



# MMoT POST EXCHANGE THE OFFICAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MILITARY MUSEUM OF TEXAS

Volume 5, Issue 4

Aug 06

## General News

Dues are Due again, the MMoT will keep the same great price for dues as we had last year, \$40.00. Make the checks payable to The Military Museum of Texas and send them to Charles Sumner Sr. at the Museum address.

## Calendar of Events

Labor Day Old Town Spring Display

Wings Over Houston 10-22,23

## Welcome New Members

Dan Barge

James Armour

June Lohman for Time Warner Life Member

## Memorial Day After Action

By Capt Kirk

We all had a great time. It rained very hard, I drove the MB through a storm I would not drive my truck in. Danny Benczedi didn't drive his jeep because it was raining. We took the Half track and various vehicle to the Vet's cemetery.



M-114 being loaded for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July



Vehicle Display on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July at Allen Pkwy

## 4<sup>th</sup> of July After Action Report

By Capt. Kirk

We had a great time. No one was hurt, it rained and everyone made it home safe. It was an 18 Hour day for some of us. There were Kirk Sullivan, Kenny Roger, Matt Rigsby, Charles Sumner Sr/Jr, Ray Silva, Tim Minor, Buddy West and tribe, ED Farris, Rodney Williams and Frank Vera were all on hand at one part or another during this operation. The Fireworks were absolutely spectacular again this year

## ROTC Report

By Buddy West

We have a new set of "recruits" joining us this year. The Spring Branch Navy JROTC has joined the Oak Ridge Air Force Junior ROTC program in volunteering to help us out this school year. Each school would like to set up one Saturday during each of their nine-week grading periods to assist around the facility. That's 8 Saturdays of energetic teenagers looking for ways to help. Last year, cadets worked on facility cleanup, light vehicle maintenance and helped us inventory Joe's collection.

Buddy is looking for ideas on tasks that we can assign the cadets this year. Thoughts include dry wall repair, painting, rebuilding the back steps and continued assistance with the vehicles. Please send Buddy any ideas you may have ([bwest@wm.com](mailto:bwest@wm.com)). We also need volunteers to help supervise the cadets. Members who could use help changing oil, filters, tires, general lubrication, etc., are encouraged to show up and take a couple of students to guide through those tasks. It is not all work. The cadets get to spend some time running engines to charge batteries, exploring the vehicles, and we try to arrange a few rides. They also get to interact with us and learn a few bad habits that may **help** them in any future military careers. Buddy will work with the Board and the school cadres to set up a schedule. We, and they, get the most benefit from their visit when we have members show up with work they'd like help with on their vehicles. A schedule will be distributed once we have finalized the dates with Spring Branch and Oak Ridge.

### **WAR STORIES: A CONTRIBUTION TO THE MILITARY MUSEUM NEWSLETTER**

BY PETER BURLAND, WWII VETERAN AND MUSEUM BOARD MEMBER

*There were, during WWII, something on the order of 12,500,000 men in uniform technically fit to fight. However, the actual number who served in combat units in both the Pacific and European theaters (including air) was only a fraction of this: 2,500,000. Each, regardless of status, had a story to tell whether he was a hot rod P-38 fighter pilot or a shoe clerk passing out underwear and socks to new recruits. Few of these men, however, had the opportunity to participate, influence and to witness the course of the war sitting in a cat-bird seat overlooking the entire planning operation of the European Theater of Operations. The following accounts are excerpts from a story involving something less than 3000 military intelligence 'grunts' who did, indeed, sit in such positions. They gathered and interpreted German military intelligence information. The success of their work, seldom publicized, was sufficiently accurate as to have predicted the enemy's intentions throughout the entire war with only two major failures: Market Garden (operational) and the Battle of the Bulge (intelligence). My WWII involvement began with my volunteering for induction into the Armed Services after President Franklin D. Roosevelt closed all military services to*

