

Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society
Newsletter — Issue # 12 (April) — 2009

The C/DPHS is an association of individuals dedicated to the preservation of the history of our community. To the preservation of the region's oral history, literary history, social history, graphic and pictorial history, and our history as represented by the region's artifacts and structures. To the preservation of this history for future generations. To the art of making this common heritage accessible to the public. And to the act of collaborating with other individuals and organizations sharing similar goals.

THE
CLAYTON/DEER PARK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Mortarboard

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Part Four of
Tuffy's War: The Alvin "Tuffy" Luhr Story

— told by Tuffy Luhr —
— written by Wally Lee Parker —

... the hell you can't ...

"I left for the war from New York harbor on New Years Day, 1945. Our ship was the Queen Mary. Five days later we landed in Scotland. It took two days to unload, after which we were transported by train down to England. A few days after that we

were packed into a landing craft headed to Le Havre, France.

"In France we were jammed into boxcars we called forty and eights, and sent north. It was so cold we just about froze to death. We ended up stealing stoves to try to get some heat into those boxcars.



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“It was the middle of January when I got into the real war.”

Tuffy’s new unit was part of Patton’s 3rd Army. He was assigned to the 82nd Infantry Division, 347th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Company M.

M was a ‘heavy-weapons’ company. Among the company’s weapons were six 81-millimeter mortars and eight water-cooled .30 caliber machine guns. Tuffy was placed in a machine gun squad.

According to the army’s ‘Table of Organization’, each squad should have consisted of a machine gunner and his assistant — both armed with .45 caliber pistols as personal weapons, three ammunition bearers armed with M-1 rifles, one combination jeep driver/ammo bearer armed with a .30 caliber carbine and M8 grenade launcher, and a squad leader armed with a .30 caliber carbine and carrying an M7 grenade launcher.

The M7 grenade launcher was designed to be used with the M-1 Garand rifle. The M8 launcher attached to the barrel of the .30 caliber carbine. Both weapons used the gas pressure produced by detonating ‘blank’ cartridges to propel especially designed grenades up to 400 yards — depending on the type of grenade.

At full strength Company M would have had one-hundred and sixty men — one-hundred and fifty two enlisted, and eight commissioned officers. The normal type of weapons — besides the mortars and water-cooled machine guns — would have been one .50 caliber machine gun (usually mounted on a jeep), six bazookas, and the usual compliment of M-1 Garand rifles, .30 caliber carbines, and .45 caliber automatic pistols. For transportation the company would have had one three-quarter ton four wheel drive truck and nineteen jeeps. Fourteen two-wheel trailers would have given the jeeps the necessary cargo capacity. And each company had six walkie-talkies for radio communication.

As with most things, how close reality came to the paperwork idea depended on circumstance, contingency, and necessity.

Two machine gun squads would share a jeep. The jeep would pull a trailer intended to haul their equipment and ammunition. And each machine gun would eat a lot of ammunition.

The full designation for what would even-

tually become Tuffy’s weapon was “gun, machine, Browning, caliber .30, M1917A1.” The weapon’s history began in World War I. With ongoing improvements, it continued to be used throughout World War II, Korea, and, to a limited degree, Viet Nam.

The machine gun was designed to be water cooled. Its rate of fire was from 450 to 600 rounds a minute. With a potential of ten shots a second, the need for cooling was obvious. To push that many cartridges through the weapon, a fabric belt was hand drawn out of a 250 round ammunition canister and fed into the gun.

The machine gun weighed a little over thirty-two pounds. Seven pints of water or other fluid added another seven or so pounds. Though transported as a separate unit, the quick-mount tripod added just over fifty more pounds.

Each ammunition canister weighed about twenty pounds. The rate of fire — which could theoretically empty two canisters a minute — and the weight of each ammunition canister indicated why three ammo carriers were specified for each gun.

Tuffy was moving toward the front as General Patton was driving north in an effort to link up with the southern moving British and cut off the recent German counter-attack against the American army in Belgium. That German counter-attack had begun on the 16th of December, 1944. Officially called the Ardennes Salient, Americans recall the ensuing incursion as the Battle of the Bulge.

On November 30th, 1944, the 347th Regiment had landed in France. The Regiment’s first engagement occurred on the 13th of December along the French and German border just south of Luxembourg. On New Years Eve, the day before Tuffy left the United States, the 347th was informed it was to move north as part of the 3rd Army’s push against the German counter-offensive into Belgium.

Although Tuffy doesn’t remember the exact date he entered combat, he does recall that the 347th had not yet made contact with the British. That would likely place the date at least a few days before the 15th of January, 1945. On the 12th of January the Regiment was in the vicinity of Saint-Hubert — a small town in the Luxembourg Province of southern Belgium, which was originally part of Luxembourg until the region was annexed by Belgium in 1839.

Tuffy explained, “Naturally, as the newest

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A National Archives and Records Administration Photo.



January 13th, 1945. Members of the 347th Infantry Regiment lining up for chow, La Roche, Belgium. Tuffy joined the 347th within a few days of this photograph.

replacement in my machine gun squad, I started out at the bottom — hauling ammo. It was during my first few days that we ran into elements of the 82nd Airborne. They hadn't been expecting us, so at first they were shooting at us, and we were shooting back. You could generally tell what kind of guns were shooting at you by the sound. When the rifles sounded like M-1s and the machine guns like 30 calibers, that's what convinced us we were up against other Americans. We finally got through to them who we were, and the fighting stopped.

"Pushing north along the roads, we had to take half hour turns, each of us, at rolling up our sleeves and pushing our arms into 18 inches of snow — feeling for booby traps — feeling for trip-wires strung across the road then tied to bombs."

Sources indicate that the winter of 1944-45 was uncommonly cold for northern Europe. American GIs adapted themselves and their equipment to that fact in various ways.

