See Page 15**

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### From HRS President

Jonathan Stevens, 9th Infantry

[jstevensww2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jstevensww2@sbcglobal.net)



### WWII HRS Scholarship 2013

The WWII HRS 2013 scholarship winner is Ben Pugh of 2/SS-Panzer Pioneer Battalion 5 Wiking.



Ben Pugh

### WWII HRS Scholarship Application Essay 2013

My name is Benjamin Pugh and I am currently a member in good standing of the WWII HRS. The unit I belong to is the 5<sup>th</sup> SS Wiking Panzer Pioneer Battalion, with our primary impression being a mid-1944 combat engineer unit. I will be reaching my four year mark this November as a reenactor and as a member of my reenacting unit, and am currently serving a one year term as unit council secretary. In high school I initially wanted to be a history teacher at either high school or college, but with the good advice of my family (my father is an emergency department nurse), friends and acquaintances I chose to go into the nursing profession which will provide me with a stable and steady vocation.

In my nursing pursuits I want to either be an emergency department nurse or intensive care unit nurse; I am also debating going into the United States Air Force and qualifying as a flight nurse. I finished up my second year at Purdue University Calumet in Hammond, IN completing perquisite nursing courses and taking microbiology this summer, but am transferring to University of Saint Francis Crown Point this coming fall semester, as I feel they are more educationally minded than my current school. Of note I also took a History of Europe 1900-1945 at Purdue Calumet. I currently work at St. Catherine's Hospital in East Chicago, IN as a nurse fellow which gives me basic clinical training in a hospital environment. Working at a hospital has also given me a chance to speak with a few WWII veterans which I find a bonus on the job.

Nursing itself has a rich history, with some of the first nursing societies being formed during the middle ages and serving during the Crusades which gives it a place in early military history. Even though I am not going into a history major I still have a rich love and appreciation for it and can use that knowledge that I have gained throughout my life. Nursing will also be able to provide me with knowledge to aid in and further either a German Sanit ter impression or if my future reenacting plans ever change an Allied medic. With my training as a nurse I will also be an invaluable tool to have on hand at events that I would be attending. We all know the obvious risk of heat stroke at many of the summer time events we attend, even witnessing it firsthand. With many reenactors now being middle-aged, heart attack can and could be a not so obvious threat at any event. My nursing skill can always be of use if a member of the public spectators were to have some sort of medical issue or condition that would require immediate attention.

I hope the board considers my application. I feel that even though I am not pursuing a history degree I feel confident that my choice to enter nursing will not only be a help for myself, those around me, and in reenacting as someone who can help during a medical situation.

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## EVENTS

November		November 2013
1-3		<b>WADE HOUSE FALL TACTICAL</b>
Nov		<p><b>Loc:</b> Old Wade House Historic Site, Greenbush, WI <b>Dates:</b> November 1-3, 2013 <b>Event Times:</b> 1500 Hrs, November 1 – 1200 Hrs, November 3, 2012 <b>Registration Times:</b> Friday, November 1, 1500-2300 hrs. Saturday, November 2, 0600-0800 <b>Pre-Registration:</b> Strongly preferred. Go to <a href="https://wadehousetactical2013.eventbrite.com">https://wadehousetactical2013.eventbrite.com</a> to register. <b>Fee:</b> \$10.00 for the event; additional \$12.00 for a barracks spot (subject to availability, first come first served) <b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:401gliderhq@comcast.net">401gliderhq@comcast.net</a> <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.401gir.com">http://www.401gir.com</a> <b>Map:</b> (<a href="#">Click Here</a>) <b>Authenticity:</b> WWII HRS rules apply. Setting is Fall, 1944 ETO. <b>Prohibited Vehicles:</b> Wheeled vehicles allowed. No tracked vehicles allowed. <b>Restrictions on minors:</b> Per HRS rules <b>Motels:</b> In neighboring Plymouth, WI <b>Sponsoring Unit(s):</b> C/401GIR (WWII HRS)</p>
08-10		<b>OTTAWA VETERANS CELEBRATION</b>
Nov		<p><b>Loc:</b> Forest Park, 419 N. Locust St, Ottawa, KS 66067 <b>Dates:</b> 11/8/13 – 11/10/13 <b>Event Times:</b> 10:30 am – 7:00 pm <b>Registration Times:</b> na <b>Pre-Registration:</b> none <b>Fee:</b> no fee <b>Contact:</b> Dave Hruska <b>Website:</b> none <b>Authenticity Notes:</b> WWII HRS rules apply <b>Prohibited Vehicles/Items:</b> no alcohol, no live ammo <b>Restrictions on Minors:</b> WW II HRS rules apply <b>Other restrictions:</b> none <b>Sponsoring Unit(s):</b> G Co., 137th Inf. Regt., 35th Inf. Div.</p>

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

December

December 2013

14

## SINYAVIN III

Dec



**Loc:** 2018 E Charles St., Ft Scott, KS 66701

**Dates:** Dec 14, 2013

**Event Times:** 0800-1600

**Registration Times:** 0800-0900

**Pre-Registration:** No

**Fee:** \$10 (this is a donation to the landowner)

**Contact:** [dustinrstrong@hotmail.com](mailto:dustinrstrong@hotmail.com)

**Website:** <http://www.250skicompany.webs.com>

**Authenticity Notes:** Eastern Front. All HRS rules apply

**Prohibited Vehicles/Items:** No alcohol, live ammunition, or vehicles larger than a jeep, kubelwagon or motorcycle

**Restrictions on Minors:** Any person under 18 must have parent/guardian present and may not be under arms

**Other restrictions:** None

**Sponsoring Unit(s):** 250 Ski Company, Division Azul (WWII HRS)

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



Jan 31st-Feb 2nd  
2014

Pheasant Run Resort  
St. Charles, IL

Don't miss the world's only INDOOR military history convention! Inside the 40,000 sq ft MEGA Center you'll find everything from the finest reenacting merchandise to authentic militaria, 12 encampments (Romans thru Vietnam) real WW2 tanks, heavy weapons, dancing, live music, seminars, workshops, and MORE during this THREE DAY celebration! Join the hundreds of historical reenactors who have made this show their "can't miss!" event for the past nine years!

- **Vendors from every era plus books and authentic military antiques and collectibles!**
- **12 encampments plus real WW2 armor, artillery and vehicles!**
- **Nightly parties: Historical Jeopardy & the Grand Ball!**
- **Dance classes, historical seminars and reenacting workshops for all eras!**



More info and discounted Advanced Tickets at  
[www.militaryhistoryfest.com](http://www.militaryhistoryfest.com) or call (630) 336-2614  
Discounted hotel rooms by calling (800) 474-3272

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## OFFICIAL INFO

### HRS Board Members SEPTEMBER 2013

#### HRS President

Jon Stevens  
9th Infantry Division  
630.221.1171  
[jstevensww2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jstevensww2@sbcglobal.net)

#### HRS Vice President

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#### HRS Secretary

Darryl "Eddie" Mayton  
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#### Allied Representative

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And 9th I.D.  
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#### HOW TO ATTEND a Board Meeting:

Monthly teleconference Board meetings are open to all members. Members do not need to register for the meetings nor do they need to contact the president or any board members.

They need to contact their unit commander for the call information to include phone number and password. This creates less of a choke point and gets the information out to more with less hassle.

The monthly board meeting time/dates will change to accommodate the board members time schedules. Please contact your unit commander for more information regarding date, time, and log on information.