*enlistments in December, 1942. In usual Army fashion, by volunteering for induction I was promised my choice of services. I chose Air. They gave me chemical warfare. After eight or ten days in chemical warfare, I was whisked off in the middle of the night to the military intelligence training center at Fort Ritchie in the mountains of northern Maryland where I was enrolled in the fifth Greek guerrilla warfare class. My parents were immigrant Greeks and, of course, my first language was Greek. After eight months of special forces training, instead of shipping the class off to Southern Yugoslavia and Northern Greece to join the Greek battalion, we were sent back to photo recon school for training in aerial photography and photo interpretation. We flew low-level photo recon missions for six months in P-38's and then were assigned to units designated to make the initial assault on Omaha and Utah beaches. Twelve of us drew the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division. We were assigned the responsibility of keeping track of German Order of Battle through: interrogation of prisoners of war; spotting German Panzer units by flying daily observation missions; and, contacting counter-espionage agents operating behind enemy lines.*

*During bad weather, G-2 and G-3 personnel scouted for the Armored Regiments.*

*I hope to include a new episode of "The Sand Table" in each of the MMOT news letters. These episodes will appear chronologically, excerpted from, "THE SAND TABLE: THE DESTRUCTION OF HITLER'S FORTRESS EUROPE AND THE ATLANTIC WALL", a work in progress but not yet published. If the reader has any questions or comments, please call me at (800)255-8494.*

### **THE SAND TABLE: THE DESTRUCTION OF HITLER'S FORTRESS**

#### **EUROPE AND THE ATLANTIC WALL ©**

*By: Peter D. Burland*

*Former: M/Sgt. U. S. Army*

*Military Intelligence Service G-2 Sectio<sup>2nd</sup> Armored Division*

#### **DEDICATION**

*To the graduates of Fort Ritchie, Maryland who fought for and won the high ground in the 'Secret War' of counter-intelligence against the Germans: Trained in this remote northern Maryland camp, formerly a summer resort for girls, linguists fluent in all the European languages were placed in every phase of military counter-intelligence during World*

*War II. Of the twelve men that graduated from this school and assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division's Tactical Command Post, three died in battle, one was severely wounded in combat, and two were physically disabled during the Battle of the Bulge by the severe cold. This story is dedicated to these and hundreds of other Ritchie graduates who suffered a similar fate playing the cat-and-mouse game of counter-intelligence....and to those who survived to tell their story.*

## **TRIBUTE**

*“The photographic reconnaissance units of the Allied Air Forces were the first to begin active and direct preparations for the invasion of Europe from the west. For more than a year, much vital information was accumulated which contributed very greatly to the ultimate success of the assault. The variety, complexity, and the detailed accuracy of the information gathered was of great importance in the preparatory phase of the operation. One of the most remarkable tasks accomplished by these reconnaissance units was the series of sorties flown to obtain low-level obliques of underwater beach defenses.”*

*General Dwight D. Eisenhower*

*Supreme Commander*

*Allied Expeditionary Force*

*Excerpt from:*

*Report by The Supreme Commander To The Combined Chiefs of Staff On The Operations In Europe of the Allied Expeditionary Force, 6 June 1944 to 8 May 1945. Date: 13 July 1945.*

### *PRELUDE*

*On October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1943, one-hundred-twenty specially trained military intelligence personnel sailed for the Firth of Clyde, Scotland from Pier 92 in New York City aboard the converted Cunard passenger liner, Queen Mary. After setting a maritime record of 3 days, 18 hours for the fastest Atlantic crossing on record, this nameless U. S. Army contingent was transported to London to join General Dwight D.*