"Our machine gun was water cooled. The army had how the cooling would work in combat all figured out. We were supposed to carry a condensing can with the machine gun. We'd fill the machine gun's water jacket from the can. Then we were supposed to set the can below the barrel of the machine gun. At the bottom of the water jacket was a port for steam. Heat from the barrel would boil the water,

and the steam produced was supposed to exit this port. We were to attach a rubber hose to the steam port, run the hose down into the condensing can, and capture the steam, condensing it back into water for reuse later. That's how the army said it was supposed to work.

"As with a lot the army said, there were a couple of problems.

"It was cold. Escaping steam produced a nice plume that told everyone exactly where you were positioned. And then, that condensing can wasn't only cumbersome, it also added a lot of noise to setting the gun up. That could also tell the enemy exactly where you were. And another thing is that water freezes.

"We spent all night trying to figure out what the hell we could do. We decided we couldn't have

those cans. The army might figure that we did, but we didn't — so we threw the damn cans away. Then we dropped by the motor pool and stole enough antifreeze to fill the company's water cooled machine guns with pure Prestone.

"In a war, you tend to get smart fast.

"There wasn't much chance of overheating the guns. The general rule was, once you opened fire, you needed to be out of that position and on the move in no more than five minutes. It usually took about five minutes for the enemy to figure out where you were and start lobbing mortar rounds or calling up a Panzer or Tiger tank to take care of you.

"Packing ammo wasn't as easy as it sounds. One of my first experiences was when our machine gun was set up beside this road — off to the side and low enough down that the gunner could get some cover. The gunner and his belt-feeder were pinned down by fire from German burp-guns."

Burp-guns were magazine fed sub-machineguns. The 32-round magazine would zip through the gun so fast — about four seconds — that the usual method of firing was in very short burst. The sound that technique of firing produced was what gave the weapon its name.

"I started across the road with a couple of cans of ammo when those guns cut loose. I just rolled back into the ditch, and waited for them to

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stop shooting.

“Pretty soon my gunner hollered — ‘Out of ammo! Tuffy, get over here!’

“I can’t!”

“An angry ‘the hell you can’t’ came back at me.

“I got up with my two cans of ammo and ran across the icy road. The burp-guns cut loose. Bullets were hitting in front of me, beside me, behind me. There was no way any human being could have run through there and not got hit. From the center of the road I slung those cans down on the ice and let them skid the rest of the way across and over the edge — to the machine gun. Then I just rolled back into the ditch — and lay there, searching all over my body for wounds. But I hadn’t been touched.

“The old man was taking care of me that day.

“M company was a support unit, and very flexible. We went everywhere quick. When the infantry would run into opposition, they would call for mortars, bazookas, machine guns — whatever we had that could help. Those parts of our company would move forward.

“Our machine gun squads would find a good position and fire over our infantry’s heads to clear things out — stuff like that. On occasion we even used our 30 calibers to cut down trees so we could spot the enemy’s positions. So we were always moving around in support of the other units.

“I can’t remember where it was, or when — just someplace before we hit the Siegfried line, someplace in all that snow. We were trying to relieve some men but we didn’t get there until daylight. We came on this big meadow. There were dead all over the place. It seemed like maybe a couple of thousand killed in that one battle.

“I don’t know why they would have gone out in the open like that — exposed themselves like that. But the Germans just mowed them down, leaving bodies everywhere. And a lot of the men were missing fingers. Somebody had gone through and cut the rings off their dead hands — wedding bands and the like.

“We were sent forward to help these people. Doubtless some of the people dead in the field had been sent in as relief before us. Seeing that we couldn’t do anything to help was such a disappointment. It was just a terrible thing.”

On January 14th, elements of the 3rd Army came into contact with British and French forces coming from the north. This was the final cut in the pincer movement intended to split the Bulge from German control.

Just a few days after Tuffy had joined M Company, the Regiment was told to move into Luxembourg proper. By the 17th of January the 347th was in position on the high bluffs overlooking the Saur River, just a few miles to the southeast of the town of Echternach. Across the river was Germany’s Rhineland — and a well-entrenched enemy.

... an active defense ...

General tactics defined two kinds of patrols sent behind enemy lines. The reconnaissance patrol used stealth to gather information about enemy positions and such while trying to avoid engaging the enemy. Fighting patrols also gathered information. But their orders usually included acts of sabotage and otherwise engaging the enemy whenever it seemed prudent or necessary to do so. Fighting patrols were called ‘tiger patrols’.

From its position above the Saur River, the 3rd Battalion was ordered to send tiger patrols into German held territory — one of their objectives being to bring back prisoners for interrogation. Sources suggest that an incident involving elements from the 3rd Battalion similar to the one Tuffy describes below occurred on the enemy side of the Saur River. Since these tactics were common throughout the war, it’s difficult to say whether the Saur, or the tributary Our River several weeks later, was the actual location of Tuffy’s first tiger patrol. However, there’s high confidence that the incident did occur before his unit crossed the Siegfried Line.

Tuffy said, “I was order to take part in several nights’ worth of tiger patrols. One of the men in our group spoke perfect German. We rowed across the river, and moved inland until we made contact with the Germans. Our German speaker was talking to the Germans, and everything seemed to be going okay until the Germans started getting itchy — maybe because only one of us was doing all the talking. Anyway, someone in our group gave the signal to get the hell out of there. We pulled the pins on a couple of hand grenades, threw them at the Germans, and beat our way toward the boat.

“I don’t remember us having so much

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trouble on our second tiger patrol. But the first one was a mess. We really lucked out in getting back to our lines without further incident.

“Our German speaker made it to the end of the war with us. He said his folks were German, and they had sent him to the United States when he was six or seven years old. They saw what was going on at home and wanted to get him out of all that. He ended up becoming an American citizen.