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

All of the HRS Board Meeting Minutes from the past five years are posted on the HRS WEB Site.  
Current HRS By-Law call for these official business reports to be re-published here in The Edge.  
See the BOD Minutes Page at <http://WorldWarTwoHrs.org/Business.htm> for past meeting Minutes

## W W I I H R S Minutes

<b>2013 Minutes</b> January February (canceled) <a href="#">March</a> <a href="#">April</a> <a href="#">May</a> <a href="#">June</a> July August September October November December	<b>2012 Minutes</b> <a href="#">January</a> <a href="#">February</a> <a href="#">March</a> <a href="#">April</a> <a href="#">May</a> <a href="#">June</a> July <a href="#">August</a> September (canceled) <a href="#">October</a> <a href="#">November</a> December (No quorum)
<b>2011 Minutes</b> <a href="#">January</a> <a href="#">February</a> <a href="#">March</a> <a href="#">April</a> <a href="#">May</a> <a href="#">June</a> <a href="#">July</a> <a href="#">August</a> <a href="#">September</a> <a href="#">October</a> <a href="#">November</a> <a href="#">December</a>	<b>2010 Minutes</b> <a href="#">January</a> <a href="#">February</a> <a href="#">March</a> <a href="#">April</a> <a href="#">May</a> <a href="#">June</a> <a href="#">July</a> <a href="#">August</a> <a href="#">September</a> <a href="#">October</a> <a href="#">November</a> <a href="#">December</a>
<b>2009 Minutes</b> <a href="#">January</a> <a href="#">February</a> <a href="#">March</a> <a href="#">April</a> <a href="#">May</a> <a href="#">June</a> <a href="#">July</a> <a href="#">August</a> <a href="#">September</a> <a href="#">October</a> <a href="#">November</a> <a href="#">December</a>	<b>2008 Minutes</b> <a href="#">January</a> <a href="#">February</a> <a href="#">March</a> <a href="#">April</a> <a href="#">May</a> <a href="#">June</a> <a href="#">July</a> August <a href="#">September</a> <a href="#">October</a> <a href="#">November</a> <a href="#">December</a>

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## About Us



The World War Two Historical Re-enactment Society is an organization of over 1200 men and women members from coast to coast, as well as Canada and Europe. Our mission is to bring the history of World War Two to life with public displays, simulated battles, participation in parades, and a variety of other community activities.

The society strives to honor and preserve the memory of those who served in World War Two, as well as preserve the artifacts of that period.

Our members carry out a wide range of historical impressions, including those of The United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, Poland, and Germany.

Our focus is entirely on the military history of World War Two. We have no sympathy for the ideology of Nazism or fascism. Such beliefs are not welcome here.

If this exciting and rewarding hobby appeals to you, please consider joining us. Our hobby is dependent upon the talents and enthusiasm of its members and there is always room for new interest! Please contact any of our board members today for more information.

The

**www.WorldWarTwoHRS.Org**

WEB Site Is Hosted by Socket.NET

A banner for Socket.NET with a purple and orange background. It features the text "people connecting people", the Socket.NET logo, and contact information for the Internet Service Provider.

www.socket.net  
1-800-SOCKET-3

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connecting people

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Internet Service Provider  
2703 Clark Ln, Columbia, MO.  
(800) 762-5383

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## MEETING MINUTES

### Board Meeting 29 August 2013

#### Welcome and ROLL CALL:

Position	Name	Present
President:	Jonathan Stevens	YES
Vice President:	Open	
Treasurer:	Charles Gallagher	No
Secretary:	Eddie Mayton	YES
Allied Representative:	Ron Kapustka	YES
Commonwealth Rep:	Bryce Seyko	No
Axis Representative:	Doug Loge	YES
Newsletter Editors:	Jeff Skender	YES

#### HRS Members Present

Jim Scoutan, Kirk Gustafson, Dave Serikaku, Brian Jones, George Reinke, Wayne McCully, Tim Scherer, Polly Blanton, Matt ???, Mike Kaczorowski

#### Reading of the July minutes

Reading of the July, 2013 minutes: The July, 2013 meeting minutes were read by Eddie Mayton. A motion was made by Jon Stevens to approve the minutes as read, which was seconded by Doug Loge. A vote was taken and the Minutes were approved as read.

#### Old Business

##### Election

The results were read to have Mike be the next HRS Vice President. Two questions were asked and voted yes although they were unbinding questions. A motion to accept was made by Doug and seconded by Jon.

##### Scholarship

The committee requested more information and are not done with their decision. This will be tabled until they make a decision on the two applicants. A few questions on due dates were asked all of which were answered by Jon. A suggestion was made that next year they pick a specific dead line for the decision to be made. A motion was made to extend the decision by one week by Doug Loge seconded by Eddie Mayton. A vote was taken and it was approved.

##### Rockford HRS Meal

The mess unit pulled out of the running. The price would be \$6 per person or \$1200 total. Jon mentioned that last year only 150 people went for breakfast. A few ideas on how to claim the breakfast were suggested and a decision was made to have a list provided. The 353<sup>rd</sup> would prefer that the breakfast be provided on Sunday. A discussion was held about the high cost. It was suggested that a new vote was needed due to the new day and price. It was decided more information was needed and Jon was going to inquire. A vote was decided to be held between meetings.

##### Recognized Groups

Doug is working on it and will post online when complete.

#### New Business

##### Unit Charters

##### New Charters:

7th Infantry Div.- They passed S&A and are ready for a board vote. A motion was made by Eddie Mayton and seconded by Ron Kapustka. A vote was held and it was approved as a probationary unit.

Midwest Women's Historical Baseball League- There were a few questions including some copyright issues. So the vote was tabled until questions could be answered.

201st Latvian Rifle Division- They passed S&A and are ready for a board vote. A motion was made by Eddie Mayton and seconded by Ron Kapustka. A vote was held and it was approved as a probationary unit.

3rd SS- A discussion was held about the number of members, location, events and how the negative side is handled. It was made clear that the only charter they are applying for is the SS and no other German unit. They passed S&A and are ready for a board vote. A motion was made by Eddie Mayton and seconded by Ron Kapustka. A vote was held and it was approved as a probationary unit.

#### Probationary Charters:

#### Defunct Charters:

#### Treasurer Report – Payouts, quarterly report

PNC as of today in money market \$48,305.46 and \$4751.34 in PNC checking making a total of 53,056.80. in wells Fargo \$687.70 making a grand total \$53,744.50. No expenses in august and a deposit of \$375.

#### Secretary Report

Nothing new to report.

#### Commonwealth Report

Nothing new to report.

#### Allied Report

New event in Vandalia IL in October. Ron shared all of the important details.

#### Axis Report

Nothing new to report.

#### Edge Report

A few questions about the Rockford meal, special election and scholarship information for the September Edge.

#### Business Manager Report

Nothing new to report.

#### Committee Reports

##### S&A

Report coming from Conneaut otherwise nothing new.

##### Unit Commanders

Nothing new to report.

#### Vehicle – Armored Vehicle Safety

Working on an armored vehicle safety report. Do vehicle safety inspectors have the authority to keep vehicles owners away from events and battlefields when they fail the safety requirements? Jon said yes Ron suggested to verify with Event organizers.

#### Legislative Committee

Nothing new to report.

#### Rockford Advertising Video

Jon discussed the video proposal MADE by the Rockford village. The video would be 2 minutes and cost \$4,000 dollars and wants the HRS to split the cost. Questions were asked about the group and the cost of the video. Most people feel that we can do the video in house cheaper and better then the company in Rockford. Jon suggested that we already have enough good videos that we do not need to pay for a video. A video is a good idea but not at this price. Jon decided he would say no to the Rockford village but will suggest that we could do the video for them.

#### Open Comments

Motion to end made by Mike and seconded by Eddie Mayton. A vote was held and the meeting was adjourned at 8/29/2013 9:16 PM.

