The Post Oflag 64 Item

All the News That's Been Geprüft

Nearly Everybody Reads THE ITEM

"Get Wise – ITEM-ize"

June 2026 | **Good Ole USA** | **Of Undetermined Worth**

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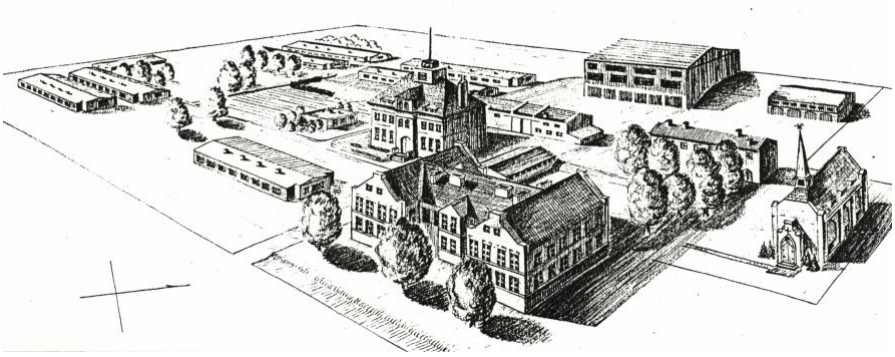
We apologize to any others we may have overlooked and thank all who have contacted us.

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

Dear Oflag 64 Family,

No matter your political philosophy, the quote below is apt. We live in the greatest country in the world and are blessed with so many freedoms. Our gratitude goes to our Kriegy Patriots and Heroes for their courage and selfless sacrifices in defending our country so that we may continue enjoying our freedoms and enjoy living in the greatest land on earth.

"With a single sheet of parchment and 56 signatures, America began the greatest political journey in human history."
— President Donald J. Trump

As you attend parades or other patriotic celebrations this year, and in the future, remember to stand and salute our nation's flag as it passes by. We wish each of you an amazing and fulfilling 250th Anniversary of our Nation's independence.

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

A Little Company Business

MANY THANKS

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 any changes to us at:*
elodie@oflag64.us

Oflag 64 Contributions

Because we are no longer mailing the ITEM and are no longer using stamps, we have changed the name of our Postage Fund account to say just **"Oflag 64".** Contributions are now being used for running the Oflag 64 Remembered website, which totals approximately $475 per year. **These contributions are still needed**, so please make your checks payable to Oflag 64, and send them to Bret Job or Elodie Caldwell. Addresses are on the front page of this ITEM.

OR

If you prefer, you may contribute directly to Oflag 64 by using the Venmo app

Bret Job@Oflag64

The last 4 digits of his phone # are 3881, for account verification. VENMO is an easy and quick way to donate.

Thanks to these Contributors to the Oflag 64 Fund

Steven Burgauer
Susanna Bolten Connaughton
Kay Godfrey Cruise
David Little
Marianne Liggett Merriam
Lisa Sinclair Smith and Bel Smith

Kriegy Research

While researching Kriegy names for more information to add to our website, we have found that the Oflag 64 Virtual Cemetery on FindAGrave has many memorials of our men. And often, these memorials contain obituaries, photos of our Kriegies in uniform and photos of them later in life, and also other information. You can check to see if your Kriegy is there at: http://bit.ly/3In9OmB Many of our men lived very long, fulfilling and happy lives. Unfortunately, some of them died young after the war and had sad and unexpected ends. We honor and revere all our men who were held captive at Oflag 64. If your Oflag 64 Kriegy is missing information on his memorial page, please contact us and we will help connect you to the manager of the Virtual Cemetery.

Researching has brought these men to life. We have found photos of them as young men, dressed in military uniforms, photos of them as they have aged, articles about them and their POW experiences including capture, captivity, escape, return to the US and even information about their continued war service in the Korean War where some were captured and held as POWs there as well.

If you would like to participate with the Kriegy Research Group in learning more about our great Kriegy heroes and patriots, please contact us at: elodie@oflag64.us.

You will enjoy it. We all work at our own pace and meet quarterly by Zoom to report on our work and findings. We would love to add you to our group. We still need people to help with the following:

- Find Kriegy interviews
- Find Kriegy articles written by or about them
- Research Kriegy commissioning locations and dates
- Research Newspapers.com for Kriegy information
- Research Veterans History Project records or military websites for Kriegy information
- Locate Kriegy books or writings
- Locate Kriegy Wikipedia pages
- Write bios
- Transcribe audio/video files

You say you don't have time? Is there a half-hour or an hour once a day, once a week, once a month or more that you can devote to this meaningful project? Please consider joining our team. Participate on your own or with family members. We need you!!

Mark Your Calendars!!

Coming up on Friday, September 18, is **National POW/MIA Recognition Day**. Now is the time to start thinking about decorating your Kriegy's grave with a small flag and daisies. Contact Anne Kreutzer for more information at:

annekreutzer@hotmail.com

MAIL CALL

It's always a great pleasure hearing from our Oflag 64 families. Even though it's been six months since the last ITEM was published instead of three as was done in the past, we are still grateful for your emails and letters. Thanks for continuing to keep us in "your" loop and for sending information. We love reading about how and what you are doing. Please stay in touch! ***Note:*** *Not all emails received by us are published in Mail Call, mainly because they are business in nature or may be a short one- or two-word reply to an email or request we've sent. In the past 6 months we have received* ***307 emails*** *containing information, requesting information, or needing action.*

NOVEMBER

NEAL CORY, son of the late Kriegy William "Bill" R. Cory – while reading the last ITEM and information about MIS-X wrote: "My father told me this book that was immediately banned after publication as the secrets it tells would have destroyed the Red Cross. Published decades later, it's a fascinating read of an operation very few people in Washington even knew existed at the time." The book is The Escape Factory: The Story of MIS-X and is now available at online bookstores.

MARY B. CREW, daughter of the late Kriegy Morgan A. Whitfield – wrote that while reading the September 1944 issue of the ITEM, she found the Oflag 64 arrival date of her father. She was only 18 and he was only 56 when he died suddenly so she's been trying to piece his life together. She thanked us for the small glimpse into his past.