“After the war was officially over, and we were encamped in southeastern Germany, he asked the captain if he could go home. Naturally the captain said, ‘Christ! We all want to go home!’ Our German speaker said, ‘No. My folks still live here — not too far away. I just want to go see them — to make sure they’re okay.’ So the captain issued him a four day pass and a jeep — and he went to see his folks.”

Under constant harassment by mortar and artillery from the German side of the river, the 347th stayed positioned on the deeply gullied ridges overlooking the river for the next five days. They were then ordered to move north, along the Luxembourg side of the tributary Our River. In constant scrimmages, the Regiment moved through small village after small village. The Germans seemed to be in a fighting withdrawal toward the heavily fortified Siegfried Line.

The beginning of February found the Regiment once more in Belgium — at Berterath. Berterath is located in the pocket formed by the furthest eastward penetration of the Belgium border into Germany. At this point the German provinces of Westphalia to the north and Rhineland Palatinate to the south intersect against the Belgian frontier.

Having advanced this far, the 347th went into an ‘active defense’ mode. The Regiment had been in constant combat for several weeks, and the men were exhausted. Active defense didn’t translate out as rest. The units were getting ready to advance against the Siegfried Line. In preparation for the impending battle, a relentless series of probes were sent into enemy territory to gather intelligence on enemy strength and details of their fortifications and other defenses.

Since the enemy was doing the same kind of probing into the American lines, it was a matter of each side remaining on constant guard.

Tuffy recalls, “Having been built up with fill material until the grade was a little higher than



the surrounding countryside, the road between Manderfeld and Berterath was pretty good. We had some protection from incoming fire by positioning our machine guns in the ditch, just high enough that we could sweep our .30 calibers over the surface of the road. I was on watch in the ditch when someone brought mail — brought me a bunch of letters. In one of her letters, my wife had copied the words from a popular song. I don’t remember which song. But I do — just as clear as could be — remember getting that letter and reading it while sitting huddled in that ditch.”

It appears that Tuffy had moved from hauling ammo to operating a .30 caliber machine gun in less than a month on the line.

What Tuffy did not detail in our interviews was the casualty rate among the troops. Historical sources indicated that it was high. These sources state that the majority of combat injuries and deaths in the 347th Regiment were due to enemy artillery. As the incoming shells exploded, they splashed the air with metal splinters — with shrapnel. And ac-

Poster by U. S. Government Printing Office — World War II era
From the Northwestern University Library collection — Evanston, Illinois — govinfo@northwestern.edu

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counts written by the men who were there state that incoming artillery was an expected part of life on the lines.

Bullets, grenades, and mines took their toll as well. Then there was the constant exposure to cold and damp as the army moved across frozen fields and through forest drowned beneath fresh snow. All this misery was occasionally interrupted by a stretch of road that tanks and trucks had churned to a frozen crust over bottomless mud.

Munitions and food intended for the men on the combat front were carried on the backs of supply troops. Breaking ground or moving along footpaths through the otherwise inaccessible hills and deep woods, these men acted as a human conveyor belt. Avoiding snipers, ambushes, and booby traps, these soldiers still had to contend with the injuries and exhaustion brought on by the rough terrain and bitter cold.

The idea of a front line where all the shooting was taking place was a nebulous concept. For most of the men, the only safe place was thousands of miles away — at home.

Of the approximately 190 enlisted or drafted known to have served in Company M of the 3rd Battalion, 14 were killed in action — with two more missing and assumed to have been killed. 53 received Purple Hearts. Another 42 were lost from the Company through other causes — presumably through illness or non-combat injury. All told, over a third of the complement were in one manner or another casualties of war. These rates were typical throughout the 347th Regiment. Other units in other Regiments of the 87th Division fared much worse — and some were literally decimated.

Among all this, the number of men who carried home unseen wounds most likely will never be fully appreciated.

With matter of fact prose, Tuffy continued his narrative. “I also remember that the Germans were shooting those big railroad guns over the border. Those shells were so massive they made an awful racket cutting through the air. I don’t know where they were aimed — way back behind our lines someplace.

“During the Battle of the Bulge the Germans had been using troops in American uniforms to infiltrate our lines. We were all as jumpy as hell. It’d gotten to the point that if we were at all uncertain, the rule of the day was to shoot three times, and

then yell ‘halt’.

“That might be a bit of an exaggeration — but we were worried.”

For the 347th, the push against the Siegfried Line began on February 27th. The 3rd Battalion was held in reserve for the first day, and sent forward on the last day of the month, their target being Ormont, a small German village nestled among forested, snow covered hills at the southern end of a two layer deep stretch of the West Wall — as the Germans called the Siegfried Line.

The western portion of this two layer stretch was built in 1939, and the second layer, the eastern portion, the year before. Though largely abandoned when the war was going well for the Fatherland, when it became apparent in the summer of 1944 that the war would be coming all the way to the German border, the entire Siegfried Line was reactivated and reinforced.

Having been built when materials and labor were more plentiful, the prewar fortifications were the strongest. The first of these were the ‘Type 10’ bunkers, with concrete walls and ceilings poured five feet thick. Intended for no more than a dozen men, these bunkers, like most bunkers, had forward facing firing ports called embrasures.

Embrasures were an ancient military concept. A small port or window just large enough to sight and shoot a projectile through faced the enemy. But the walls leading to that small window flared wider as they moved back through the defensive wall. This increase in side to side width allowed the defender to move his weapon side to side when aiming through the firing port. And this allowed the defender to increase his field of fire over many lateral degrees without increasing his exposure to incoming projectiles. The field of fire for each embrasure would overlap the field of fire from the neighboring embrasures, and the field of fire from each blockhouse would overlap the field of fire from the blockhouses of either side — especially important since any attacking infantry able to get sufficiently close to a pillbox would be out of sight to the defenders inside that pillbox.