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## Finding Master Sergeant Bloyd

### Part 3

## The Aircraft of the 19<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (Heavy)

By LTC Tim A. Scherrer

*About Finding Master Sergeant Bloyd: This is a series of articles regarding discovering the service of a family member in WWII. This is the researching of a story inside my family and comparing it to the facts that can be found in other sources. I don't know how many articles this will be, because the research is still underway. I hope to prove each month a series of new details as my detective work figures out exactly who was MSG Bloyd.*

Part 3: The 19<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (Heavy) was one of the earliest B-17 groups in the USAAF. It deployed from March Field, to a pre-deployment base of the brand new Albuquerque Army Air Field in the summer of 1941. The 19<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group conducted a POM (preparation for overseas movement) and then deployed in the fall of 1941. It arrived in the Philippines a month before Pearl Harbor and was devastated in an attack on 8 December 1941. Because it was on the other side of the dateline, the attack came just 8 hours after Pearl Harbor, and the 19<sup>th</sup> lost half of its aircraft. There is much more to the story, but this part will just focus on the 33 B-17s of the 19<sup>th</sup> and their fate. Eight aircraft were shown as assigned to the 93<sup>rd</sup> BS at this time. I have located 32 of the 33 aircraft. The one aircraft could just be a miscount or perhaps wasn't on station in the Philippines yet, or broken somewhere else. The 32 aircraft tells a pretty compelling story about the hell the 19<sup>th</sup> BG went through in the first few weeks of the war.

Military aircraft are accounted for by their year of production and then a service number. The first two digits are the year of production and the remaining numbers are the government serial number. All the aircraft were B-17 C and D models produced in 1940. The E models were in production but were not yet in service. The 19<sup>th</sup> consisted of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron (Gerald's unit), the 14<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron and 30<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron. I list all the aircraft because crews would be assigned depending upon the serviceability of the aircraft and availability of a crew member. Gerald could have flown on any of these aircraft on any given day.

### Boeing B-17C Models

**40-2045:** Assigned to 14<sup>th</sup> BS. Shot down on 10 December, 1941 by Japanese fighters, killing Pilot Captain Colin Kelley and Flight Engineer SSgt William Delehanty. Aircraft was intercepted by Zeros returning from a bombing run against the Japanese Heavy Cruiser Ashigara. The crew bailed out within six miles of Clark Air Base and most returned to duty. An explosion also ejected Co-Pilot 2Lt Donald Robbins from the astrodome. Robbins pulled his parachute and survived, although the Zeros strafed the crew all the way to the ground. A memorial for Captain Kelly is located in the Kelly Theater at Clark Air Base.

**40-2048:** Strafed on the ground at Clark field, 8 December, 1941. Parts were salvaged for use on other aircraft.

**40-2062:** Assigned to 93<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> BS. Aircraft survived the Clark Field attack on 8 December. It was shot down by Japanese fighters south of Malang, Java on 3 February 1942 with the loss of all 7 crew members. Aircraft was jumped by multiple Zeros and shot down, crashing 20 miles from the Malang Airfield.

**40-2067:** Strafed and destroyed on the ground at Clark Field, 8 December 1941.

**40-2072:** Heavily Damaged on bombing mission to Davao on Christmas Day, 25 December 1941. Converted to a transport aircraft with the nickname of Pamela and later Miss E.M.F. (Early Morning Fixing). Aircraft crashed 14 June 1943 in Queensland, Australia while serving with the 317 Transport Group.

### Boeing B-17D Models

**40-3059:** Strafed and destroyed on the ground at Clark Field, 8 December 1941. Salvaged for parts.

**40-3062:** Destroyed by strafing at Pasiran, Java on 22 February 1942.

**40-3063:** Aircraft survived 8 December 1941 Clark Field raid because it was on a mission at the time. It collided with a P-40 Warhawk at Clark Field in a ground accident and was significantly damaged. It was salvaged for parts.



B17C & Ds at Hamilton Field CA before flight to Hawaii May 1941, these became 14th Sqd flown to Clark Field.

**40-3064:** Crashed overshooting airfield at Malang, Java on 17 January 1942. All the crew survived.

**40-3066:** Aircraft was strafed and destroyed at Pasiran, Java 22 February 1942.

**40-3068:** Aircraft was strafed and destroyed at Clark Field on 8 December 1941.

**40-3069:** Aircraft was strafed on the ground at Clark field on 22 February 1942. Parts of this aircraft were most likely used for a Japanese reconstruction of 40-3095 by the Japanese.

**40-3070:** Aircraft was strafed at Pasiran on 22 February 1942 and salvaged for parts.

**40-3072:** Aircraft was strafed at Pasiran on 22 February 1942 and salvaged for parts. Aircraft had also run off a runway in 1941 at Adams Field in Little Rock AR before deployment to the Philippines.

**40-3078:** Flying from Del Monte Field on Mindanao, PI on 14 December 1941, bombed Japanese transport ships off Legaspi. Aircraft was jumped by 5 Zeros and claims to have shot down two of the attackers. The aircraft force landed on a rice paddy on Masbate Island. Filipinos assisted with the rescue of the crew, who all returned to duty in March of 1942.

**40-3074:** Strafed and burned at Singoassri, Java on 3 February 1942.

**40-3075:** Strafed and destroyed at Clark Field on 8 December 1941.

**40-3076:** Strafed and destroyed at Clark Field on 8 December 1941.

**40-3078:** Strafed and burned at Singoassri, Java on 3 February 1942.

**40-3079:** Crash landed and wrecked at Daly Waters, Northern Territory, Australia on 14 March 1942.

**40-3086:** Aircraft ditched off Zamboanga, PI on 10 December 1941. Flown by 1LT Guliford Montgomery.

**40-3087:** Seriously damaged in a ground accident at Del Monte Field, Mindanao on 12 December 1941. Salvaged for parts.

**40-3088:** Strafed on ground and destroyed at Clark field on 8 December 1941. Salvaged for parts.



**40-3091:** Aircraft was damaged in the Philippines on 10 December 1941. It was flown to Australia for repairs, but was broken into components instead. The tail of this aircraft survives today as the tail of *The Swoose*.

**40-3093:** Aircraft strafed and destroyed at Del Monte, Mindanao on 19 December 1941. Salvaged for parts.

**40-3094:** Aircraft strafed and destroyed at Clark Field on 8 December 1941. Salvaged for parts.

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

**40-3095:** Strafed on ground at Clark Field on 8 December 1941. Aircraft was later repaired to flying condition by the Japanese using parts from 40-3069. It was flown to Japan and displayed as a war trophy in July of 1942 and then used for testing. Fate after that is unknown.



**40-3096:** Sustained battle damage during a bombing mission to Legaspi on 14 December 1941 and crash landed at Catayan, Mindanao. Aircraft was mostly burned up after crash.

**40-3097:** Assigned to the 93<sup>rd</sup> BS. Known today as *The Swoose*. This aircraft was nicknamed *Ole Betty* by crews in the 19<sup>th</sup> BG. The only known aircraft to have flown a combat mission on the first day of US entry into the war and remained in continuous service until the end of the war. Aircraft is currently at the US Air Force Museum in Ohio awaiting restoration. Aircraft also served as inspiration for the name of actress Swoosie Kurtz, whose father flew the aircraft in WWII.



*The Swoose* in its WWII service.



*The Swoose* today at the Air Force Museum.

**40-3098:** Damaged in a ground accident at Del Monte Field, Mindanao, PI on 12 December 1941.

**40-3099:** Aircraft strafed at Clark Field 8 December 1941 and destroyed. It was salvaged for parts.

**40-3100:** Aircraft was in a ground accident at Clark field on 9 December 1941. It was salvaged for parts.

## Conclusion:

The initial group of 33 B-17s which MSG Bloyd flew to the Philippines took a beating. Most were out of combat action within a few months. Eighteen of the aircraft were strafed and damaged on the ground, mostly at Clark Field. Parts of two aircraft strafed were used to build the flyable Japanese B-17. Three aircraft were shot down and three more crashed either after battle damage or other air catastrophes. Five were destroyed in ground accidents and one was ditched. Only three aircraft were still in service six months later. Three of the aircraft were converted to transports and only one of those survives today, *The Swoose*. It can be visited at the US Air Force Museum in Ohio.

The learning curve and status of weapons technology is also a big part of this. The early B-17s were not a match for Zeros. As the war progressed, the Japanese mostly failed to upgrade their weapons due to their confidence they would soon win the war. The B-17 went through several upgrades that turned it into a true Flying Fortress, only to be replaced by the Super Fortress. The losses show the parity of weapons and how difficult of a fight this was early in the war.