PETER FORMAN, from the Custodians of History – wrote to correct information we published in our November ITEM regarding Craig Campbell. The link we included was incorrect, please use this link: http://bit.ly/48XPbYO

MARIANNE LIGGETT MERRIAM, daughter of the late Kriegy F. Eugene Liggett – VENMO-ed a very thoughtful donation to our Oflag 64 Remembered fund to put toward our website expenses. While we no longer need funds to mail hard copies of the ITEM, we continue to need funds to operate our Oflag 64 Remembered website. *(Thank you very much, Marianne, for your donation!)* Marianne is the Council Chair for the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin.

SUSAN WILCOX RICHARDSON, daughter of the late Kriegy Lumund Wilcox – wrote that Mariusz Winiecki gave her family a 6-hour tour of Oflag 64 last fall. She said it was an incredible experience for all of them. They won't be able to return for the opening of the Tin Store museum but hope to return in the future. She also mentioned that she has artifacts to share and would be happy to send photos to the Artifacts Committee for them to review.

DECEMBER

TERRY BUCHANAN, son of the late Kriegy Earl W. Buchanan – wrote to say that the ITEM means a lot to his family. He is a retired army pharmacist with an interest in military history. He sent a biography of his dad, which has since been posted to our Oflag 64 Remembered website. You can access that page by going to Archives and then Kriegy Biographies. He also sent a number of photos of his dad, some of which were featured in a previous ITEM. *(See the Topics of Interest page for a new photo.)* Terry's dad was a POW at Oflag 64 from November 1943 until his escape January 21, 1945. We hope to enlist Terry's help with research soon.

CINDY SHARPE BURGESS, daughter of the late Kriegy Wilbur B. Sharpe and Board Chair of Friends of Oflag 64, Inc. *(the non-profit)* – wrote with contact information on a couple of families who would like to be included in future communications regarding Oflag 64.

KAY GODFREY CRUISE, daughter of the late Kriegy James T. Godfrey, sent a very thoughtful donation to our Oflag 64 Remembered fund. We appreciate the support of our Oflag 64 Remembered website. *(Thank you very much, Kay, for your donation!)*

BRET JOB, Oflag 64 Remembered Treasurer and son-in-law of the late Kriegy Ray E. Holmquist – wrote to say that he had received donations from MARIANNE LIGGETT MERRIAM, mentioned above, and from SUSANNA BOLTEN CONNAUGHTON. *(Many thanks also go to Susanna for her thoughtful and generous donation to the Oflag 64 Remembered fund!)*

MARLENE THOMPSON MCALLISTER, daughter of the late Kriegy Robert T. Thompson – Polish-American Foundation Council Member Emeritus and current member of the Strategic Planning Committee of Friends of Oflag 64, Inc. wrote to report that many of her family will be attending the Tin Store museum opening. Additionally, a young man from Brittany who is studying West Pointers is also going to attend.

MYRICK L. MONROE, JR. – son of the late Kriegy Myrick L. Monroe, Sr. – wrote to update us on his email address and thank us for the work we are doing.

GLENN RUSSELL, a fellow researcher and the one working on the Oflag 64 Virtual Cemetery on the FindAGrave website – has been locating Kriegies that we have on our Oflag 64 Database page who weren't actually Oflag 64 Kriegies. We're not exactly sure how we got their names, but we have been updating as we go along. He has also found some whose information is incorrect, verifiable and documented in newspaper accounts and other sources. We appreciate Glenn's continued coordination with us in helping to correct errors and find information about our Kriegies.

LISA SINCLAIR SMITH, daughter of the late Kriegy Matthew C. Smith – sent a very generous and thoughtful donation to our Oflag 64 Remembered fund, which will be applied to operating our Oflag 64 Remembered website. It was also sent on behalf of her mother, Isabelle, who just turned 100. *(Thank you very much, Lisa and Isabelle, for your donation!)*

ADRIENNE STANLEY, family member of the late Kriegy Woodley C. Warrick – wrote that the family has given her access to Woodley's genealogy collection, which includes many photos. She has several photos that weren't labeled and has asked for help matching faces to names. She has written a biography on him which has been posted to our Kriegy Biographies page. It also appears on his FindAGrave memorial page with photos at: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/95643844/woodley-charles-warrick Among the photos she sent were two that we didn't have previously. *(See the Topics of Interest section.)*

JANUARY

GLENN RUSSELL, fellow researcher – contacted us again with the name of John Austin who needed to be added to our TAPS page. This we have done. If you know of any other whose name isn't listed there, please notify us at elodie@oflag64.us.

MARVIN WILLIAMS, fellow researcher – has been keeping us up to date on research being done by Alex Solsma on Chaplain Stephen W. Kane. Alex has recently done a Zoom presentation on the life of Chaplain Kane. You can view the presentation at: Event recap: Chaplain Kane: The Life and Ministry of Stalag 17's POW Priest - American Catholic Historical Society Chaplain Kane was at Oflag 64 for just a short time, then was transferred to Stalag XVII B and was the only chaplain there. Interestingly, Col. Thomas Drake is mentioned in the recording.

Many other emails were exchanged in January from members of our various Oflag 64 groups, several regarding the progress and opening of the Tin Store museum, which we have been very excited about.

FEBRUARY

BRANT GODFREY, son of the late Kriegy James T. Godfrey – has been planning to attend the opening of the Tin Store museum alongside other members of his family. He wrote with questions about the informational Zoom meetings that were planned for those who would be attending.

WARREN JONES, son of the late Kriegy Charles L. Jones – wrote with the following information: "I'm writing you today to bring to your attention a "60 Minutes" broadcast last night on CBS that was reported by Leslie Stahl, about 3 survivors who were born in concentration camp surroundings whose mothers were lucky enough to survive and hide their pregnancies from the Nazis. It was an AMAZING story of survival as the "babies" are now in their 80s and retold their stories and how their stories all came to be interconnected through research and determination." You can watch the broadcast on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnGbpS1eDXM Warren is also looking forward to attending the Tin Store museum opening.