Blockhouses were placed along the most logical lines of penetration — placed at the entrances to mountain passes, in front of river fords, and laid like a wall across open farmland. Since good access to the borders would also allow attackers to concentrate their heaviest and most effective weapons at

A National Archives and Records Administration Photo — The Siegfried Line.



these points, the most heavily armored and densest concentration of blockhouses, pillboxes, and other active and passive defenses were also laid down in such places.

Much of the original weaponry and armor was stripped from the West Wall during the war and reinstalled along the Atlantic Wall to defend against the expected Allied invasion from England. There was little opportunity to move this back to the Siegfried Line after the fall of the Atlantic Wall.

The reactivation of the West Wall in 1944 included the building of a number of small, one man pillboxes — essentially lightly armored rifle emplacements.

Frontal attacks against the Wall, such as the one Tuffy was preparing for, would have first encountered rows of anti-personnel barbed wire. Next would have been rows of dragon's teeth or other types of tank traps intended to raise and pinion tanks and other heavy vehicles on concrete pyramids

or metal spikes. Mines would have been liberally sprinkled throughout these areas to discourage infantry and small vehicles. Fire from the emplacements rooted behind these barriers, and from artillery and mortar support yet behind that, would have made it difficult for army engineers to place explosive charges or otherwise attempt to remove these obstacles — but this is often exactly what the attacking troops had to do in order to allow the armored vehicles a chance to approach the fortified emplacements.

Though some historians tend to view the West Wall as more of a propaganda tool than a serious defense, the expenditure of American soldiers needed to overwhelm it was in the multiple thousands. After all the firepower that aircraft and artillery could drop, it still required GIs packing relatively light weapons to approach and clear the enemy from Siegfried Line — pillbox by pillbox.

Contemporary reports state that the typical

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situation was one pillbox every 300 feet, both in width and depth of the line, providing a field of overlapping fire. Mines were common, especially along the most obvious approaches to the pillboxes — likely meaning those blind areas not under direct observation from one or more of the other pillboxes. Besides pressure mines — the ones that detonated when stepped on or run over — there were remote mines. These were buried in strategic locations, linked to one of the blockhouses by wire, and detonated by an observer inside the blockhouse.

Against this seemingly impenetrable array, the GI had his own arsenal of weapons and tactics. One was to move forward across open ground in those moments of still deep yet lessening morning darkness, and then be waiting in good tactical positions as the day began. Apparently the enclosed positions of the enemy made it difficult to see under those lighting conditions. Another was to move forward in tight formation behind armored vehicles. Once the infantry team had gotten to the pillbox, they used flame throwers, bazookas, and concentrated rifle fire at pillbox ports to suppress enemy fire. Demolition charges could be placed against the structures. Or, if heavy earthmoving machinery was available, it was sometimes expedient to bury the pillboxes, leaving the defenders inside.

White phosphorus grenades were another weapon of choice for the attacking GIs. Once a breach had been blown in a pillbox, the GIs never went in. Rather, any surviving Germans were asked to surrender. If such did not occur, white phosphorus and fire from flamethrowers was poured into the

defensive position until surrender was achieved, or no defenders were left alive.

This was the no man's land Tuffy and his companions were expected to take.

"As we pushed against the Siegfried Line, we moved onto this meadow," Tuffy continued. "It had been torn all to hell by artillery and bombs. There was a pillbox nestled in a draw at the end of the meadow. We flagged down a tank and talked the commander into going after the pillbox. We followed behind until he was close in. Once we were close enough, we ran around the tank and got up on top of the bunker. And we threw hand grenades down the airshafts until the Germans gave up.

"With some of the pillboxes we captured, the Germans agreed to give up, but took their time coming out. With the SS troopers, they'd keep stalling, and when they did come out they'd have their shoes polished up all bright and shiny and the like. Well — let's just say waiting didn't make us any happier, so we weren't very nice to SS troops when they did come out. Let's just say."

As March's first week ground to a close, the Fatherland's West Wall in the Ormont area was breached by the 347th Regiment. And the entire Siegfried Line began crumbling beneath the hammer of the allied army.

Now the mud being treaded under GI boots was the sacred earth of the Thousand Year Reich. And for Company M, the worst of the war was yet to come.

... to be continued in *Mortarboard* issue #13.

Letters, Email, and Chatter

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| <p>Please Note: All comments, corrections, and criticisms printed can and will be edited by the society for clarity, brevity, and — if necessary — content.</p> |
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On October 27th, 2008, an email was received from Trudy Laswell of Puyallup, Washington, regarding a photograph appearing on the Society's website.

"I would like to get in contact with the person who identified several individuals in the website's photo of the Standard Lumber Company of Deer Park. "Grandpa" Edington is quoted as being the sixth man from the left, the one with the round

black hat. The gentleman on the far right of the photo, the one with his hand on his hip, is stated as being my great uncle, Frank Edington."

"I downloaded the photo and enlarged it. I'm almost positive that "Grandpa" Edington is my great grandfather, William A. Edington."

Bill Sebright responded to Trudy saying that Lawrence Zimmerer, the gentleman assumed to have originally identified the individuals in the photo was now gone.

In subsequent emails, Trudy outlined her family's history in the area.

"The obituary of William A. Edington's wife, Rosa, states that the family migrated from Ohio

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to Washington in 1906 — first to Colville, and then, in 1910, to Deer Park. They raised four sons, one of whom — Erie — was my grandfather. Great Grandmother Rosa died in 1929. William A. passed away in 1936 — while at his oldest son's place in Tum Tum. Both William and Rosa are buried at Deer Park's Woodland Cemetery.

"Grandfather Erie Edington married Grandmother Rose Perkins in 1915. My dad, Allan, was born and raised in Deer Park. And it appears that the whole clan moved to Spokane sometime in the mid to late 1940s.

