

Enjoy Xmas While
You Wait

The Dflag 64 Stem

Home in Forty-four
-Or Rust

"Season's Greetings to You All"

No. 3

Altburgund, Germany — December 24, 1943

Price: 50 Pfg.

New Years Eve Here To Resound with Jive Games, Beer, Singing

Jive, beer, harmony and roulette will highlight the gala New Year's Eve party here, with a five-star musical program directed by Ken Goddard. M. C. will be Howard Holder.

The mess hall will be decorated, proped and braced for the two-hour show, featuring:

The Dixie Land Band,
Rankin's Dance Orchestra,
The Schubin Glee Club,
The Barber Shop Quartet, and —
"Three Sharps, a Flat and a Barracks
Bag Melody Makers."

Following the musical program:
Croupier Sid Thal will spin the roulette wheels in dining room two.

"Big" Mitchell, well-known large operator in games of chance, will operate "Chuck-a-Luck" for the benefit of all. And for the less daring and more agile, games of skill will be conducted in especially erected booths in the large dining room.

Beer and plenty of it will be on hand to help usher out the old year. Charter members of the "Home-in-1944" Club will act as bartenders.

Doors will open at 7:30 p.

On New Year's Day, celebrations will center about dinner and supper, both to be Oakes specials.

Bachelor Kriegies are warned that 1944 is Leap Year.

Two - Man Art Show Wows Zimmer Nine

Six sultry poses of strange, curvaceous creatures in non-combat uniforms are featured in a two-man art-photography show in Room 9.

Lana Turner, Hedy Lamar, Esther Williams, Ann Southern, Judy Garland are the principal eye-fillers. Bob Lob and Bill Luttrell are co-proprietors.

Where the pictures of these odd-shaped morsels came from is still a mystery, but each is autographed "to Bob and Bill". Bob won't talk and Bill is married.

Admittance is free and attendance records to the show are gigantic. Whango fans as for West as 3-B have been G-2'ing the show.

Home Was Never Like This

A shavetail's dream came true last week. Eight lieutenant colonels were on KP.

Representing 42,000 dollar's annual worth of military brains, the members of Mess I were, to a man, peeling spuds. Cost of this operation to the U. S. taxpayer was estimated at 21 bucks per hour.

REMEMBER

You'd almost think it would be hard,
Wouldn't you,
To remember how she looked
As Christmas two years ago?

You'd think that all the things
That have happened since
Might erase it from your mind.
But it is all so very clear,
Isn't it?

It isn't hard to remember
How she held the "U. S. 's" on your
[uniform] [uniform]
And said, without the "dots"
It spelled a perfect "US."

There were Christmas decorations
[everywhere].
Remember...?
In all the store windows...
In all the windows of the homes
Along the street...
Little fur Christmas trees,
Tinsel, holly, red ribbons...
And the sprig of mistletoe
She hung in the hallway.

But now you haven't got her...
Instead, a prison mess-hall wreath,
To symbolize the goodness
Of a world someday to be.
It's common to both of you,
Even though you're here.
A simple wreath to symbolize
The Christmas you hold dear.

So it really doesn't matter
Where we are, dear,
There'll be Christmas in our hearts,
Put there by you and me.

Ken Goddard

Lest We Forget

"...And the angel said unto them,
Fear not: for, behold, I bring
you good tidings of great joy,
which shall be to all people.

"...Unto you is born this day a saviour,
which is Christ the Lord.

"And this shall be a sign unto you;
Ye shall find the babe wrapped
in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

"And suddenly there was with the
angel a multitude of the heavenly
host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest and
on earth peace, good will toward
men."

— Luke 2:10-14

Yuletide Program To Feature Kris Kringle, Mass, Songs, Parcels

Christmas will be celebrated here with special church services, yuletide entertainment, a special dinner and a Christmas parcel issue.

Along with the regular Catholic Mass and General Service on Christmas day, there will be a special service in the chapel on Christmas Eve with carols by the choir under the direction of Russell Ford.

"This Is Christmas," a potpourri of music, readings and fun will be presented on Christmas night.