MICHAEL JORALEMON, acquaintance of the late Kriegy Ralph R. Gann's family – sent a copy of a couple of articles regarding Ralph. He also sent a copy of Ralph's obituary which has been added to our Oflag 64 Remembered website and also to our TAPS page. The articles were similar to many other newspaper articles written when our Kriegies returned home. *(See the Topics of Interest section.)*

PEGGY KLEYSTEUBER, daughter of the late Kriegy William "Bill" Kleysteuber – contacted us with information about a letter she recently obtained written by her dad to her mom detailing his 5-month travel from Szubin to the coast of France. She has transcribed the letter for easier reading. She and a friend also traced, on a current map, the route the men took to get to France. *(See the Topics of Interest section.)* The map has also been posted on our website at https://www.oflag64.us/long-cold-march.html. As of the date of the email, she was looking forward to participating in the Tin Store museum opening.

DAVID LITTLE, grandson of the late Kriegy Thomas H. Wingate – sent a thoughtful donation to our Oflag 64 Remembered fund to help cover website expenses. *(Thank you very much, David, for your donation!)* David, one of our Kriegy Research Group *(KRG)* researchers, also volunteered to find obituaries that were filed at the academy of West Point graduates website. He subsequently sent obituaries or death information on 39 former West Pointers. Some also included Kriegy photos, which we didn't previously have.

GLENN RUSSELL, fellow researcher – sent a very interesting article on one of our late Kriegies, John C. Morrisey, Jr. *(See the Topics of Interest section)*

ANNE MELTESEN TRUJILLO, daughter of the late Kriegy Clarence R. Meltesen – is one of our Kriegy Research Group *(KRG)* bio writers and has been working on a biography for the late Kriegy Herman Littman. After the fact, we learned that a biography had already been written by one of our other KRG bio writers, Ann Rogers. The two biographies are posted on our biographies page and are together in one document. Anne commented on some of her finds, including a dissertation written by Herm's granddaughter, Tiffany Skidmore in memory of Herm. Anne also found two taped interviews.

AMBER WEATHERBEE, Manager at Camp Breckinridge Museum and Arts Center in Union County Kentucky – wrote to say that she had digital photos to add to our website collection. She also thanked us for our photos with identifications of Kriegies. It helped her label the photos in her collection. After receiving the digital photos, we determined that they were taken at Oflag IX A/Z so we were not able to use them. We look forward to hearing from her another time if she finds other items from those war years.

NANCY THOMPSON WYATT, daughter of the late Kriegy Robert T. Thompson – is a member of the Friends of Oflag 64, Inc. Strategic Planning Committee and is actively working to help with Tin Store museum opening preparations. She asked for information for a Zoom presentation regarding the Oflag 64 Remembered website, the Kriegy Research Group *(KRG)* which works under the name of Oflag 64 Remembered, and the Artifacts Committee. She also asked us to add some family names to our contact list, which we have done.

MARCH

DAVIDE BONZI, an Italian researcher – contacted us with a request for information, in Italian, for a relative who spent time at Stalag IID and Stalag IIC. *(With the help of Google Translate we were able to understand his request.)* His research was extensive, but he wasn't able to find the information he wanted. Unfortunately, we weren't able to help him either.

STEVEN BURGAUER, author and friend of Oflag 64 – sent a thoughtful donation to our Oflag 64 Remembered fund. *(Thank you very much, Steven, for your donation!)*

SUSANNA BOLTEN CONNAUGHTON, daughter of the late Kriegy Seymour R. Bolten – as Vice President of the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin, has been heavily involved in the planning, organizing, etc. of the Tin Store museum as it has been constructed and readied for the grand opening, and sent a lengthy list of what would take place leading up to the opening. She has been key to organizing the opening event which, as you are reading this, took place in mid-May. *(Thank you Susanna for sharing your talents!)*

CINDY SHARPE BURGESS, daughter of the later Kriegy Wilbur B. Sharpe – has sent several emails asking for and sharing contact information for Kriegy family members. This has all been done in preparation for the opening of the Tin Store museum. The intent was to let as many people as possible know of the opening and to make plans if possible. At the time of the email, time was short and some deadlines had passed for group participation. Due to the size of the museum, a limited number of seats were available for the event.

PEGGY KLEYSTEUBER, daughter of the late Kriegy William "Bill" Kleysteuber – has been keeping us up to date with photos of her dad. She also sent information about her mom who was possibly involved with a code-breaking program during WWII, although not associated with our armed forces. She said that people were prohibited from talking about their war activities for 38 years.

ANNE HOSKOT KREUTZER, daughter of the late Kriegy Nathaniel R. Hoskot – wrote with information on the Tin Store museum opening. She is the Editor/Corresponding Secretary of Friends of Oflag 64, Inc. *(the non-profit)* and will be one of the hosts at the event. She also wrote to say "Thank you for all you have done over the years to keep the Oflag 64 organization together, and for the incredibly valuable website that you and Bill have created and maintained. I'm sure I've told you how often I've visited it to get answers, and how often I've recommended it to others as THE site for an amazing amount of information about the camp and the men of Oflag 64."

GLENN RUSSELL, fellow researcher – found an article on a Kriegy named Lt. Richard W. Groggel. Lt. Groggel was not on our Kriegy Database but according to the article was at Oflag 64. We're not sure why he wasn't showing, but he has since been added. We really appreciate Glenn's efforts in keeping us up to date. Not long afterwards, he found another Kriegy, 1LT Raymond Lyons, which we have updated.

MARVIN WILLIAMS, fellow researcher – recently attended an event which had a POW table on display. During his trip, he found a POW poem, which is included in the *Topics of Interest section*. He also sent a link to a new podcast from Alex Solsma which includes mention of Oflag 64. This is the YouTube link: https://youtu.be/pHd2SpPTTqQ Alex is mentioned in the March section of "Mail Call" after Marvin's name.

As mentioned earlier, many other emails were exchanged from members of our various Oflag 64 groups, several regarding the progress and opening of the Tin Store museum, which is coming up very soon.