*Eisenhower's European Theater of Operation's Forward Command Post.*

*Under the expert tutelage of British Royal Air Force, British Army MI-5 and Canadian Air Force personnel, the coastal defenses of Fortress Europe were placed under almost daily aerial surveillance by U. S. reconnaissance aircraft. Low level sorties were flown from the site of Germany's secret rocket research facility at Peenemunde in the North Sea to Cherbourg, France on the Cotentin peninsula of Normandie. From these low-level observations, ground reports transmitted to London by American O.S.S. agents; the British spy network (MI-6); and the Free French underground (FFI) working behind enemy lines, a reconstruction in miniature of the entire Atlantic Coastline of Europe was pieced together from beach sand and Plaster-of-Paris by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. This work of art, dubbed the “Sand Table,” accurate in every detail of topography was used to update German defense positions twice weekly in General Eisenhower's war room at his Grosvenor Square London HQ's.*

*In early April, 1944, the final military intelligence estimate of the German military position on the Atlantic defense wall was presented by Captain Hugh D. Jones (Racine, WI), one of the Military Intelligence Service's “nameless few.” On that date, General Eisenhower chose the Normandie beaches as the confirmed site of the initial assault on Fortress Europe. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, M. I. S. personnel that conceived and built the “sand table” were assigned to the combat divisions chosen to make the early invasion beach landings. The now famous “sand table” was sawed into several sections and transported from the protective custody of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division and the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions. Captain Jones's Military Intelligence Team (M.I.S. 16) consisting of 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Eric Matthews, M/Sgt. Edward Stempowski, S/Sgt. Peter Burland, S/Sgt. Richard Kim Wong and S/Sgt. Norris Eckelberry escorted the Plaster-of-Paris replica of Omaha Beach to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored where regimental and battalion commanders were briefed on the beach defenses that had to be breached by D-Day assault forces. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored was scheduled to make the*

*first armored assault on D+1. The very earliest of these briefings were presented to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalions and the 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> U. S. Airborne Divisions.*

*On D-Day, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1944, regimental combat teams from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions made the initial assault on Omaha Beach. After three days of heavy fighting and having taken over 3800 casualties on D-Day alone, the first American assault forces had expanded the beachhead to an area two to three miles wide and only 2000 yards inland from the beach. On D+3, delayed for two days because of the debris and wrecked landing craft littering Dog and Easy Beaches, four companies of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Reconnaissance Battalion and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division's tactical command post landed in the first armored assault on Omaha. The M.I. S. Team that carried out the Omaha Beach "sand table" briefings followed the 82<sup>nd</sup> Recon Battalion up and over the Normandie sand dunes and into the war.*

*This narrative is their story. Every incident in this ensuing story is true and every character existed in living GI color. Certain names relating to occasional incidents described herein have been changed to save embarrassing the families of the survivors of some bazaar and very unflattering incidents.*

*.....(cont. from main text):*

*The draft board's response to our volunteering for the draft was swift and unambiguous. We were 'selected' by the U. S. Army to be sworn in and assigned to a training unit at Fort McPherson, Atlanta, Georgia. No mention of our first choice of services: the Air Corps. Having drawn our standard Army gear and assigned to a barracks, Barney and I dutifully reported to reveille formation at 7:00am every morning and again at 9:00am where the shipping lists were read aloud and then posted for all recruits to see. After days of this same routine and boredom hanging around the day room for the next shipping list to appear, the platoon sergeant entered the game room, obviously excited about something. Immediately, he announced that a special project was brewing and asked for a show of hands from all of those who could type. Eight of us raised our hands and were formed into a special detail. After marching us to our barracks where we slipped into the latest in army fatigues, we stoked coal-burning boilers in the officers' quarters for four days until excused for a more important Army detail: guard duty. These same eight 'volunteers' pulled guard*

*duty for another three days at the main gate of the Fort and then returned to the platoon. So much for the principle of volunteerism!*