It also speaks to the stress the 19<sup>th</sup> BG was under during this part of the war. Losing five aircraft due to ground accidents shows the inexperience of the crews handling them. The B-17 was a new weapons system in its first combat. Many of the lessons learned in the 19<sup>th</sup> were probably used throughout the USAAF in other heavy bomb groups. The 19<sup>th</sup> left the Philippines as the most experienced heavy bomb group in the USAAF and continued the fight. Gerald didn't go with them. He didn't make it off the island and died in captivity before summer.

Sources: Most of the information in this section was pulled from the very detailed Pacific Wrecks website and the incredible Joe Baugher serial number list located on the web. Without these resources, this would not have been possible.

LTC Tim A. Scherrer

Director of College Placement and Counseling

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WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## VETERANS DAY

By Heinz Thiel

This past year I was lucky enough to be able to meet over 50 WW2 Veterans. I captured some on video, others in pictures, and some just left their mark in my sole.

This issue of the EDGE is dedicated to ALL Veterans. In the following pages you will find pictures of some of the veterans I spoke with this year along with some famous quotes and bit of history about some Veterans and Veterans Day.

Our society strives to honor and preserve the memory of those who served in World War Two. In this issue I strive to do just that!



"We owe our World War II veterans - and all our veterans - a debt we can never fully repay." - Doc Hastings

"On this Veterans Day, let us remember the service of our veterans, and let us renew our national promise to fulfill our sacred obligations to our veterans and their families who have sacrificed so much so that we can live free." - Dan Lipinski

"America's veterans have served their country with the belief that democracy and freedom are ideals to be upheld around the world." - John Doolittle

Veterans Day is an official United States holiday which honors people who have served in armed service also known as veterans. It is a federal holiday that is observed on November 11. It coincides with other holidays such as Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, which are celebrated in other parts of the world and also mark the anniversary of the end of World War I. (Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect.)

### History of Veterans Day

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”



Soldiers of the 353rd Infantry near a church at Stenay, Meuse in France, wait for the end of hostilities. This photo was taken at 10:58 a.m., on November 11, 1918, two minutes before the armistice ending World War I went into effect

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

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## COURAGE

Bravery doesn't mean you aren't scared. It means you go anyway.

THANK-YOU VETERANS

"Among the men who fought on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue" - Admiral Nimitz

*Freedom Isn't Free*



*Thank You, Veterans*

"Freedom is never free." -Author Unknown

"Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live taking the form of readiness to die." -G.K. Chesterton

"This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave." -Elmer Davis

"But the freedom that they fought for, and the country grand they wrought for, Is their monument to-day, and for aye." -Thomas Dunn English

"Lord, bid war's trumpet cease; Fold the whole earth in peace." -Oliver Wendell Holmes

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." -John Fitzgerald Kennedy

"The most persistent sound which reverberates through men's history is the beating of war drums." -Arthur Koestler

"I dream of giving birth to a child who will ask, 'Mother, what was war?'" -Eve Merriam

"Valor is stability, not of legs and arms, but of courage and the soul." - Michel de Montaigne

"In war, there are no unwounded soldiers." -Jose Narosky

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. This is not a way of life at all in any true sense. Under the clouds of war, it is humanity hanging on a cross of iron."  
—Dwight D. Eisenhower

"It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather, we should thank God that such men lived."  
— George S. Patton Jr.

"You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival."  
— Winston Churchill

"Imagine there's no countries  
It isn't hard to do  
Nothing to kill or die for  
And no religion too  
Imagine all the people  
Living life in peace

You may say that I'm a dreamer  
But I'm not the only one  
I hope someday you'll join us  
And the world will be as one"  
— John Lennon, Imagine

"Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men. It is the spirit of men who follow and of the man who leads that gains the victory."  
— George S. Patton Jr.

"We are going to have peace even if we have to fight for it."  
— Dwight D. Eisenhower

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“One question in my mind, which I hardly dare mention in public, is whether patriotism has, overall, been a force for good or evil in the world. Patriotism is rampant in war and there are some good things about it. Just as self-respect and pride bring out the best in an individual, pride in family, pride in teammates, pride in hometown bring out the best in groups of people. War brings out the kind of pride in country that encourages its citizens in the direction of excellence and it encourages them to be ready to die for it. At no time do people work so well together to achieve the same goal as they do in wartime. Maybe that's enough to make patriotism eligible to be considered a virtue. If only I could get out of my mind the most patriotic people who ever lived, the Nazi Germans.”

— Andy Rooney, My War

“This topic brings me to that worst outcrop of herd life, the military system, which I abhor... This plague-spot of civilization ought to be abolished with all possible speed. Heroism on command, senseless violence, and all the loathsome nonsense that goes by the name of patriotism -- how passionately I hate them!”

— Albert Einstein

“One day President Roosevelt told me that he was asking publicly for suggestions about what the war should be called. I said at once 'The Unnecessary War'.”

— Winston Churchill



Edith Shain, holding the iconic photograph taken by Alfred Eisenstaedt. Originally published in LIFE Magazine, the photo depicts a sailor kissing Edith Shain in her nurses uniform, in Times Square on August 14, 1945 Tom Sanders Photography: Edith Shain



Bill Snyder passed away last week at the age of 100 years old. He was the first American Marine soldier to marry an Australian woman in WWII.

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The 2nd Marine Division has been especially chosen by the High Command for the assault on Tarawa...what you do there will set a standard for all future operations in the central pacific area."  
Major General Julian C. Smith - Commander of the U.S. 2nd Marine Division - November 1943

"Casualties many; Percentage of dead not known; Combat efficiency; we are winning."  
Colonel David M. Shoup - (Tarawa) - 21st November 1943



"Tarawa, South Pacific, 1943" by Sergeant Tom Lovell, USMC  
Marine Corps Combat Art Collection



"Tarawa Invasion" by David Pentland

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## My Date with Flying History Part 2

### Meeting the men who served

By Heinz Thiel

WW2 HRS Press Corps

On Thursday 5 September 2013 I was honored to meet the following WW2 Veterans at Lewis University Airport in Lockport, ILL.



Edward Vercelli – B17 Navigator during WW2  
Enlisted in 1943 at the age of 18  
Flew 20 Missions over Europe  
Became a Pilot after the war and then flew weather recon over Greenland.



Bill Thorns – B17 Flight Engineer  
He was 20 years old in 1943 when he completed 25 Missions over Europe



Coronel Bill Haefflinger- B17 Pilot  
1944 to 1945 Flew 29 Missions over Europe  
Served for 41 years in the U.S. Air Force  
Flew a B-25 in Korea  
Trained Pilots for the Vietnam War

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



Emil Pribula – B17 Togglier (Bombardier)  
Drafted in 1943 at the age of 20 years old  
Flew 15 Missions over Europe with the 92<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group



Morrie Renke – B17 Pilot  
1944 to 1945 Flew 35 Missions over Germany and Italy



Joe Belman – B17 Gunner  
Enlisted at 19 years old  
Flew 35 Missions over Germany with the 305<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group



Charlie Muller – B17 Navigator  
Flew 6 Missions over Germany in 1945 with the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

A Big Thank You to Dave Stevens, and WarBird Squadron 4, and the Crew of the B-17G Aluminum Overcast. On September 5<sup>th</sup> they invited these WW2 B-17 Veterans to take a free ride in a B-17.

I was there to video this Veterans flight, and did, but at the time of this publication I had not yet made that video public. It will be posted on YouTube at some time in the near future.

Until then you can see these Veterans in the following videos on YouTube.

Experience Ride on B-17 Bomber

By Chicago Tribune – Adam Wolffbrandt

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pc\\_p\\_VwEUxg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pc_p_VwEUxg)

B-17 Flight over Joliet, IL. Media and Veterans Day

By wardtv6 (Joliet Cable Channel 6)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-shhPLJjEv4>



Dave Stevens – EAA Warbird Squadron 4 –  
Hosted the B-17G Aluminum Overcast 5 Sept to 8 Sept 2013.