"There's an article in the March 30th, 1944 issue of the 'Deer Park Union' regarding Grandfather Erie's retirement from the Deer Park

Lumber Company.

"My father, Allan, still lives in Spokane.

"My dad told me that his cousin, Kathryn Edington, use to run around with Leno Prestini. Like Leno, Kathryn never married."

Trudy recently emailed the Society with another question regarding her great grandfather.

"I was wondering if you could print the attached photo to see if anyone might be able to identify the two women standing beside William A. Edington? I believe the photo was taken in the early 1930s. I've no idea where it might have been taken — Deer Park, Spokane, Tum Tum. But any help anyone might be able to give would be greatly appreciated."



**Standard Lumber Company of Deer Park
circa
1910 — 1913**

*Photo from the
Lawrence Zimmerer Collection/*



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Trudy's photo is reproduced below.

If anyone has any thoughts on the matter, please contact the Society and your message will be forwarded to Trudy.



Society webmaster Bob Clouse has been corresponding with former Clayton resident Norma (Lindh) Burnette, currently of Casselberry, Florida. As Bob explained, "Norma and Lucille Tobeck were very close friends back in the 1940s when we all rode the Clayton school bus. Naturally they always sat together, and they were both quite straight laced — which makes me wonder how they could put up with all us juvenile geeks.

"I was talking with Warren and Rainy Nord when the subject of the Lindh family came up. I decided to try to get in touch with Norma again, and have been writing her (snail-mail) ever since."

In her last letter to Bob, Norma said ...

"Thank you so much for sending the Mortarboards, and also the snow pictures. The snow is beautiful. I got to enjoy it for 44 years, but now that I'm old, I'm happy to let other people enjoy it.

"If I was downtown (Spokane) and it started snowing, I headed for home — just to be sure I could get up to 22nd Street. I always had good snow tires, but if someone got crosswise on Cedar Street, then there was a problem.

"And speaking of 22nd, in one Mortarboard it mentioned a book named 'Spokane, 22nd Street, and the Fifties'. I went to a bookstore and they said it was out of print, but they would look for a used copy for me. They found one in great shape. The author, Marilyn Magney Newkirk lived east of us on 22nd. We lived right off of Highdrive.

"I also really enjoyed the articles about the Kelsos and the one about Tuffy Luhr. I learned things about both families that I hadn't known."

Regarding the above letter from Norma Burnette, and Norma's statement that she had been told that Marilyn Magney Newkirk's book, 'Spokane, 22nd Street, and the Fifties', was out of print, the Mortarboard's editor wrote to Marilyn asking if this was correct. Marilyn replied

"The information Norma obtained from the bookstore in Florida is incorrect. The book is definitely not out of print. A few months ago I did make the decision to discontinue using book distributors, and that explains why my books are no longer available at Borders or Barnes & Noble stores.

"Spokane's Hastings and Aunties bookstores still carry my books.

"For anyone wishing to purchase one of my books who can't locate a copy in their area, folks can write to me at 15343 105th Ave. SE, Yelm, WA 98597, or they can contact me through my email addresses listed below. My phone number is 360-400-1756. I would love to communicate with anyone who is interest in the book or anyone who simply lived near 22nd Street or on Spokane's south hill."

Marilyn's current email addresses are ...

mlnew@comcast.net

info@raymondschaferartandpublishing.com

The C/DPHS wishes to thank Marilyn for clarifying this situation for our various readers, to

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remind our readers about her other book, *“Legacy of Yesteryear”*, and encourage anyone wanting to know more about her various publishing endeavors to write or phone her as indicated.

The Society recently received a photo of Leno Prestini’s painting, “Rural Mail Carrier” from Justin Tew. Justin is the grandson of the painting’s owner, Shirley Tew. The *Mortarboard’s* editor called Shirley to ask how the Tew family originally obtained the painting.

Shirley reported that she and her husband, Floyd Tew, moved to Deer Park in 1954, and took over the auction then located along highway 395 just south of the town. About 1955 the family built a new house, and had Leno Prestini lay the fireplace. That’s how they became acquainted with Leno.

Shirley thought Leno’s fireplace was so exceptional because there was the image of a horse’s head clearly visible in the brickwork.

Leno invited Shirley and Floyd to his place at Clayton. Shirley was taken by Leno’s painting of the rural mail carrier because her father was a carrier at Idaho Falls. There were seven kids in the family, and she vividly recalls playing on and in her dad’s old mail wagon — just like the one in the painting.

She said the wagon could become a stagecoach, or whatever else the kids wanted. And the image in the painting brought all that back.

Leno wasn’t offering to sell his paintings at the time, but Shirley’s husband worked out some kind of trade for the painting, and it’s been in the Tew family ever since.

The Society does appreciate Shirley’s permission to use the image of Leno’s painting in our publications.

For a look at the painting, as well as further information about it, check the Sadie Mae Huffman article beginning on page 137 of *Mortarboard* issue #11.

On the 2nd of February we received this email from Jim Quigley of Ontario, Canada.

“My grandfather’s brother, Robert George Long, died in Deer Park on September 6th, 1937, at the age of 75. Apparently he was killed in a blasting

accident at his farm or ranch. I would like to get a copy of his obituary and I wonder if you could advise me if the local newspaper is the same one that was in place in 1937.”

We sent the following note to Jim.

“If the Tribune editor isn’t able to help you, we might be able to get the needed data. If you would care to write any of the details regarding your search — a sketch of the family’s history in this area for example — we can post said material in the society’s newsletter. Although the incident occurred quite a few years back, it’s remotely possible such a letter could draw some extra information out of the local community.”

Quigley responded with ...

“I don’t have a lot of other information about this fellow. He was born in Montreal, Canada, in 1862. My grandfather and one other brother stayed in Ontario. One brother moved to Modesto, California, and this fellow ended up in Deer Park. He was a bachelor, and I know my mother’s sister (his niece) had to go down from Vancouver, B.C., to make funeral arrangements. That’s about it. He died 13 years before I was born. All of our other family members who would know much have passed away. I appreciate your response.”