APRIL

SUSANNA BOLTEN CONNAUGHTON, daughter of the late Kriegy Seymour R. Bolten – after hearing from Cindy Burgess about the US Army Historical Foundation's OnPoint Journal, submitted an article to the Foundation about the Tin Store. You can access that article at: https://armyhistory.org/ww2-pow-museum/ Please take a moment to read it. Through Susanna's writing, you'll gain an appreciation not only for our Kriegies but also for their descendants who have worked tirelessly to keep their memories alive over the years. In a later email, she sent updates regarding the opening of the Tin Store museum.

ROSA DIFRANCESCO LEE, daughter of the late Kriegy Vincent "Doc" J. DiFrancesco – communicated on several occasions with Marianne Liggett Merriam, regarding her family's history with Oflag 64, the number of years they attended Oflag 64 reunions, etc. She stated: "Our Family is proud of the legacy which will represent Captain Vincent J. DiFrancesco, M.D. in Szubin for all time."

MARIANNE LIGGETT MERRIAM, daughter of the late Kriegy F. Eugene Liggett – wrote to let us know that Pat Waters, Polish-American Foundation Council Member Emeritus and son of the late Kriegy John K. Waters, has volunteered to send Tin Store Challenge Coins to Szubin for those attending the Tin Store museum opening. Those coins were sent over with Marianne as Pat was unable to attend the opening. *(Thank you Pat for your thoughtfulness.)* In a separate communication, Marianne reported that she would like to have the bronze model of the camp *(lovingly produced by Pat Cochran, son-in-law of the late Kriegy Vincent J. DiFrancesco, and sent to Szubin by him and his wife, Rosa DiFrancesco Lee) displayed* at the Tin Store museum opening. Several emails were exchanged between Rosa and Marianne.

Several emails from those involved with planning and executing the Tin Store museum opening and preliminary events, regarding historical information for programs, speeches, guest lists, etc., were exchanged throughout the month.

MAY

TOM COBB, son of the late Kriegy George A. Cobb – wrote to let us know that my husband, Bill, and I are appreciated for all we have done in the name of Oflag 64 to remember our Kriegies. We were not able to attend the Tin Store museum opening but Tom let us know that we were missed but not forgotten.

TOM DETMERS, son of the late Kriegy Arthur V. Detmers – sent greetings for a Happy Memorial Day to us and to all Kriegy families.

KURT HANSEN, son of the late Kriegy Kermit Hansen – recently sent a link to a map of his dad's POW March in 1945 and WWII service https://www.oflag64.us/long-cold-march.html, also sent a link to a YouTube documentary he did regarding the trip he took retracing his dad's journey https://www.oflag64.us/links.html. A typewritten copy of his dad's Long March journal was also sent *(posted on the same page as the online map).* Kurt commented on how meaningful his recent time in Szubin was, seeing the culmination of Tin Store efforts and feeling so connected to other Kriegy kids. He feels like he has new family members now. Thanks to Marianne Liggett Merriam, Council Chair for the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin, for forwarding the email with this information to us.

MARLENE THOMPSON MCALLISTER, daughter of the late Kriegy Robert T. Thompson – Polish-American Foundation Council Member Emeritus and current member of the Strategic Planning Committee

of Friends of Oflag 64, Inc., attended the Grand Opening of the Tin Store museum in Szubin Poland in early May. She wrote to tell us how wonderful it was, stating that everyone who participated in the program did a really good job and that the room was full, lively, and supportive. She thanked those who put together a high-level opening ceremony and dinner reunion and commented on the big impact this was on everyone who attended and how meaningful it was to the Kriegy families and friends who were there.

MARIANNE LIGGETT MERRIAM, daughter of the late Kriegy F. Eugene Liggett – wrote to say that the Polish-American Council for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin will soon be sharing photos from "Polish Origins" with everyone regarding the Tin Store museum opening and related events. She also sent a copy of a photo she really liked of folks walking through the Tin Store museum and examining the exhibits. It's a great panoramic view of various parts of the museum and the artifacts that were donated. *(See the Topics of Interest section)*

ANN CHAPEL ROGERS, niece of the late Kriegy Frank N. Aten – wrote "Today, while I was watching Gary Sinise's program, *"WWII in HD",* a familiar name and face was projected on the screen--Jimmie Kanaya, a Kriegy at Oflag 64. His historic journey as an American military medic has been revealed on other credible sources as well and I believe that this appearance corresponds beautifully with the grand opening of The Tin Store. I was honored to co-write his biography with assistance from his wife, Lynn, for the Oflag Remembered site."

GLENN RUSSELL, fellow researcher – found a newspaper article on a Kriegy named James A. White, Jr. who was held at Oflag 64. James made the long march to Hammelburg and then to Moosburg where he was finally liberated. We appreciate Glenn's tireless efforts in helping us update our Kriegy files.

MARVIN WILLIAMS, fellow researcher – has a copy of a letter from the late Kriegy Kermit Hansen and asked that we forward it to his sons, which we will do as soon as it arrives. He also mentioned a book called "A Doctor's Way" by Peggy Ludwick, in which Kermit is mentioned.

JUNE

VICTORIA HERRING, daughter of the late Kriegy Clyde E. Herring, wanted to get a solid chronology of her dad's service in the 168th infantry and Oflag 64 and posed the question to "Claude", the AI, and got a pretty good answer. She has put something together regarding the process. We'll share it by email.

* * * * *

Thanks to those who attended the Tin Store museum opening and who wrote to let us know that we were missed at that event. *We were involved at another wonderful event during that time period, the wedding of our granddaughter. We know those who attended were appreciative of all the hard work that was put into creating the Tin Store museum and making the opening a success.*

Lastly, thanks to those of you who have asked about the chemical blast that happened here in Longview WA where my husband and I live. We know it was reported on national news stations but don't know how much or what kind of information was shared around the country. In any event, it was a tragic incident, and our community is grieving but supporting each other. The motto seen around the city now is "Longview Strong". Bill and I didn't know any of the victims, but we have friends who work in other areas of the mill. They are okay and we are okay. We were not affected by the blast. The air is safe to breathe, and the water is safe to drink. If you have questions about the blast, you can contact us at elodie@oflag64.us or webmaster@oflag64.us

Topics of Interest

Adrienne Stanley sent a variety of Oflag 64 photos which included Kriegy Woodley Warrick. Most of them we already had, but this one we didn't have. We would like to include it on our Oflag 64 Remembered website, but its file size is quite small. If you have the same photo in higher resolution, please let us know at elodie@oflag64.us. We'd like to have photos that are as clear as possible for the website. Woodley is the first person on the left on the bottom row.