EAA's B-17 Aluminum Overcast Flight Crew with Richard Fredrickson (Joliet Cable Channel 6)

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## Meeting the men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division

By Heinz Thiel

WW2 HRS Press Corps

On Saturday 14 September 2013 I was honored to meet some 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division WW2 Veterans at the First Division Museum at Cantigny in Wheaton, ILL. While this meeting actually left me speechless and in awe, it meant much more to Jon Stevens (the current HRS President). His father served with these men, and they did remember him. Much of the TEXT that follows is taken directly from Jon's WEB site Tarawa on the Web <http://tarawaontheweb.org/index.html>

Tarawa on the Web was created to be a tribute to the 2nd Marine Division of WWII and a historical resource to further the knowledge of an epic struggle that was an integral part of the march of the United States towards defeat of Imperial Japan. My main interest in the Pacific battles of the 2nd Marine Division is from my father, Gordon Stevens H&S 2. He was there on Tulagi and the fetid jungle of Guadalcanal. He waded to Red Beach 2 on Tarawa. He hit the beach on Saipan and Tinian. From my desire to know more about what he went through I began to gather information about the South Pacific battles of WWII.

My dad was 23 years old at Tarawa.

He enlisted in the Marines 19 January 1942.

Jonathan Stevens

Associate Life Member 2nd Marine Division Association

The Assault of the Second Marine Division on Betio Island, Tarawa Atoll, 20-23 November, 1943.



Flamethrower smoke rises above the top of an enemy bombproof shelter on Betio as Marines, led by 1st Lt. Bonnyman, advance up its slopes. (USMC 63458)



Sgt. Gordon H. Stevens, H&S 2

### HOW I REMEMBER MY ARRIVAL AT "HELEN"

By Sgt. Gordon H. Stevens

I was in H & S Company, Second Regiment, Second Division FMF. My job was radio operator. It was November 20, 1943.

After seeing action at Guadalcanal, our outfit had spent nine months in New Zealand for rest and training. We left New Zealand knowing only that we were headed for the Central Pacific Area.

H & S Company was divided up and put aboard two transports. Our group went aboard the APA Zeilin. Life on ship was always the same: steaming holds and lack of drinking water. The scuttlebutt was we were going to retake Wake Island.

My buddy, John M. Gross -- who received the Navy Cross at Tarawa -- and I slept topside under a Higgins boat. This was to take advantage of cool, fresh night air. John was later killed in action on Saipan.

Our convoy pulled into Efate in the New Hebrides to pick up supplies and the big ships. After a short stay the convoy headed north. Still the scuttlebutt was we were going to be the avengers of Wake Island. It wasn't long before the straight dope came over the loud speakers. We were going to attack the heavily defended atoll of Tarawa, Island of Betio.

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WW2 Veteran Erwin D. Long – 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division



WW2 Veteran – 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division 60 mm Mortar Man

We were also informed Tojo had announced to the world "a hundred thousand United States Marines couldn't take Tarawa." We looked around and doubted if there were that many men in the whole convoy. The U. S. Navy informed the troops not to worry -- when they finished with Helen it would be nothing but a pile of sand in the Pacific.

As dawn of "D Day" approached, I think, to the man, each thought this landing was going to be a pushover. Some thought of their buddies on Bougainville, who were having a real rough time. Later I found out one of my friends there didn't make it.

This operation was different; the training had been something new. The holds of the ships were nearly empty - something we were not used to. Usually gear is piled high in every corner. Not this trip! This also gave way for more scuttlebutt. It meant one thing to us -- we wouldn't be there long. The thought also entered our minds that maybe, after the operation (which was going to be so easy) we would head for the States.

As dawn came the transports pulled into Tarawa Lagoon -- our first glimpse of an LST. Some thought maybe it was Japanese. The ships anchored and prepared to disembark troops and supplies. The Navy planes were making the last strafing runs on the landing beaches. The big ships were hurling their final shells. Helen was talking a real beating. We could see trees and fire. Maybe the island wasn't going to be as flattened as the Navy said.

Next, to everyone's surprise, the transports were being shelled from shore. As quickly as possible the transports moved out of range. So this was going to be an easy operation!

"H Hour" was changed, as it would take longer for the troops to reach their line of departure, being further from shore. A mad scramble was next, getting everything going into the Higgins boats. The first thing we noticed, the water was really rough. Many of the men, including myself, got seasick.

Our group was to head for the beach as soon as the amphibian tractors landed the troops of the first wave; that is, all the amphibians that were operating after the landing.

Soon it became apparent things were in a jumbled-up mess. The beachmasters were like madmen trying to organize the jumble of boats and tractors. John Gross was aboard another boat with his radio as radioman for Col. Shoup. History has told what a heroic job John and the Colonel did at Tarawa.

The water seemed to get rougher all the time. My radio was taking a real pounding on the deck of our Higgins boat. I had to then put it on my back to save it. This made it hard to operate. By this time I was really sick and many others were, too. The rough water kept a good spray of water coming over us so things were kept washed off. We were too crowded to do any moving around.

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



WW2 Veteran 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division Machine Gunner  
Wendell Perkins talks about his time on Tarawa



WW2 Veteran 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division Machine Gunner  
Wendell Perkins signs the Map of Tarawa

It was now apparent communications were very much lacking. We couldn't set up our radio equipment so it was decided to find any amphib running, pile the radios and operators in, and head for our spot on the beach. Most of the amphib running were taking wounded put to the ships. Finally we found one and pulled alongside. The officer in charge of our boat gave the operators new orders -- "get these radios ashore!"

I didn't care if I lived or died by this time, so I went along with three other radio men. As soon as we were aboard the tractor, the difference in motion caused my seasickness to leave. It was apparent all was not well here, either. The driver had taken in troops in the first wave and landed them successfully. As he was backing off the reef, they took a second hit in the side. It was bad enough so they were taking on water.

We instructed the driver to head for the beach near the pier. He said, "That's going to be hard, as all those dead Japs the Navy killed for us came back to life and the reef is jammed with dead and wounded Marines." He said, "Anyway, here we go. I'll try to put you where you want to go or as near as possible." We traveled approximately one hundred yards and the engine quit. No amount of coaxing would bring it to life. We started to drift toward the large end of the island. Our hailing and waving at boats and tractors for help was to no avail; all we received was a wave back. They had their troubles, too.

The engine was tried from time to time, but to no avail. Later in the afternoon the engine did come to life. We turned around and headed back toward the pier. After going approximately 50 yards, it quit. Looking shoreward we could see movement on the beach but couldn't tell if it was Marines or Japs. The decision was made to try to raise someone on one of the radios. We gave this up as there was no answer on any of our frequencies on either radio set.

All of a sudden a 37mm opened up on us from shore -- probably because of three sets of antennas aboard -- one from the tractor, two from our radios. The shells landed close on all sides of us, but none hit. We decided to lower the antennas in a hurry. After doing this, they stopped shelling. During this time the two amphib drivers worked madly on the engine; still it wouldn't start.

Darkness was beginning to fall -- the battery was about gone. One more try and the engine caught and roared into action. Again we headed for the pier. By this time we had drifted almost past the large end of the island.

Slowly we headed toward the pier. All of a sudden, in the darkness, an LCPV loomed up. The officer in charge advised us to tie up as he was anchoring until somehow, someone would get some information on what was going on. All night long we tried to figure out what was happening on shore. Machine guns rattled -- both American and Japanese. Rifle and mortar fire was heavy. We really felt useless just waiting.

The radios just were not getting through, so we decided to pack them back up. There wasn't any dry spot aboard because of all the water the tractor had taken on. There wasn't any sleep to be had except dozing from time to time. Things quieted down ashore toward morning.

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"The Three Musketeers"

Bob Geil, Gordon Stevens, and John Gross in New Zealand 1943.  
This picture was carried in my dad's wallet for the rest of his life.  
Both Gross and Geil were killed on Saipan from friendly fire.  
The brotherhood of battle.