Society member Sharon Clark recovered the requested material from the microfilm archives at Eastern Washington University, and it was forwarded it to Jim Quigley with this note.

“Although you have likely received these from the editor of the Deer Park Tribune, please find attached two articles that appeared in the Deer Park Union”

The September 9th article stated that Long, described as a “Deer Park Farmer” who lived about two miles from town, was found in his field by P. N. Strong after Strong had heard the explosion. From the evidence it appeared that Long, found about 100 feet from the explosion, had been struck on the head by a piece of stump thrown by the blast.

Dr. Slater was called. He diagnosed “*cerebral hemorrhage*”, and Mister Long was transported to Spokane’s Sacred Heart Hospital. Mister Long died “*some hours later*”.

Mister Long was described as a bachelor, living alone on a farm he had owned for about five years. Although the article stated that Long’s farm was two miles from Deer Park, due to a typographical error, the direction from town couldn’t be read.

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The September 16th article was a “*Card of Thanks*” from the family.

Mister Quigley replied to the forwarded articles with appreciation.

In research carried out in the Northwest Room of the Spokane Public Library, Sharon Boyd-Clark found the R. G. Long’s farm was located two miles due west of Deer Park on the west side of Spotted Road — just to the south of where West Herman Road abuts.

Below is a recently obtained photograph of 2nd Lieutenant Orland Luhr, Army Air Force, who was killed in the line of duty on the 19th of August, 1944. Orland, who attended Clayton grade school and graduated from Deer Park High, then used the family name of his stepfather, Clayton’s Peter Berg. Orland’s grave is located in Clayton’s Zion Hill Cemetery, and the details of his death appeared in last month’s issue of the *Mortarboard*.



Photo from the Abvin “Tuffy” Luhr collection.

2nd Lieutenant Orland Luhr

Society associate and *Mortarboard* contributor Charles A. Stewart wrote regarding the results of the Army Air Corps investigation into the mishap. Based on his own experience as a pilot, Charles offered the following hypothetical considerations.

“There is one piece of data in the official reports that might explain the collision. The briefings stated that the B-25s would be at ‘approximately 10,000 feet indicated altitude’ and that the AT-6s were to ‘come no closer than three hundred feet vertically to the bombers.’ In order to keep the 300 feet vertical separation, Orland probably would have decided to level off at 9,500 feet by his altimeter, 500 feet below the bombers’ planned altitude, to give some margin for instrument error and turbulence, etc. But Lt. Williams said that ‘the two ships made contact at an approximate altitude of ninety-five hundred feet indicated.’ So the bomber may not have been where Orland expected it to be, possibly due to early afternoon thermal turbulence common to the Arizona desert.

“In setting up his approach out of the dive, pulling a couple of g’s to make it look realistic, Orland probably kept a visual reference to his flight leader while checking his altimeter for his 9,500 foot reference. Since he had already done all this three times successfully, he may not have been paying as much attention to the bombers and failed to notice the B-25 in front of him at lower-than-planned altitude until it was too late. The probable closing speed of over 400 miles-per-hour is about 600 feet per second. It would have taken at least two seconds, about a quarter mile, before Orland could have maneuvered to avoid the bomber: one second to see it and decide what to do and another second to yank his AT-6 over and start the turn, then additional time for the heavy AT-6 to respond and get out of the way. It would have been difficult for anyone to avoid the collision in this scenario.”

During the war years the newspapers were littered with reports of mid-air collisions during training exercises involving formation flying. Flying aircraft in proximity without the assistance of modern avionic instrumentation was hazardous under the best of circumstances, even if all the planes were headed in the same direction. Drawing two swarms of WWII aircraft head-on a high velocity, even with three hundred feet of altitude separation, was not a casual thing — and obviously was not treated as

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such by the military.

While the report's conclusion of "pilot error" was not unwarranted, it should be remembered that there is absolutely no taint of negligence

in that phrase. And we wish to thank Charles for putting that fact into perspective.

Using the JFK Library: Eastern Washington University, Cheney
— by Sharon Boyd-Clark —

The JFK library is centrally located on the Cheney campus. I usually park in the P10 parking lot near the Pence Union Building/PUB off Elm Street. This is where the buses turn around and park to pick up and drop students. Don't park at the unmetered parking places as you need a special permit for those. Instead park by a meter and deposit coins. They take dimes, nickels and quarters at the rate of 50 cents an hour and have a limit of 4 hours. Go to the sidewalk back of the PUB parking and turn left. The library is the second building. The sidewalk will slant to the right and go directly to the library's entrance on the 2nd or main level. The Circulation Desk is to your right as you enter. This is where you get your EWU Community Borrower Card. You need picture I.D. (Your Driver's license) and proof of living locally such as an electric bill with your name and address. The card is good for a year and can be renewed. There is no charge.

To the left of the main entry door is a small snack bar — coffee, bagels, soda vending machines, and a few tables. This is the only place to eat in the building.

There are color coded guides to each of the three levels. I also picked up small brochures: Circulation Services, Archives and Special Collections and Reference and Instructional Services and a bookmark with library hours and phone numbers. The library hours are Mon-Thurs 7:30 am to 11:00 pm, Friday 7:30 am to 6:00 pm, Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm and Sunday 1:00 pm to 9:00 pm or 11:00 pm. The circulation desk is open the same as the library. The Reference desk has more limited hours and is open 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday-Thursday,

8:00 am-5:00 pm Friday, 10:00 am-6:00 pm Saturday and 1:00 pm-8:00 pm Sunday. It is located on the Main Floor.