The program, arranged by Ford, is as follows:

God Rest Ye — the Glee Club,
Birth of the Lord — reading by William Cory.

Good King Wenceslas — solos by Tom Holt and Frank Maxwell.

Winter Wonderland — Wilbur Sharpe,
White Christmas — the Glee Club,
Kris Kringle.

Three Carols — the Glee Club,
Remember — poem by Kenneth Goddard.

Oh Hush Thee — the Glee Club,
Silent Night — solo by Russell Ford.
James Cockrell is in charge of lighting and stage construction.

Each man in camp will receive a Christmas box with which to make merry for the holiday season, according to Col. Thomas D. Drake.

Decorations Board Is Appointed by S.A.O.

A decorations board, constituted to make a record of recommendations for awards, has been formed by orders of Col. Thomas D. Drake, SAO.

Officers detailed to the board are: Col. Drake, Inf., president, Lt. Col. William Schaefer, Inf., Lt. Col. John Waters, Armored Force, Lt. Col. Gaines Barron, Inf., Lt. Col. Doyle Yardley, Par-Inf., Maj. Matthew Smith, Inf., Capt. William Kleysteuber, Engr., and Lt. Craig Campbell, AGD.

Recommendations will give all details: enemy action, date, time of day, duty being performed and names of witnesses with home addresses.

Prem Tops Holiday Menus

The following menu is planned for Christmas and New Year's.

Breakfast: English oatmeal. Dinner: Meat and vegetable stew, cocoa. Supper: Breaded Prem, peas and carrots, eggs and bacon, mashed potatoes, tea.

The New Year's evening meal will include Schubin pudding.

The Oflag 64 Item

Published monthly by and for American officers temporarily detained in Offizierlager 64, Altburgund (Schubin), Germany.

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1st Lt. Jim Bickers
2nd Lt. Bob Bonomi
2nd Lt. Frank Maxwell
2nd Lt. Frank Hancock
2nd Lt. Larry Phelan
Larry Allen, A.P. Correspondent

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DECEMBER 24, 1943

Christmas Cheer

The tasteful touch of Christmas that is evident all thru the camp—the beautiful wreaths, the graceful garlands—is the thoughtful doings of John Creech and his helpers:

Clarence Ferguson, Carl Hunsinger, Stanley Brach, Niram Meadows, George Durgin, Brantley Hart, George Reavey and Warren Johnson.

Cheers to them for a cheery holiday setting.

The Little Theater

Jason sowed dragons' teeth and built a city.

He had nothing on Cockrell, Aten, Glendinning, Otterbein and T. J. Mitchell.

They took Klim tins and beat them into stage lights, collected a few pieces of wood, some metal and string, added water and made a rheostat, sewed together pieces of burlap to produce a curtain. Result—a theatre.

Hats off to them for making something out of almost nothing. To Maxwell, Goddard and Duckworth for starting the ball rolling with those first three revues.

To Sharpe, Campbell, and Marlowe for favoring with vocals,

To Rankin, Van Vliet, Saxton and Goddard for recapturing forgotten moods,

To Bickers for atmosphere,

To Ford for organizing a grand Glee Club.

Now old man winter has brought an obstacle which can't successfully be coped with. The cold has cut out Little Theater productions for the present.

The shows will be missed. But they'll go on again—and just as good—as soon as weather permits.

Parcel from Petty . . .



Hobby-Art Exhibit Reveals Wide Range of Talents

The hobby and art show of Dec. 6-7, organized by Capt. Clyde Herring, placed on exhibit a wide variety of items. Contributors were:

Needlework: Col. Thomas Drake, Capt. Ellsworth Cundiff, James Dicks and Bernard Bolton, Lts. John Shirk, Ormond Roberts, George Reavey, Charles Jones and W. O. Austin Knapp.

Woodwork: Maj. Emanuel Robertson, Capt. James Dicks and Sgt. Charles Greenhill, British Army.

Model Homes: Lt. Col. Gaines Barron and Lt. Wilber Hooker.

Model Planes: Lt. Victor Danylick.