As dawn came the Navy planes started bombing and strafing the small end of the island. Then, to our amazement, planes of all types started bombarding the pier. This seemed very close to our troops ashore; in fact it really wasn't a great deal of distance from us. We also were wondering just where our troops were located. So this was going to be just a pile of sand in the Pacific! It was still an island with trees and many, many Japanese.

The bombing of the pier prompted the LCVP to start moving. We stayed moored to it and they headed for the new type ship, which was an LST. We were ordered to tie up and come aboard. To our amazement there was part of our H & S Company aboard waiting to go ashore. Now we really knew this operation was in trouble.

Then all of H & S Company, Second Marines, that hadn't reached shore were put aboard Higgins boats and we headed for the beach next to the pier. I do not remember anything in particular about our trip in, except we landed on the pier about thirty yards from shore. We were immediately waved off and finally reached shore under sniper fire.

The spot we had picked to land the amphibian tractor was a large pillbox that wasn't knocked out until the second day.

As we arrived at our appointed spot on the beach, which was behind a large bunker, there was my buddy, John Gross, with the only operating ship-to-shore radio. John and Col. Shoup had made it in along the pier under very heavy fire. John asked just where I had been! He was getting tired and wanted relief. I was assigned the radio while John found a foxhole for some rest.

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



This photo shows Shoup's command post. The Marine on the left might be Gordon Stevens and to the right operating the radio with headphones is Bill Travis. The bearded Marine operating the generator behind them is Frank "Henry" Lupien. According to Bill Haddad this picture is probably from the third day. The TBX radio Travis is operating did not arrive until the second day. Corpsman Ray Duffee was on Red 2 during the second day and needed some Marines to help carry some wounded back to the relative safety of the beach. He came to the CP and probably talked to my dad, Gordon Stevens. Two guys, who were probably from the H&S communications company, accompanied Ray and were wounded themselves.

We who had just arrived ashore were amazed at the small beachhead the Marines were holding in this area. To our right was a bunker with Japs in that just couldn't be knocked out. The pillboxes and bunkers were so ingeniously constructed that flamethrowers and grenades were just not enough to knock them out.

On the second day a large bulldozer came ashore and one of its first missions was to roll this bunker into a pile of sand and logs.

One of the most outstanding things I remember about Tarawa was the water. About six weeks before the operation began, five-gallon water cans were filled with fresh water and stored until we needed them. Some of these cans were painted on the inside -- others were not. The water in the painted cans absorbed the paint taste or oil taste. Although the water itself was all right, it was unbearable to drink. With nothing else around, that was it! If one was lucky he might find a can that was not painted inside. The water in these cans tasted like water but the cans had rusted inside and were thick with rust -- but, it did taste like water!

Another wild night without sleep!! John and I kept the radio going. As time passed, a radio or telephone was put in running order or connected with fresh batteries. Most of this equipment was around but it wasn't healthy walking around looking for things and stay healthy. Slowly and painfully, needed gear was located and put to good use.

The next morning the men assigned the job of locating the bodies on the reef, started bringing them to mass graves. One was behind our bunker toward the runway.

Seeing this really started to bring the full impact of the battle before each man. Everyone had buddies missing but thought maybe things would slowly get organized or their buddies would show up. Part of our company landed on the large end of the island way off the assigned landing beach. But this time we were in radio communication with them but didn't know just who was where.

The third day we moved across the island, making room for the replacements that would be coming in.

Our communications company was now getting organized -- scattered pockets of H&S 2 all together once more as a unit. Now we were finding out who the dead and wounded were and how it happened.

The night of the third day was rather calm compared to the previous two nights. Estimates on how many Japs were still alive on the tail of Betio varied. We expected a Banzai charge down the airstrip; however it didn't materialize in our area.

The morning of the fourth day was spent in trying to clean up. Many were looking for souvenirs, or just relaxing. There were still some pillboxes with live Japs giving the Marines trouble, but other units were assigned to that job.

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



WW2 Veteran 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division Dean Ladd –  
Signs a copy of the Tarawa Map



This picture shows most of the men from H&S Co. 2nd Marine Division after the battle, including my dad, Gordon Stevens, and his good buddy John Gross. It was taken just before they went back aboard ship. The second picture lists the names of the Marines. Those listed as "not there" were either wounded or killed.

Before we really thought about it, the word came down that the assault troops were leaving. All units assembled, even though some were very few in number. We headed for the pier and Higgins boats to be taken back out to the troop transports.

We were promised Thanksgiving dinner after we were aboard. I'll never forget the officer in charge of the loading and unloading of troops, who was an Ensign. For some reason he would not give permission for our particular group of boats to come alongside the cargo nets. We just circled and waited for orders. It was hours before we finally received word to come alongside. The water had been rough and all were soaked from the spray coming over the bow. I never did see that Ensign again all during the trip to Hawaii. The ship was the U.S.S. Biddle, used during World War I. It was the ship aboard which the other half of H&S Company came to the Gilberts.

It was as we expected -- the troops aboard before us received the turkey dinner. We each received two peach halves and something to drink! This was just another day of World War II.

The ship was very crowded. All officers' quarters were filled with the wounded. Many of the officers and men were sleeping topside.

The convoy was moving at a good pace, as many of the ships had wounded aboard. We headed toward the Hawaiian Islands. Our ship docked at Oahu Harbor, and we thought as soon as the wounded were off, clean clothes would be issued and we could have liberty. Our stay was three days -- but the only liberty was for the officers. The third night things were made ready to put to sea. It was a good thing, as the troops were becoming very restless.

The Marine band came down to the docks and played as we pulled out. One piece was "California, Here We Come." Our thoughts were that perhaps we were going stateside.

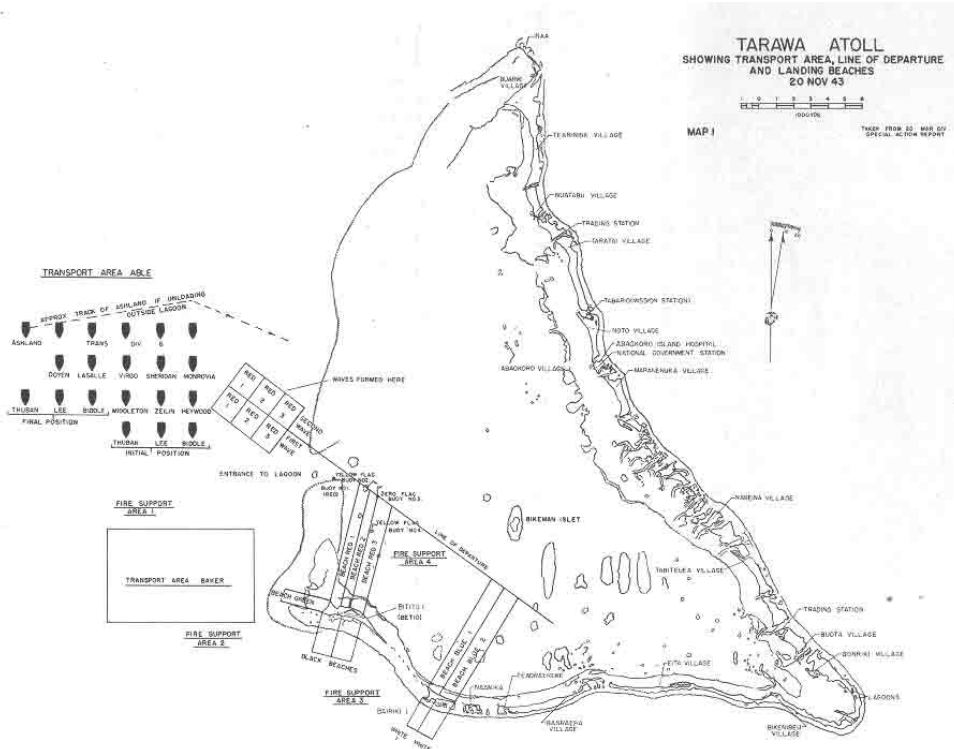
The next morning we lined the rails looking at the ocean. Now we knew it was stateside for us. On the starboard side of the ship the men saw something else -- the snow-covered peaks of the Island of Hawaii. That morning we docked at Hilo, Hawaii, and were sent to new training at Camp Tarawa.