Prisoner of war 139 days, the former Central high and WM-College athlete was captured, liberated, re-captured and liberated again before he finally got out of Germany.

Another time, Lt. Groggel and 500 other American prisoners, en route on a 49-day forced march, were set free by their German guards when the Russians got too close. But they were seized again by another Nazi battalion the following morning.

From the day the Germans used smoke bombs and TNT charges to blast Lt. Groggel and his beleagured infantry battalion out of their pillbox near Diligen, Germany, until he was finally liberated and flown back to LeHavre, France, Lt. Groggel was held captive in six different German prison camps stretching across the Rhineland from the Holland border to Poland.

Marched 400 Miles in Snow

He was in actual confinement only 59 days. The rest of the time he was being marched back and forth across Germany by his captors to avoid his being liberated.

He hiked through snow and blizzards nearly 400 miles from Oflag 64 in Schubin, Poland, to Oflag 13-B near Hammelberg, Germany when the Russians advanced too close to Schubin to suit the Germans.

This article, at left, found by Glenn Russell, focuses on part of the experiences of one of our Kriegies, Lt. Richard W. Groggel, not previously known to us. This is a portion of that article.

Terry Buchanan sent the following photo of his dad, Earl W. Buchanan, receiving the Silver Star. Your dad may have served with him before capture.

Glenn Russell sent the following article on the late Kriegy John C. Morrisey, Jr. It also includes a brief history of the ITEM.

Good News When This Newspaper Folded

End of Business for The Oflag 64 Item Meant American Prisoners Had Been Liberated

By BEULAH SCHACHT,
Globe-Democrat Staff Writer.

Customarily when a newspaper folds up and the last edition is run off the trusty old presses, a feeling of sadness prevails, and the staff gathers to sob and repeat the tales of "them good old days."

That's what makes this story so different. A newspaper went out of existence overnight and the editor, together with his gimlet-eyed snoopers, gave one rip-roaring yell and shed the unavoidable tears of relief and joy.

Of course, it didn't happen here. The name of the newspaper was The Oflag 64 Item, referred to by its staff as "the only American newspaper printed in Germany, the biggest circulator of cheesecake in Europe and the best P. O. W. paper in the world."

Capt. John C. Morrisey Jr., 3411 Magnolia ave., was one of its subscribers and he carried six well-worn copies of the prison camp newspaper all the way from Altburgand, Germany, where he was a prisoner of war for six months, to St. Louis, where he'd like to curl up for the rest of his life.

"We were liberated late in January," Capt. Morrisey related, "and I carried these papers all the way back for one reason. Some day, when I think life is treating me a little rough, I'll get them out and read them, and remember those days in Offizierslager—or Officers' Camp—64 in the Polish Corridor."

BRINGS SIX COPIES HOME

Because Capt. Morrisey, who recently returned to Jefferson Barracks with other liberated POWs, has only the last six copies of the paper, it's a little difficult to trace its history from the beginning.

The material gleaned from several of the articles shows that the camp came into existence in June of 1943, but the newspaper wasn't organized until November of that year, with only 250 subscribers.

What was printed was carefully regulated by Nazi authorities and who did the actual printing is somewhat of a mystery.

"I have heard," explained Morrisey "that a German printer close to the camp did the printing for us, but I can't prove that. I do know that there was a strict censorship on all material used and the boys who did the job certainly had to be diplomats.

"We received our monthly copy on the first day of each month, and we read and reread every page. Boys who didn't join us in our barbed-wire-bound camp until late were always interested in getting the back issues and bringing themselves up to date."

The Captain's first copy is dated Aug. 1, 1944, and a picture of page one appears with the story. Although the upper right-hand corner carries "Price: 50 Pfg.," that amount must have been taken out of the boys' allotment, because they did not buy the sheets as you buy newspapers on a corner.

TELL OF NEW ARRIVALS

Each paper carried the number of "new arrivals," much the same as school newspapers list freshmen for the benefit of the upper classmen.

Called "Kriegsgefangenen" (war prisoners) by the Germans, the Americans nicknamed themselves "Kriegies" or referred to each other as "Lt. John Kriegie."

There was definitely a shortage of pictures. Those of beautiful girls—or just girls—which seeped through the mails were lapped up by Item newshounds and printed in the following issues. There must have been a great shortage, because two editions carried pin-up girls who were German screen starlets. Then again, that might have been diplomacy on the part of a staff which was trying desperately to get some really hot news across to the boys.

November, 1944, marked the first anniversary of the Item, and the circulation had jumped to 1000, which fact is eloquent with the increase in camp internees. The headline of the paper carried the words, "Item's First Year Sees Great Expansion in Oflag's Strength, Sports, Entertainment, Kultur and Thirst."

They greeted the New Year, 1945, with a hope that cannot even be imagined here. As Capt. Morrisey said: "People say, 'I can imagine what it must have been like.' They can't, because imagination just doesn't stretch that far."

The New Year's edition of the Item carried the motto: "Peace in '45 or Rust" and suggested resolutions as follows:

"1. To eat ourselves into a state of gasping, glutted insensibility four or five times each day.

"2. To sleep until noon each day in a double Simmons Beauty-Rest.

"3. To wear civilian clothes.

"4. To accomplish the above and more at the earliest feasible date."

The 30-point headline of this last edition screamed: "Oflagites Greet New Year With Chilblains and Hope," with an 18-point sub-heading which added, "Jeers Oust Old Year, Kriegies Salaam 1945," over a story which read:

"'It beats the hell outta me,' said John Kriegie last night as the big clock in the White House (headquarters building) knocked out 12 bells.

"And with these words of wild celebration, John pulled the bed sack over his head and closed his eyes, while 1945 limped into Oflag 64 cursing its chilblains.

"There were no tears among Altburgund's American colony at the departure of 1944.