The Special Collections are principally a collection of books and periodical related to the history and government of the Pacific Northwest. Staff is usually available in the Archives Research Room to assist researchers from 10:00 am until 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. No assistance is available on evenings, weekends, or holidays observed by the university. Most of the special collections are only available when the staff is on duty. The Archives and Special Collections are on the lower level in the far back left corner.

The newspapers on microfilm are also on the lower level. The readers are also copiers. Two of them take nickels. Two nickels for each copy. Other machines take cards which can be purchased on the main level to the left of the stairwell. There are change machines here and it is convenient to the restrooms.

Before you go to the library you should access the EWU Library Catalog and search for subjects, authors or titles you are looking for. Go to the following web site: <http://www.ewu.edu/library>. Click on "Find Books & Videos". Several Catalogs come up. You can search the EWU Library Catalog or the Spokane Area Libraries: Gonzaga, Whitworth, Spokane Public Library, Spokane County Library District or Community Colleges of Spokane. The Summit Catalog and others require student cards and I wasn't able to access those.

Society Contacts

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Society Minutes — March, 2009

Gathering for the March 14th meeting were Bill Sebright, Mark Wagner, Rob Higgins, Patricia Parker, Wally Lee Parker, Bob Gibson, Robert C. Lemley, Bob Clouse, Sharon Clark, Marilyn Reilly, Kay Parkin, Betty Burdette, Ella Jenkins, Lonnie Jenkins, Sue Rehms, Warren Nord, Lorraine Nord, Peter Coffin, Karen Meyer, and Cliff Meyer.

Society president Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 09:03 AM.

Treasurer Mark Wagner reported the current status of the Society's finances. All was accepted and entered into the records.

It was agreed that the Society should continue its membership in the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce, and the fifty dollar membership fee was authorized. It was noted that the fee has increased twenty dollars since last year.

Several members of the Society recently reviewed a set of four DVDs containing home movies from the Olson and Wolfe families. These movies date back to 1945 and contain several minutes of historically significant footage of Deer Park in the 1940s and 50s. Some discussion ensued regarding appropriate means of obtaining copies of these DVDs for the Society archives — as well as permission to use the images they contain — but no further action was taken at this time.

Bill Sebright reported that Nancy Berger of Standen Insurance indicated it would cost the Society six-hundred and forty dollars a year for liability coverage of normal activities such as our monthly meetings and the displays we set up at events such as Deer Park's Old Settlers celebration, the Clayton Fair, and Clayton Days. Furthermore, liability coverage for the Board of Directors would add another thirteen-hundred and forty dollars a year to that. Bill was looking into such matters because the Board of Directors, noting a number of possible legal exposures associated with the Society's more active presence within the larger community, has begun to feel that an increasingly businesslike approach to Society concerns might be called for. Part of this businesslike approach would be recognition of the simple truth that the Society's growth within the community places it at greater risk of lawsuits, and that protecting the assets of the Society and its decision makers is a prudent part of the cost of doing business.

Although no immediate action on the above was proposed, the feeling within the Board seems to suggest consultations with an attorney regarding this as well as other Society related matters may be in order.

Wally Parker, Editor of Print Publications, reported that Volume 3 of the *Collected Newsletters* is now available. This volume contains *Mortarboards* #9, #10, and #11. Wally indicated that if all goes well, Volume 4 of the *Collected Newsletters* should be available for sale prior to this year's Old Settlers Day gathering.

The question was raised as to whether the current price of three dollars per issue is appropriate for the *Collected Newsletters* — if perhaps a somewhat higher price might be better. It was explained that the function of the *Collected Newsletters*, as well as the limited number of free editions of the monthly *Mortarboard* distributed around the community, is to advertise the Society's activities. Although we do make approximately forty cents profit on each edition of the *Collected Newsletters*, that money is used to offset the expense of printing free editions of the *Mortarboard*. We feel raising prices would be counterproductive since it would also reduce the number of purchased copies in circulation.

Doubtless we will be required to raise the asking price for the *Collected Newsletters* in the future, since that price needs to be adjusted whenever the cost of materials increase, but for the present we feel a small overall net loss for our print publications is acceptable.

Webmaster Bob Clouse reports over 900 different email address visited the Society website one or more times during the month of February. The website continues to be a strong advertisement for the Society's activities as well — an advertisement that has the advantage of an international reach and relatively low cost. Its respondents are people from throughout the world who go online in search of information specific to the Clayton/Deer Park area — people such as Ed Kingery, grandson of Walter and Clara King. Our webmaster reports that Ed has been sending a number of pictures and other useful information about the King family as a result of his first contact via the website.

Donna Smith from the Clayton Post Office forwarded a letter from Clayton, Wisconsin, to Soci-

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ety president Bill Sebright. The letter stated that Wisconsin's Clayton is celebrating its 100th birthday and is planning a book reporting on all the other U.S. towns named Clayton. Bill responded to the letter and is now waiting for a reply in turn.

Sharon Clark, Pete Coffin, and Wally Parker reported on the Society's newly formed 'Old Schools Project'. Besides the above members, the current staff includes Florene Moore and Bill Sebright. The object of the project is to gather and collate historical data on all the schools within the greater community — with special emphasis on the many one room schools once scattered throughout the area.

Pete has identified twenty-seven geographic locations associated with thirty school names. Twenty four of those locations — not including Deer Park, Clayton, or Loon Lake — are small rural primary schools typically overseen by a single teacher. Pete has generated maps of each of these locations.

Sharon and Florene are searching various archives, including Eastern Washington University and the Museum of Arts and Culture, for data on the schools. An impressive amount of documentation is already surfacing — which Sharon is saving as both print and digital files.

Wally is attempting to collate the incoming data, while Bill Sebright is acting a project overseer and community contact person. We expect that some early results will begin appearing in the *Mortarboard* by late summer, although the project itself is not likely to be completed anytime soon. Any assistance in this endeavor would be welcomed.