#### CAMP SIEBERT AND THE 4.2-INCH CHEMICAL

##### MORTAR BATTALION

*On our tenth day of Army life, the shipping list produced a long list of names destined for the Army Air Corps. Only Barney's was on it. Off he went to Warner-Robbins Field in Macon, Georgia! However, not to worry. The best were being saved for (sacrifice) last! Barney shipped off into the ether and I never saw nor heard from him again. On the fourteenth day, having the longest tenure of any rookie in the platoon, I finally was assigned. It was the chemical warfare service and Camp Sibert, Alabama. Some bright Army analyst took one look at my chemical engineering college curriculum and decided it was the perfect background for a career in 4.2-inch chemical mortars. My very superficial research in the field of chemical mortars established them as glorified infantry to be used as a retaliatory weapon in the event phosgene or mustard gas were used by Germany or Japan. In the meantime, no need to waste all that manpower. We will train these 'specially anointed' to use conventional explosives in those 4.2's. The following morning fourteen of us were off to Camp Siebert, a U. S. Army basic training base, staked out at the foot of the Blue Ridge mountains in Northern Alabama. By now, it was the third week in January and the squirrels and gophers had long since gathered; stashed their nuts; and hung it up for the winter. That morning the temperature hit 20 degrees at Siebert.*

*Camp Siebert was a lovely place! The Army had scooped off the top of this 3000-foot mountain and planted about eighty to one hundred barracks where this beautiful stand of Southern pine and hardwoods had formerly stood. Now I don't know what the Russian Siberian gulag's were like, but Camp Siebert must have been chosen as the design prototype after a tour of the facility by the Russians. Thirty to forty-knot winds howled through the place almost continuously in the winter. The camp was so new that the usual double-bunk beds had not arrived yet, and the new trainees slept on army cots. It was so cold that beneath the two GI army blankets that served as a makeshift mattress we placed a dozen layers of old newspapers to insulate us against the cold wind whipping through the barracks. Hanging neatly on wooden plaques at the end of each cot was our name and serial number: prominently placed so that the first sergeant could identify our frozen carcasses after a particularly cold night in the Blue Ridge mountains.*

Basic training began three or four days after our arrival. It took about that long to issue rifles, field packs and the usual paraphernalia that soldiers have to carry and the stuff that it takes to fight a war. Within two days, basic training in infantry tactics began. For the first time in my nearly three-week old Army career, a glimmer of good logic and intelligence shone through the Army Neanderthal mind. R.O.T.C. training got me on special detail assisting platoon sergeants in the process of educating recruits in the use of gas masks. Across the mountains and piney woods of Northern Alabama, these 'experienced' R. O. T. C. cadets were strategically placed high up in the trees with thirty-pound canisters of tear gas with orders to spray the line of marchers as they passed deeper into the woods on their weekly five or ten-mile hikes. The tear gas spray did not discriminate. It showed an equal affinity for the sprayer and the sprayee alike. A combination of strong winter winds, poor aim at the troops passing below, and the oily nature of tear gas, made it impossible to keep from getting soaked with the stuff in the course of the day. At the end of the day's march, it was also the responsibility of those manning the canisters to decontaminate the containers and let them dry out for the night. In another example of brilliant Army planning, the tear gas container drying rack was just outside our barracks door where it was impossible to escape breathing the stuff even at night.

On about the tenth day of basic training and after an extremely bad day in the trees dodging tear gas fumes, wind changes, and suffering the indignity of dropped gas canisters, the weather turned Camp Sibert into an Arctic snow mass during the night. At about eleven p.m. the front door blew open and a uniformed figure, flashlight in hand, walked slowly through the barracks looking at bunk tags. After one pass through the bunks on the opposite side of the barracks, the slow shuffle of GI boots stopped. Thinking the night crawler had either found his bunk or had finished his inspection, I tried to doze off again. Not a chance! The intruder was reading the name on my bunk tag. Shoving the flashlight beam in my face, the rough voice of 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant James rumbled above the howling blizzard outside. He grabbed me by the shoulder, shook me a few times until he was certain that I was awake. " 'You Burland?', he asked. "Yea, what's the trouble?" "Gimme your name, rank, and serial number soldier!" From under six inches of GI blankets, I gave him the usual: "Private Peter D. Burland, 34701036." I could see myself being "chosen" for another shit-house detail. Did I come too close to some shave-tail lieutenant with the tear gas? None of the above! The Sergeant roared on. "Get up. Shave. Put on your dress uniform