I was a Private First Class at Tarawa and was discharged later as a Sargent.

This was the operation called "Helen" as I saw it.

Gordon H. Stevens  
H & S – 2 Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

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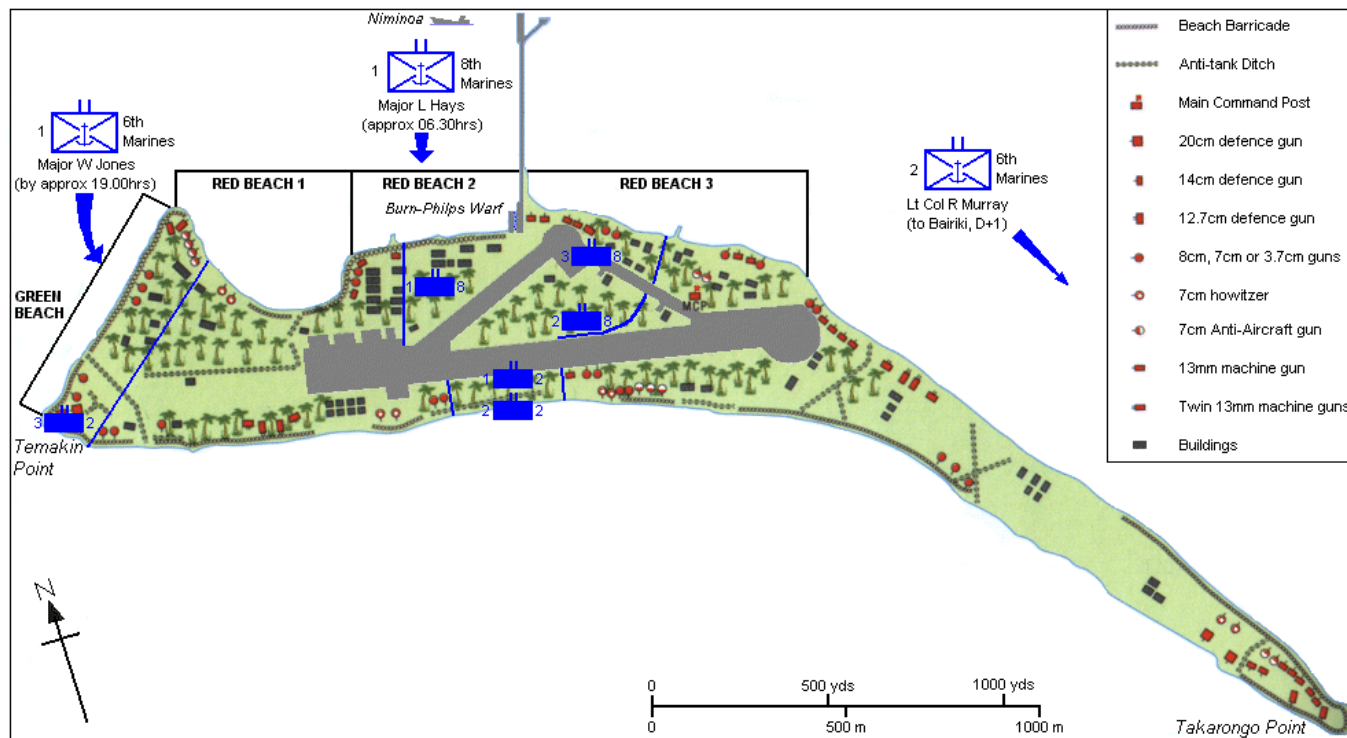
## Dean Ladd – Reviews a Map of Tarawa

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



The Battle for Tarawa: Marine Gains By 18.00hrs, 21st November 1943 (D+1)

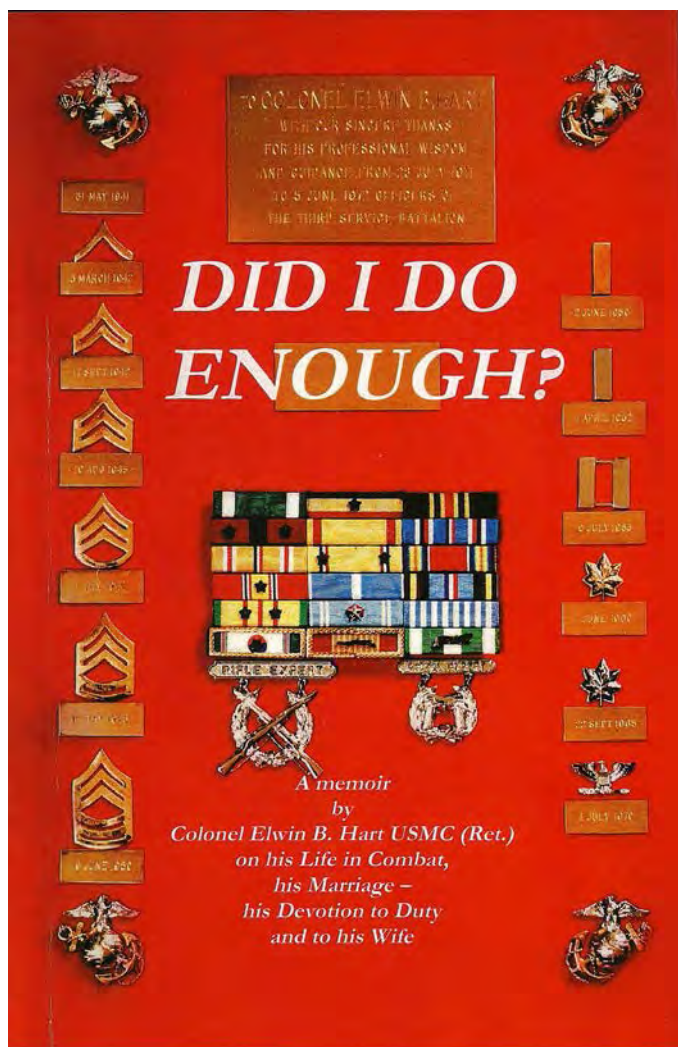


Dean Ladd with a few WW2 HRS 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division Re-enactors

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



MSgt Lynch & Elwin Hart (Lynch Later KIA on Saipan)



Colonel Elwin Hart  
With a few WW2 HRS 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division Re-enactors

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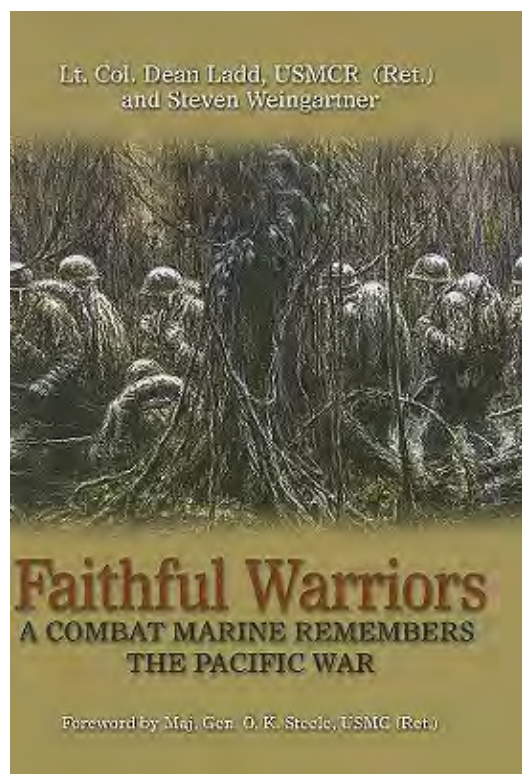




# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



WW2 Veteran 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division Dean Ladd –  
Signs a copy of his book for Jon Stevens



## CURTAINS OF FIRE

By Dean Ladd

Heavy resistance; many casualties, landing craft destroyed, units scattered.