Drawings: Lt. Cols. John Waters and Walter Oakes, Capt. Horace Spaulding, Harry Carlson and William Kleysteuber, Chaplain Stanley Brach, Lts. Wilbert Davis, Delbert Dorman, James Bickers, Larry Phelan, John Glendinning, Stanley Stetson, Herman Littman, Woodley Warrick, Bill Fabian, Louis Otterbein and Milton Jellison.

November Mail Hits 4450

New names came into top positions as the month of November closed with the establishment of new mail records.

The leading "Big Ten" operators now are Lt. Stanley Stetson with 207 letters; Lt. Amon Carter, 170; Lt. John Scully, 160; Lt. William Rudel, 158; Capt. George Juskalian, 153; Lt. Earl Buckley, 150; Lt. Robert Langley, 150; Lt. Henry Perry, 149; Lt. Lloyd Warren, 147; and Lt. Col. James Alger with 145.

A total of 4450 letters were received during the month.

Oflag Nature Studies...



By: Howard Holder

THE BASH-HOUND

A funny dog the bashhound is; he's not so very useful;
He walks around with Rations "D" and with a look most wistful.
He's always eating milk, condensed, or cans of plum preserves;
And that is why he's on your list, because you've eaten yours.

THE LOUNGE LIZARD

The Lounge Lizard is often found in Kriegy camps they say.
He presses blankets all night long, and lies around all day.
He's horizontal all the time until he hears a bell,
And then jumps up and wails aloud, "My Gawd, I've missed appell!"

THE CARD SHARK

The Card Shark isn't fish at all, or human being either.
He plays at cards the whole day long, without a single breather.
Poker, bridge, casino, hearts, to him it's all the same.
He scarcely eats, he scarcely sleeps, for fear he'll miss a game.

THE RUMOR BIRD

The Rumor Bird now comes to mind—he's like a growing tumor.
He bothers you most all the time, with rumor after rumor.
He haunts you while you're bashing, squawks into the night.
And no matter what you say, he's sure his dope is right.

THE TOBACCO WORM

The Tobacco worm is a guy who says, "How 'bout a cigarette?"
He never has his own—at least one that he cap get.
He smokes much more than average men, he snags butts from your shelf;
And if you ask, his comment is, "I seldom smoke myself."

THE FIRE BUG

A funny guy the firebug is, he never leaves his seat;
So when you walk beside the stove, you trip upon his feet.
He's at the stove before you lunch, he's there when you come back;
And, boy, does he complain a lot, if of fuel there is a lack.

Kriegy Sketches

Captain James Barker

By: Larry Allen

"Information, Please!"

Just ask Captain James Barker on Wednesday at 7:15 and you'll get it.

In the vacillating spotlight of Oflag 64, this blonde, blue-eyed member of America's fighting forces clings to an individualized sector all his own.

A daily routine job is that of official announcer on the parade ground.

He glides through "Atten-shun" and "Dismissed" with the greatest of ease, surpassed only by his weekly platform chit-chat of wit and spontaneity.



Telling people things they don't know isn't a new art to this 35-year-old, ready-smiling, all-round "good guy."

A native of Harrisburg, Pa., he taught in preparatory schools back home, so he knows how to make you sit up and take notice.

He received an A. B. degree from St. John's College at Annapolis and topped this off with an M. A. in German from Columbia.

A CMTC product, he was commissioned in 1929, and was boosted to captain in the reserve corps by 1936. For a time, he was attached to the general command staff school at Fort Leavenworth, Kas., and went into active duty in 1941.

Captain Barker graduated from North Africa in the Sidi Bou Sid class last February 14.

But don't remind him of it, unless you want a spicy, withering salvo of replications: "Wednesday at 7:15."

He Got His Man

Lt. "Cactus" Tripp maintained his OP on a hill flanking the El Guettar-Gabes Road. At 10 am, 24 March, the battle started.

"Cactus" and his handful of men held out until evening against an enemy force detailed to liquidate his installation. After dusk the OP-CP line became ominously silent.

Sometime later, Lt. "Curly" Curtis was ordered out to find Tripp. He did—at Oflag 7B.