and pack your duffle bags. You're shippin' out! Report to the CO's office next to the Company day room in one hour sharp!" I crawled out of the sack and in the dim light of the latrine at the other end of the barracks, I saw no one else moving! Was the training unit shipping out? No, I was the only person moving. What the hell was going on? Here I was an eighteen year old greenhorn, not yet dry behind the ears, less than a month in the Army and I was being singled out for God only knows what! Well, I hustled into the much warmer latrine, cleaned up, dressed, and threw all my GI stuff and possessions into my two barracks bags for the one-block walk to the day room. There is no describing the incredibly bitter cold. Only the Battle of the Bulge which was to take place two years later could compare. But, I struggled to make the distance to the CO's office with my M-1 slung over one shoulder, carrying what I know must have been a 50-lb barracks bag over the other shoulder, and dragging the other through the ice and snow. I staggered up the steps to the day room and collapsed on the pool table from exhaustion.

In about five or ten minutes 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant James appeared in full dress uniform and led me into the Company Commander's office. He too was in his full dress regalia! What the hell was going on? I stepped up to his desk, saluted and dutifully reported-in with my name, rank and serial number. He began the most eloquent benedictory farewell speech that I have ever heard. I could not have imagined at the outset that an infantry officer could have spoken with such sincere feeling and eloquence. I can only paraphrase. He began: "Burland, I can't tell you how proud I am of being your commanding officer. In all the years of service, we have never had one of our men chosen from Camp Siebert or Fort McClelland for such a special military mission. You have been chosen (drafted) by the Military Intelligence Service for training at this very special top-secret school for a special mission." (At this point, I thought about the week I spent on another "special mission" at Fort McPherson shoveling coal into coal-fired hot water heaters.) "I know, that when you are finished, you will come out at least with the rank of Major." He went on for several more minutes in this same vein reemphasizing the glorious mark this appointment had made on his unit's record. If I weren't already scared out of my wits up until now, certainly this little speech moved me to panic. With Captain Rogers' farewell, he ordered Sergeant James to drive me personally in his U.S. Army sedan to nearby Gadsden to put me on the train to Atlanta, Georgia. Rogers' last words were: "Burland, here is your 201 personnel file. Your orders are in a sealed envelope inside this file. Do

*not open them for at least one hour after you are on that train and you leave this post. Sergeant James will see that you get aboard the right train heading for Atlanta where you will change trains for Hagerstown, Maryland. Call this number when you reach Hagerstown and an escort will pick you up. Good luck. We are proud of you.” With that I saluted and the first sergeant drove me to the station. This was not the last word I was to hear regarding the fate of Company G, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chemical Mortar Battalion from Camp Siebert.*

*(Next episode: The trip to Fort Ritchie and the meeting of an old ‘friend’ again in the person of ‘Man Mountain Dean.’)*



**Capt. Kirk Sullivan and Sgt. Sumner 2ID 7CAV (Reenacted) API (4<sup>th</sup> of July)**

### Ol' Army

By PFC Dieter Klein  
RA 18532813

'You're in the Army now'

The year was 1957, Basic Training in Ft. Hood, Texas. In the middle of the hottest time of the year in that 'lovely place' we recruits got put thru the 'wringer'. One such day, I was picked for guard duty in front of the 4th Armored Division Headquarters. We were told it was easy duty, just stand there with your M-1 rifle at 'Parade Rest' or snap to attention when 'Brass' approached.

Now the 'Officer of the Day' was none other than our Platoon Leader, 2nd Plt. 'Delta' Co. 54th Inf Regt., a 'Gung Ho' 2nd Lieutenant just fresh out of OCS (Officers Candidate School, Ft. Benning, Ga).