In regards to the site of the oldest cemetery in the Deer Park area, Pete Coffin has been corresponding with Christi Anderson, granddaughter of Evan Enoch. As a result, Pete has determined another possible location — this one on Enoch Road, west of Short Road. He will try to pinpoint and photograph the site after the area's snow melts.

Sue Rehms brought class pictures, maps, and other information to the meeting. Pete Coffin will scan this material and return the originals. The Society is appreciative of Sue's generosity.

Loon Lake's Karen Meyer brought a picture of her Grandfather Schonfeld standing in front of an unidentified building similar to the old Clayton Grange Hall. Although we didn't recognize the structure, we will publish it in a future edition of the

Mortarboard in hopes that some of our readers can place the image.

Society Vice President Rob Higgins reported the results of a closed meeting of the C/DPHS Executive Board held Sunday, February 22nd, in Deer Park. This meeting was in response to a proposal introduced at the historical society's regular February meeting held the prior week. That proposal suggested the Society purchase a pole-building to be erected at the Clayton Fairgrounds — said building to use as the Society's museum.

Rob had investigated the particulars of the proposal. After review, the Board decided that the Society could not afford the proposal as described. The Board also noted other conditions inherent in the proposal that made it unworkable — perhaps the most basic being that the Society did not own the property on which the building would be erected.

Because of the continuing interest expressed by the general membership regarding the possibility of museum ownership, the Board developed the initial outline of a plan to create a permanent Fund Raising Committee for the purpose of generating the revenue necessary to finance the Society's various endeavors — including the desire to eventually own a museum.

Regarding the museum, the Fund Raising Committee is (1.) to create a Land Acquisition Fund to purchase a suitable site, (2.) to create an Infrastructure Fund for placing improvements such as property access, power, sewer, etc., on the property, (3.) to create a Building Fund for the museum structure itself, and (4.) to establish a Museum Maintenance Fund to provide for the daily expenses involved in such an enterprise.

A general outline of the expectations being placed on this proposed committee was passed to the membership.

The names current placed forward for this committee includes Rob Higgins, Bob Clouse, Marilyn Reilly, and Don Ball. Anyone interested in volunteering is requested to contact Rob Higgins or any other Society member. More details will be available after the committee membership has firmed and the process is underway.

The meeting was officially adjourned at 10:16 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for 09:00 AM, April 11th, at the Clayton Drive In.

Over the Kitchen Table

The Editor's Thoughts Regarding a Museum for the Society

— Wally Lee Parker —

At the Society's February meeting an idea for erecting a museum was presented by Society guest Howard Richards. Since I became a member of the historical group in November of 2003, at least half-a-dozen museum proposals have been made — all of them inadequate in one or more ways. This is not to say that any of the ideas presented were in themselves bad, but rather that none address the complexities beneath the proposition — complexities such as the actual cost of building the structure, and then of generating the funds needed to maintain it on a continuing basis.

Most museum proposals to date have reduced cost by using property owned by others — the basement of a church, a local farmer's barn, or, as in this case, land recently acquired by the Clayton Fair Association. While property owners may or may not consider such propositions as anything more than a nuisance, from our perspective the real problem is that the Society would lack ultimate control over the building. Our understanding of state law leads us to believe that regardless of who paid for the building and its construction, the owner of the property would ultimately be the owner of the building. Whether we became tenants in that building by rent or lease, the actual owner's property rights would always hang over our future plans like a cloud. And when we eventually left the building, we would be leaving our entire investment behind.

Board member Rob Higgins investigated the February proposal and found that building a suitable structure from the ten-thousand dollar pole-building package would require multiplying the original cost by a factor of four — at the very least. The commercial grade building-permit would add another twenty-three hundred dollars. Labor for erecting the building — not an amateur job — would cost about seventy dollars an hour for the crew, with at least four days for construction. Concrete for the floor adds another twenty-two hundred and fifty dollars — without considering the excavation of topsoil, dumping, spreading, and compacting a bed of crushed gravel, placing the necessary metal reinforcement mesh, and hiring the skilled labor needed to give it all a professional finish. Then we need to consider bringing power to the building and wiring it

to commercial standards. Internal structures need to be built to hold the wallboard, insulation needs to be added, interior walls finished, and on and on. And after all this is done, we'll still have the ongoing expense of insurance — liability, fire, and theft — as well as our share of the utilities. And even this is far from all.

To suggest that most of this can be accomplished by the thousands of hours of amateur and professional labor that are sure to be volunteered — and therefore of no concern when realistically adjudicating the actual cost — is essentially voodoo economics. And by now anyone with retirement investments should be well aware of the fate awaiting those practicing that particular religion.

Lord knows I could paint you a picture of a local heritage village gathered, reconstructed, and maintained by the Society that would make your mouth water — but the modern world is full of confounding regulations that can quickly turn a dream into a nightmare. Considering that a museum is in essence a public venue, it will have to meet the same standards as any other commercial enterprise — including handicap accessibility and a blizzard of similar code requirements and safety standards. This means when planning to create a museum or museum complex a number of local, county, state and federal agencies will have to be dealt with — on their own often bureaucratically inflexible terms.

Creating a museum is basically the same as building and operating a business — except for the part about eventually turning a profit. This is not to say museum ownership is beyond our reach, but it does suggest that quite a bit more than buying a tin shed is going to be required to get us there. The Board of Directors has suggested a methodical, businesslike approach. An approach that addresses the simple truth that dreaming up the idea is the easy part. An approach that addresses the pragmatic realities found among those complex and tedious steps needed to convert that dream into bricks and mortar.

In the meantime, the Society will continue to pursue the other aspect of its mission — collecting, preserving, and disseminating the history of the greater community.

Special thanks to this issue's proofreaders — Sue Newell, Sharon Boyd-Clark, and Pat Parker.