"For the older gefangeners (prisoners) it had been a year of great expectations that had misfired; for the younger generation it had been the year of the Great Shock.

"(You know—'Hell's bells, Lieutenant, I figured on being wounded or killed, but I never even dreamed of being captured!')

"The New Year brought new hope—plenty of it.

"John Kriegie awoke this morning from dreams of beefsteak, Scotch and Lana Turner with a new gleam in his eye.

"'It won't be long now!' he shouted, diving for his ersatz coffee."

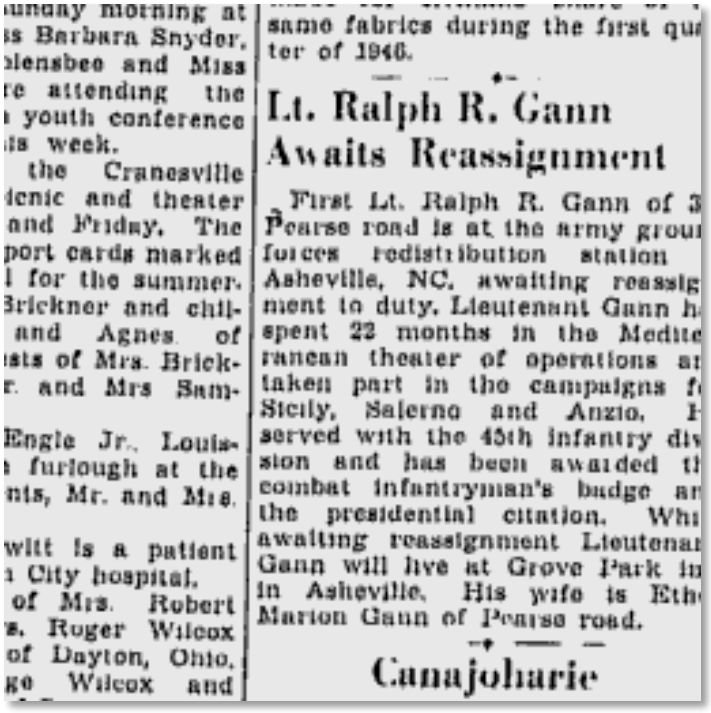
John Kriegie, unless he was psychic, probably didn't realize as he dove into that mug of imitation "mud" how close to freedom he was, because less than a month later he was on the way home.

Even though he appreciated the Item, you can bet he didn't say: "Aw gee, fellas, we won't be here for the February issue!"

THIS ST. LOUISAN, Capt. John C. Morrisey Jr., 3411 Magnolia ave., brought back samples of the Oflag 64 Item on his return to his home town. —Staff Photo

Michael Joralemon, an associate of the late Kriegy Ralph Gann's family sent the following articles which were common as our Kriegies were released from captivity, returned home, and were reassigned. One article that we do not have a copy of said the following:

"Leaves Service
Capt. Ralph R. Gann, husband of Mrs. Ethel Marion Gann of Pearse road, was discharged from the army at Fort Bragg, NC, Oct. 11.
He entered service April, 1942, and was sent overseas in May, 1943, serving in Sicily, Salerno and Anzio with the 45th division. He returned from overseas in April, 1945. Gann was a prisoner of war in Poland for a year. He is a holder of a combat infantrymen's badge and a presidential citation. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gann of Woodward, Okla."



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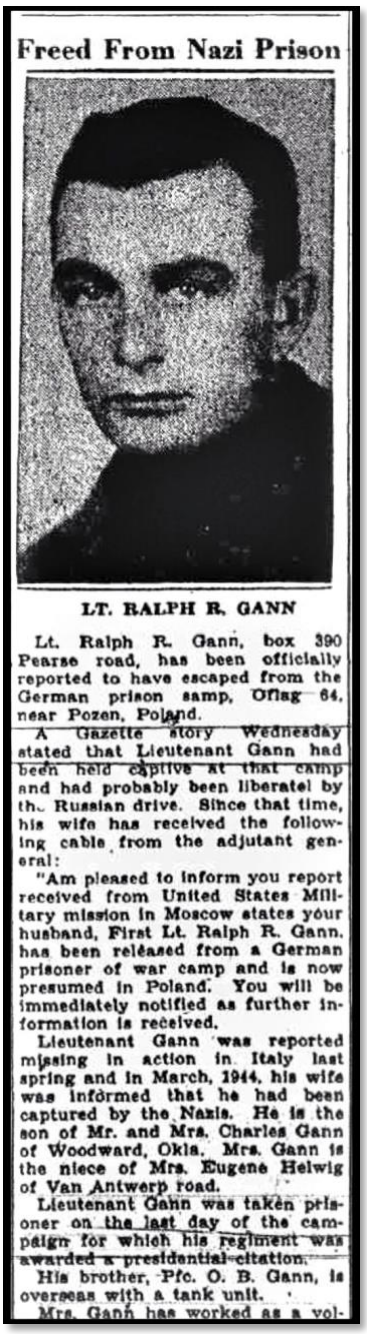
same fabrics during the first qu...
ter of 1946.

Lt. Ralph R. Gann Awaits Reassignment

First Lt. Ralph R. Gann of 3... Pearse road is at the army grou... forces redistribution station ... Asheville, NC, awaiting reassig... ment to duty. Lieutenant Gann h... spent 22 months in the Medite... ranean theater of operations a... taken part in the campaigns f... Sicily, Salerno and Anzio. H... served with the 45th infantry div... sion and has been awarded t... combat infantryman's badge a... the presidential citation. Whi... awaiting reassignment Lieutenan... Gann will live at Grove Park in... in Asheville. His wife is Eth... Marion Gann of Pearse road.

Canajoharie



Freed From Nazi Prison

LT. RALPH R. GANN

Lt. Ralph R. Gann, box 390 Pearse road, has been officially reported to have escaped from the German prison samp, Oflag 64, near Pozen, Poland.

A Gazette story Wednesday stated that Lieutenant Gann had been held captive at that camp and had probably been liberatel by th. Russian drive. Since that time, his wife has received the following cable from the adjutant general:

"Am pleased to inform you report received from United States Military mission in Moscow states your husband, First Lt. Ralph R. Gann, has been released from a German prisoner of war camp and is now presumed in Poland. You will be immediately notified as further information is received.