SPORTS



Oflag Puck-Chasers Form Seven-Team Ice-Hockey League Here

Team 1 To Play Team 2 In Hockey League's Opening Game

The newly formed ice-hockey league will go into action a few days after the freezing of the skating rink with teams one and two playing the first game, says Bill Burghardt, winter sports director.

The puck-chasers are divided into seven teams as follows:

No. 1: Muehlbauer (Capt.), Hubbell, Hansen, J., Gray, Brocker, Perry, Batte, Cheatham and Farber.

No. 2: Waters (Capt.), Haag, Bancker, Goddard, Davis, Maxwell, Carnes and Bonomi.

No. 3: Scully (Capt.), Haley, Knapp, Shoaf, Kennedy, MacArey, Dicks, Witt and Johnson, H.

No. 4: Aschim (Capt.), Secor, Kleysteuber, Hoffman, Keith, Chappell, Webb and Weigand.

No. 5: Ranck (Capt.), Hooker, Stetson, Bryant, Bires, Emerson, Torrence and Johnson, A.

No. 6: Jellison (Capt.), Frazee, Mitchell, Monks, Danylick, Casner, Guest and Pawloski.

No. 7: Alger (Capt.), Pravadica, Lee, Creech, Robertson, Takacs, Rankin, Hirt and Rogers.

15 Promenade Laps Give Walk Quota

The promenade walk, constructed under the supervision of Capt. William Kleysteuber of the Army Engineers, is now available for officers taking their exercise within the wire.

The circuit, which includes the concrete walk in front of the hospital and passes around the theater, sportplatz and thru the gate just below the basketball court back down to the hospital, is 650 paces long, or roughly three laps to the mile.

About 15 times around covers the weekly minimum ration of hiking.

Walking in a uniform direction—clockwise—is urged by Capt. Kleysteuber.

Life in the USA

It happened at the Woman's Club where they were doing Red Cross sewing.

A dear old lady brought in a pair of pyjamas she had made, perfect in every detail, except there was no opening in the front of the pants.

The lady who was inspecting them said she was afraid they would have to be rejected as they were not according to regulations.

The dear old lady's face fell as she thought of her work and all that nice flannel going to waste.

Suddenly she got a bright idea. She whispered to the inspector, "But couldn't you give them to a bachelor?"

Science and Hatch Reveal Date War Will End

Science, not speculation, is the key to the mystery of the war's end, according to Mathematician Jerome Hatch.

In an exclusive ITEM interview, Mathematician Hatch revealed his method... a series of intricate calculations... for determining the great WHEN? He explained as follows:

"You've got to figure it out scientifically. No guess work.

"First I thought of a number... any number will do. Then I added my serial number to it because that's important. Next I subtracted the number four because there are four ounces in a can of Nescafe.

"Now, there are ten cigarettes in an English pack and 20 in an American so I struck a happy medium and added 15. I then subtracted the phone number of a sardine cannery back home, added the number of strands of barbed wire in the fence, multiplied my social security number and divided by 20. Twenty is grand, you know.

"The figure I got as a result was 1945, which happens to be my PoW number. By deductive reasoning, I figure the war will end either before or after December 1945."

Extra Special Christmas Shopping Guide for Kriegies

THE ITEM'S Hints For Late Shoppers

Have you put off your Christmas shopping until the last minute?

Are you having trouble finding a suitable gift for your Room Fuehrer?

If so, try these helpful hints:

For the chronic basher on your list, try half a dozen "D" bars, neatly wrapped, or some "Classy Canteen Coffee" — the new blend with the distinctive flavor and no caffeine, unconditionally guaranteed ersatz.

For the smoker, you can get choice, imported Elegantes at Gershenow's Christmas Shoppe. This tastefully decorated emporium, with its staff of courteous salespeople, also features a wide assortment of powders (non-explosive) for the fastidious Kriegsgefangener.

Then there is Gershenow's Special Stationery ready-lined and just the thing for Kriegies who are out of paper rolls.

Automatic card-punchers make practical gifts these days, too.

For your Mess President, YMCA track shoes would be handy in assuring seconds.

And for the man who has everything, how about a nice bottle of glue?