Like I said 'Gung Ho' and he had all sorts of ideas for 'his' platoon to look the sharpest in the company, especially for those picked for Guard Duty at HQ. The Uniform was Class 'B', long sleeve khakis, combat boots (brown at that time) helmet liner and cartridge belt. Now here it comes, the Lieutenant instructed us to turn the khaki pants inside out, apply the "GI" soap, a thick layer to the crease from the knee down and use a very hot iron to create a stiff crease. It worked, stiff as a cardboard and we had to slip in very carefully and 'blouse' the pants legs at regulation heights.

Now myself and another 'sap' were standing Guard in front of the HQ, looking sharp, when disaster struck. One of those typical summertime Texas rainstorms, a downpour, a 'frog strangler' hit and of course you can't leave your post and duck inside. Well, the results came quickly as we stood there getting soaked, two small streams of soap bubbles appeared to gather around our legs, much to the amusements of everybody entering the building.

Some of the comments referred of course to 'urinary problems', but heck, standing there on Guard Duty, you could not defend yourself !!

Our Company Commander found out about this and put a stop to this 'practice'.

### **" The Soldier's Rules"**

- 1. Soldiers fight only enemy combatants.**
- 2. Soldier do not harm enemies who surrender. They disarm them and turn them over to their superior.**
- 3. Soldiers do not kill or torture enemy prisoners of war.**
- 4. Soldiers collect and care for the wounded, whether friend or foe.**
- 5. Soldiers do not attack medical personnel, facilities or equipment.**
- 6. Soldiers destroy no more than the mission requires.**
- 7. Soldiers treat civilians humanely.**
- 8. Soldier do not steal. Soldiers respect private property and possessions.**
- 9. Soldiers should do their best to prevent violations of the law of war.**
- 10. Soldiers report all violations of the law of war to their superiors.**

*From Army regulation 350-1, Jan 2006*



**M-60, CUCV ,M-114, M-151 and MB/GPW on Display 4<sup>th</sup> of July**

**For Sale**

Ray Barth has a green Sheller steering wheel for a pre November '42 GPW \$40.00 needs repairs  
 Ray Needs a Axe head for a GPW and 2 600-16 tires  
 For Sale '42 GPW – Bill Bryant

**State Guard Report**

By 2LT Kirk Sullivan

Notice my rank has changed? My commission finally came in, it is official the Gov. thinks I'm a gentleman. The State Guard has been very busy since our last newsletter. We are reorganizing our structure and training for our new mission. The 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment is no longer a MP unit, but we are now a Civil Affairs unit. The good thing is that the CA mission seems to be better in line with what the 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade was doing during the Katrina and Rita deployment. The bad news is that the CA branch insignia looks like an Olympic torch and the branch colors are purple and fusia, or something like that. Just when I was about to get my own company guideon, the colors change to something festive! Any how I will get over it. Another one of us from the MMoT has joined the state guard, Kenny Rogers will take the oath at the next scheduled Regiment Drill. Make sure you congratulate Kenny when you see him.

## Military Vehicle Preservation Association

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Choose on of the the following memberships to include 6 *Supply Line* and 4 *Army Motors* magazines:

<p><b>REGULAR MEMBERSHIPS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Second Class Postage - \$35.00</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> U.S. First Class Postage - \$55.00</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Canadian Economy Airmail - \$US40.00</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overseas Economy Airmail - \$US48.00</li> </ul>	<p><b>BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Associate: Second Class Postage - \$70.00</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Canadian Associate: Economy Airmail - \$US75.00</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overseas Associate: Economy Airmail - \$US75.00</li> </ul>
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Memberships are for one calendar year. Join during the year and your dues will be pro-rated for the rest of that year with the balance credited toward the next years membership dues.

**Attention active MVPA Members: Recruit a NEW member and receive a gift! Contact MVPA, HQ for details.**

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