Lieutenant Gann was reported missing in action in Italy last spring and in March, 1944, his wife was informed that he had been captured by the Nazis. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gann of Woodward, Okla. Mrs. Gann is the niece of Mrs. Eugene Helwig of Van Antwerp road.

Lieutenant Gann was taken prisoner on the last day of the campaign for which his regiment was awarded a presidential citation.

His brother, Pfc. O. B. Gann, is overseas with a tank unit.

Mrs. Gann has worked as a vol-

Peggy Kleysteuber, daughter of the late Kriegy William "Bill" Kleysteuber, sent the following transcribed letter from her dad to her mom detailing events of the Long March. It was transcribed as written on small pieces of note paper.

AMERICAN RED CROSS

June, 1945

My Dearest: Think I had best give a short account of myself for the last five months. First the last letter I received from the home front was one of yours written in Nov, 1944—I hope and pray all is well at home.
As you know the Russians started their Big Advance in Jan. of this year. As a result of this the Germans moved us west on the 21st of Jan. or rather I should say started to move us. We had a very few hours to pack. The night of the 20th all power in our area failed. A good hint that something was happening.—We of course had been seeing

-2-

thousands of people with their complete worldly goods going by the camp—Cows, pigs, children, old men, old women everything. Everything was either horse drawn or being pulled by humans. Quite a sight.
The morning of the 21st we were alerted to move to a small R.R. depot at Exin a small village about 25 km away where we were to get a train.—We moved out the 21st and marched in Sub Zero Weather to a farm (hof) the other side of Exin. No train was to be had. I had had a brainstorm and built a sled on which I had everything I could carry

-3-

We lost a number of the boys here due to fatigue. We had been w/out Red Cross parcels for several months. Well to make a long story short I walked for 15 or 16 days until my right leg and hips gave way. By this time we were quite near to Stargard (near the River Oder) Here we were packed (I mean pushed) into box cars and began to move toward Berlin. After 5 days and nights we arrived in Luckenwalde—59 South West of Berlin. Here I went thru the worst period of my life. We had been given little or nothing to eat on the march

-4-

At Luckenwalde we got next to nothing. Just as the boys were beginning to lose what minds were left. The miracle happened. Red Cross boxes arrived and just after that the Russians got to our camp (April 22). A month later I was sent by the Russians to the Elbe River where we were picked up by Americans and carried to Halle from Halle to Reims by plane and from Reims to our present camp on the Channel Coast. Where I now await shipment home. Think it might be several weeks before we will go because of the shipment

-5-

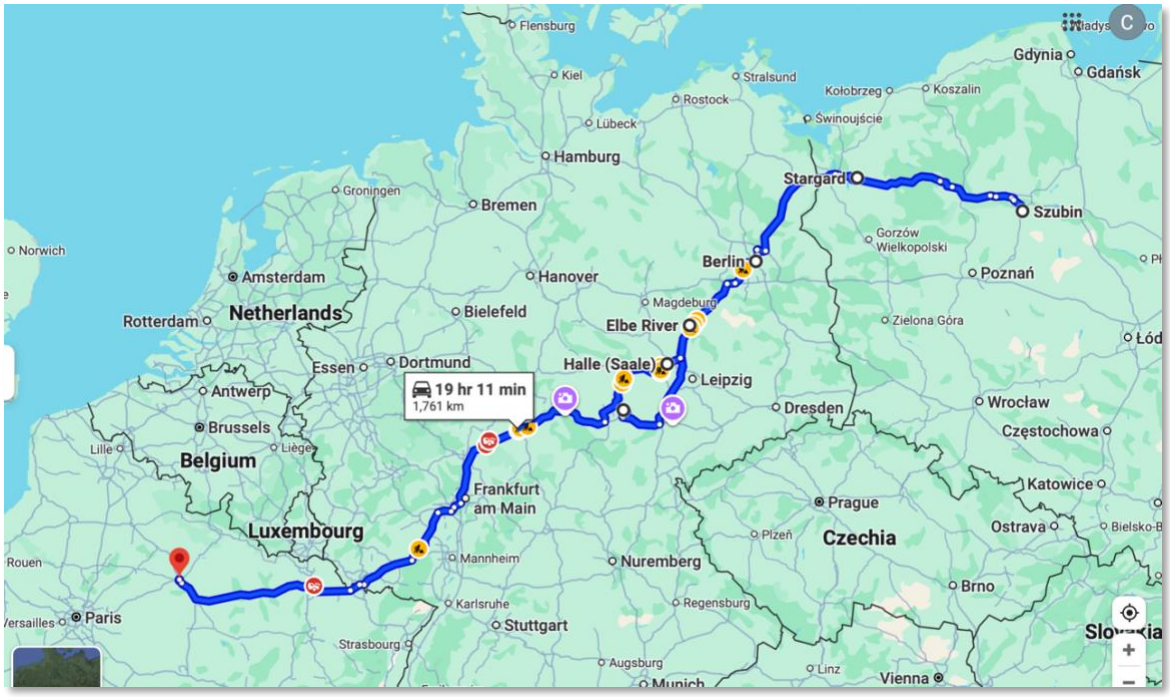
of the troops to the CBI.
I understand I will get 60 days leave so my lovely hold yourself free for the next several months and years.