Or, if he's a pessimist, a five-year subscription to THE ITEM!

Out Goes The Old In Comes The New

Now is the time for all good men to start thinking of New Year's resolutions.

Those who have and what they've resolved are:

Jim Koch: "Resolutions! Never make 'em. But they say a smile's contagious — so I'll keep smiling in '44."

Carl Burrows: "I resolve to date more women in '44 than I did in '43."

Newt Lantron: "I resolve not to burn any more cakes I bake in the short order kitchen."

"George" Hatch: "When I get back to Vermont, I'm going to be top man on the totem pole. That's my resolution."

Larry Allen: "I resolve to write the truth, so help me."

Louis Gershenow: "No more fuss-puder, zahnpuder, or körperpuder for me when this is over, believe me."

IS YOUR HAIR FALLING OUT?

Do parole walks give you that tired feeling?

Do you bash between meals?
Pep up! Hear Jim Barker in:

WEDNESDAY

AT 7:15

In the Messhall

What's in a Name?



Ward Goes on Warpath for All 4-F'ers Named Morris

Are you worrying about your wife back home?

Well don't. More than likely she's well taken care of!

In a Christmas parcel received recently from his wife, Ed Ward of Florida found a shirt. On the neckband was Ed's old laundry mark — and a fresh mark "Morris."

"Yes, I've been overseas a year," mused Ward. "No, I'm not worried — but who in hell is Morris?"

It's All In How You Read It

Bill Guest spent hours on spit and polish for the big inspection. He looked sharp.

"TENSUN — the inspecting officer was passing by.

"Who's locker is this?" he asked.

"Mine, sir," spoke up Guest.

"What does the order say about shoes in lockers?"

"It says —" gulp. "I don't remember, sir."

"Go up to the main building, read the order and report to me."

Fifteen minutes passed. Guest returned.

"Sir," he reported, "the order states that *all shoes under beds* will be clean and neat."

Bill got his weekend pass.

Watch Repair Service

A watch repair service "while-you-wait" was inaugurated this month by Lt. Ed Hirt, of Room 3-B.

There is no charge, but "D" bars are always acceptable, says Hirt.

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Last Christmas Was Never Like This One

From morning appell to evening appell, it'll be the same Christmas for all here at Oflag 64. But things were different a year ago. For instance:

Lt. Col. John Waters, camp executive officer, was "deep in the mud outside of Oran."

Lt. Col. Max Gooler was enjoying his first full Red Cross Christmas parcel at Italy's high-walled prison camp in Chiati.

Maj. Merle Meacham, camp adjutant, was in Algiers. He bought turkeys from farmers in the hills, so he and his men had the traditional feast with most of the trimmings. The assassination of French Admiral Jean Darlan on Christmas Eve spoiled the major's plans for a bigger celebration.

Capt. Irving Yarock was aboard an Italian boat "El Greco" enroute from Tunisia to Palermo.

1st Lt. Teddy Roggen dined upon turkey at Camp Edwards.

2nd Lt. Gerald Long reveled in similar pleasures, including whiskey, at Camp Wheeler.

Yes, Christmas is here again. And from morning appell to evening appell it'll be the same Christmas for all.

But things will be different a year from now!

CLASSIFIED ADS

LOST

Lost... Ten pairs of trousers in the vicinity of Room 28. Occupants Room 2.

Lost almost... One large moustache with handlebars. Earl Buckley.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Do you see spots before your eyes? Do you wake up in the morning with that "dark brown" taste? Do your head and back ache? Do you have athletes' foot? Are you bilious? Is your hair falling out? Do you have rheumatism? Do you have that let-down feeling? You do? Then you're in one helluva shape!

SERVICE

Telegraph, Telephone, Tellabingham.

WANTED

I wanna go home. "Pop" Noonan.

Right answers for quiz programs. The Judges.

A more comprehensive German-English dictionary. Seymour Bolten.

More winter underwear. William Rudel.

TRADE AND SALE

Will trade high quality scented soap for milk powder. John Peyton.

For sale... Latest edition of my book, "Women I Have Known." John Hasson.