Betio Islet on Tarawa, November 20th, 1943--the Marines worst challenge in history.

Naval gunfire inadequate, tide lower than hoped, radio communications disrupted.

Marines on the Sheridan troop transport climb down cargo nets into LCVP landing boats.

First Battalion, Eighth Marines enters atoll lagoon and circles all night, awaiting orders.

Finally, seasick men welcome dawn of second day.

Orders never received so continued circling twenty hours--a first.

Long fatiguing night; men crammed on the deck like sardines.

Battalion commander's boat chugs by, "We're going in at Red beach 2."

I glance at my men, they stare back. Expected to land on the left flank.

Our boats arrive at line of departure,

Parallel to landing beaches.

Arrayed like a cavalry squadron,

Waiting for "bugles" to sound charge.

Coxswain's nervously rev engines in neutral.

Boats champing at the bit.

Engines blasting; hearing muffled.

Adrenalin surges as we clutch our weapons.

Looking at the island, focusing on the task ahead,

Getting ready--ready.

Receive go-signal, our coxswain responds.

Engine bellows and belches smoke, water churns behind.

Stern dips; boat leaps forward;

Bucketing, bouncing, bulling ahead,

Getting closer--closer to the island.

Then we hear tiny objects flying past; zip--zip--zip.

Not angry hornets, they're killer bullets.

Within range of enemy machine guns.

Splat splat here, splat there, splats to the left,

Splats to the right, splats in front of us.

At the reef; deadly curtain of fire spitting from many machine guns.

Heavier machine guns now join the fray,

Along with anti-boat guns and mortars.

Destroying many landing craft;

Killing and wounding many of our men.

Men look grim; resigned to their fate.

No stopping now; keep fear under control.

Do your duty; don't let buddies down.

Unexpectedly scrape bottom; metal grinding on coral.

Stopped abruptly; thrown forward, cursing that we've run aground.

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

Still 600 yards to go; the coxswain proclaims, "This is as far as we go!"

Ramp screeches open and drops splashing into the water.  
There before us, Betio beckons in all its menacing glory.  
Scene from hell; inferno of fire and smoke, bellowing--bellowing.  
Orange fire, red fire, black smoke curling skyward.

First down the ramp, clutching my carbine, shouting, "Let's go!"  
Leap into water to unknown depth, relieved that only waist deep.  
Enemy guns rip us apart indiscriminately as we wade helplessly  
Shoreward through overlapping patterns of fire.  
Like shooting fish in a barrel--no place for protection.

Men get hit, cry for help, plead for corpsmen--  
Going under, being chopped to pieces.  
Sounds of battle everywhere--sweeping curtains of fire.  
Machine guns rattling, a cacophony of staccato hammering.  
Geysers of water, fire and body parts.

Keep moving forward, hold rifles above water.  
Into the teeth of enfilading gunfire with incredible courage.  
I wonder how long my luck will hold. Are those our planes strafing us?  
Oh--they're attacking that wrecked freighter grounded on the reef.  
Trying without success to terminate enemy machine guns placed there.

My adrenalin is flowing like an electric current.  
Finally, inevitably, it happens; a sickening splat,  
Like an inner-tube snapped across my bare abdomen.  
Sharp stinging sensation-"I'm hit!" I hear myself say.  
A bullet has struck me nearly dead center below the navel.

Struck just above water line; a gut-shot wound; worse of all!  
Discard helmet, carbine, walky-talky, pack and web belt.  
Energy draining out of me, going into shock, keep head above water.  
PFC Thomas Sullivan hastens to me asking, "Lieutenant where are you hit?"  
Pulls up my jacket, checks my wound.

Disobeying orders, stopping for wounded rather than hurrying to the beach.  
PFC John Duffy applies a bandage, sulfanilamide powder floats away.  
"You're going to get hit too", I utter in a weak voice "Leave me; get to the beach."  
They ignore me-- Sullivan asks, "Should I take you to the beach or to the ship?"  
I respond, "To the ship for best medical care."

Sullivan drags me to the nearest LCVP landing boat at the reef.  
He momentarily stops-- I ask if he's OK; he is just resting.  
Reach an LCVP being loaded with wounded, gathered in front of the ramp.  
Ramp is raised about three-quarters for protection.  
Wounded are pushed singularly over the top.

A husky man waits nearby, unrecognizable due to a gory eye wound.  
I motion for him to go before me; he is boosted over the ramp.  
Then Sullivan and Duffy attempt to push me up.  
The unknown man exerts his waning energy to help me and another.  
Reaches down and lifts me on up with one arm.

I tumble down onto the deck next to my unknown helper.  
Over a dozen more lie bandaged, bloody and writhing in pain.  
Boat races back to the Sheridan,  
Bumping hard over the water's corrugated surface.  
My wounded abdomen complains with each jolt.

At least if I die I'll be buried at sea instead of on that island.  
I recall my parents, they will be devastated!  
But maybe I won't die after all.  
If only this tortuous ride to the ship would stop.  
Coxswain encourages us that we are now approaching Sheridan.

Hoisted aboard ship in a litter basket next to the one who had helped me--  
Identified nearly sixty years later as probably Sgt James Maples, company C.  
I gasp, "We made it." He murmurs, "You're going to make it now."  
Those were the only spoken words. I made it but he didn't.  
Buried at sea later that day, leaving a vivid memory.



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## Sharon Bradshaw Shares her pictures Of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division

By Heinz Thiel

WW2 HRS Press Corps

So: You have seen pictures of WW2 in books and on the Internet, but how often do you get to see the originals? The actual photos taken by the men who were there.



Sharon Bradshaw

I was standing next to Sharon (above) as she showed her collections of her fathers (John T. Bradshaw) photos.

I quickly pointed my camera down at her photo collection and snapped up as much as I could. Some of these pictures had already been used in WW2 books and articles. But here for a brief moment I had the originals in my hands.

The hand (or thumb) you see in some of these pictures' is Sharon's.

Thank You Sharon for sharing these with us!



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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## Meeting WW2 Veterans at Lyons Farm

By Heinz Thiel

WW2 HRS Press Corps

Please: See this YouTube Video

Honoring WW2 Veterans – Lyons Farm 2013

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twkF\\_ezOMNk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twkF_ezOMNk)



George F. Havelka  
U.S. Army Private First Class  
Veteran of the Battle of Hürtgen Forest

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.



Wess Diemenbach  
U.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division  
Veteran of the Battle of Guadalcanal

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S. Richard Williams  
U.S. Navy – Signalman Second Class  
Poet  
A Lincoln Friend

\*\*\*



# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## Meeting WW2 Veterans at Elks Page Park

By Heinz Thiel  
WW2 HRS Press Corps

Please: See this YouTube Video  
Honoring WW2 Veterans – Dixon ILL 2013  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTkqrVN7d64>



Forrest Frank  
U.S. Navy – Radar Tech  
Pacific Ocean 1943 to 1945

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# WWII HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT SOCIETY Inc.

## Your Pictures

Do you have a good re-enactment picture or video?  
Then Send it in to me for publication in The Edge or The Point.

**Heinz Thiel** [GD5.Heinz.Thiel@GMail.Com](mailto:GD5.Heinz.Thiel@GMail.Com)

It does not matter when or where it is from.  
Good Re-enactment Pictures and Videos are Timeless.  
Send them In.



This is me Dale Windhorst in the engine room of the U-505 during the special photo session.

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Photo Submitted By: Dale Windhorst

This one is Aaron Ottiano sitting in the rear torpedo room toilet aboard the U-505 at the museum of science and industry in Chicago. We got special permission from the curator in the early 90's to take pictures before the doors opened to the public one morning.

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Photo Submitted By: Dale Windhorst  
This is 2nd Panzer Division at blast camp for an eastern front event. 1991.

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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To: \_\_\_\_\_  
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