Your loving husband
Billy

Ps. Please my love to all the family—I am using Mothers address because I am not sure you are at the same place

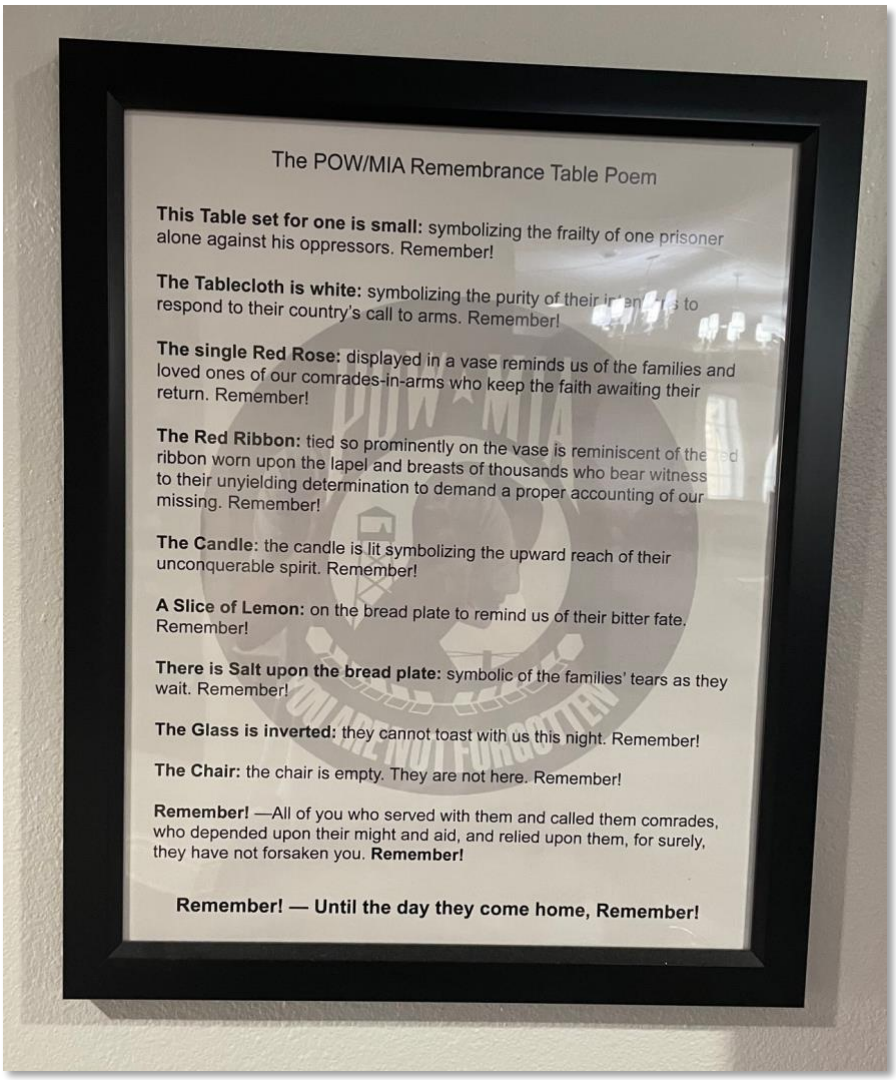
BK

This map was created by Bill Kleysteuber's daughter, Peggy and a friend. It traces Bill's march from Szubin to France. It has been posted on our website at https://www.oflag64.us/long-cold-march.html.



Peggy also shared: "This is a picture of my mother receiving my dad's medals when they thought that he had been killed in action. I saw that she did not look super sad and my sister later told me that my mom knew he wasn't dead. I suspect because she was a Codebreaker that she might've seen some transcription or heard from someone else that they had seen his name as a prisoner in Poland."

The photo below pictures a POW poem found by Marvin Williams at a recent event he attended where other POW items were displayed.



The photo below was sent by Marianne Merriam, Council Chair, Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin. It was taken by her during her recent trip to Szubin for the Grand Opening of the Tin Store museum on the grounds of the former Oflag 64 POW camp. This panoramic view shows the tremendous amount of work that went into creating the museum as well as the very generous donations of artifacts, through the Friends of Oflag 64, from the families of our former Kriegies.

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 this? 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: marilynkbeckham@gmail.com

TAPS

Kriegy Wives

Geneva "Ann" Amy
1932 – 2015

Geneva Ann Amy was born on February 27, 1932, in Beaumont, Texas and passed away on March 10, 2015, in Atascocita, Texas. She was a beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend to many. She was also a caring nurse, faithful servant of God, and longstanding member of First Baptist Bevil Oaks.

She is preceded in death by her husband [the late Kriegy] Lyle Amy; her mother and step-father Opal and Andrew Droptini, Sr., sister Betty and brothers Bobby, T.J., Wesley, and Leslie Jones. She is survived by her sons John and Byron Rexses, step-son Michael Amy; grandchildren Alexandra and Caitlin Rexses, Joni Amy Harrell, Clint and Wade Amy, Megan Dumesnil, sister Carolyn Modica, step-brothers Andrew, Jerry, and Johnnie Droptini, and 13 great-grandchildren.

Ann was a very friendly, active person with many interests. One seldom found Ann at home, even toward the end of her life. She loved to sing and was a member of the First Baptist Bevil Oaks choir and past member of Sweet Adelines. She was a member of the Hotel Dieu School of Nursing Alumni and the Daughters of the American Revolution. She also enjoyed her bridge, bunco, and domino groups. She was very proud of being an RN for over 60 years.

Thank you to all her friends and family who cared about her, visited, called, and sent get well wishes in her last few months.

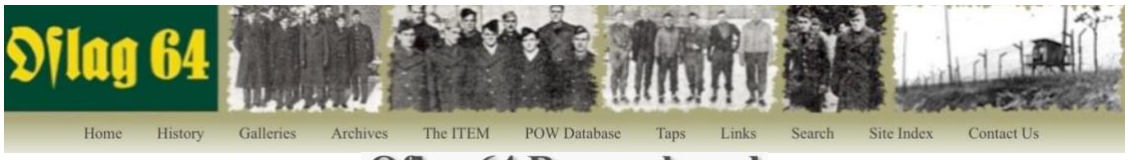
The complete obituary can be found at:
https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/legacyremembers/geneva-amy-obituary?id=18773681

Frances D. Bond
1919 - 2017

Frances was born on December 26, 1919 and passed away on Sunday, July 23, 2017. Frances was a resident of Madison, Alabama at the time of passing [and was the widow of the late Kriegy James B. Bond]. No other information was available.

This obituary was found at:
https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/legacyremembers/frances-bond-obituary?pid=186182345

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.



Oflag 64 Remembered
Honoring our Kriegy Patriots and Heroes

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
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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 _____
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Date _____

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

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