



PASS IN REVIEW

“Shedding Light On Idaho’s Military History”

4th Quarter

December 2011

MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND ELECTIONS

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Idaho Military Historical Society was held on 26 October 2011. At the meeting, the annual election was held for three members of the Board of Directors.

Elected were Rick Johnson, Charles Ake and Jeff Packer.

The new Board then met and reorganized by electing its new officers for the coming year. Those officers are:

- President – Russ Trebby*
- Vice-President – Jeff Packer*
- Secretary – Gayle Alvarez*
- Treasurer – Gary Donnelly*

Congratulations to all! ★

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Earlier this fall we hosted the World War I traveling exhibit sponsored by Waddell and Reed. It was a great success with 1,500 visitors in the one day that the exhibit was here.

Because of the exposure from the exhibit we have had quite a few World War I artifacts donated to the Museum. These items range from uniforms to helmets and most of the materials have good histories associated with them.



Visitors line up to see the traveling WWI exhibit



Corey Clyne poses in a WWI uniform with Ken Swanson

(photo credits-Cheryl Bloom)

A long term loan of material from Lewis-Clark State College has been made to the Idaho Military History Museum. The artifacts are from the Spanish-American War and are now on exhibit at the Museum.

The Museum had four interns from Boise State University this fall. Thanks to their efforts we were able to build new exhibits as well as catalog and re-inventory parts of the collection. The interns also worked with the public as docents.

Steven “Corey” Clyne, Zachary Forster, Kyle McCormick and Matthew Fullmer have my thanks and appreciation for their hard work.

– Ken Swanson★

NEW MEMBERS

Special Welcome to:

- ★ William H. Drumm
- ★ Bill Spring

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

RECENT DONATIONS

Oregon Military Museum - On December 1, Bill Miller and Ken Swanson returned to Boise with a new acquisition for the Museum collections. The Oregon Military Museum generously donated a World War II Japanese artillery piece to the Idaho Military History Museum.

This 75mm Type 41 weapon was originally the standard pack artillery weapon of the Japanese army. It could be rapidly broken down for animal pack, the maximum weight for each load being approximately 200 pounds. In tests conducted by the US Army during World War II, at maximum range (7,800 yards), 75% of the rounds fell within a rectangle 100 yards wide and 200 yards long.

The gun is mounted on a carriage fitted with steel rimmed wooden wheels. Two parallel tubular steel trails connect to a single, large, detachable spade. The gun has a large two-piece shield with sighting port.

The wooden wheels are in an advanced state of decay and are now in the hands of COL Lytle for restoration. The gun also needs restoration and we are looking for volunteers with metal working skills to help with this project. If you can help, please contact Ken. ★

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Don't forget, it is now time to renew your membership!

Annual renewals are:

- General Membership:** \$25
- Senior (60+):** \$15
- Associate (Spouse):** \$10
- Student:** \$10
- Lifetime Membership:** \$375

Lifetime payment may be spread out over a one-year period.

In addition, as the year begins drawing to a close, many people contemplate their charitable contributions for the year.

The Idaho State Tax Commission offers a tax credit for contributions to Idaho Educational Entities which include "An Idaho public or private nonprofit museum."

The Idaho Military Historical Society is such an organization and **donations to the Society qualify for this credit.** Please remember the Museum as you plan your donations for the year. ★

ENDOWMENT



UPDATE

Our Endowment balance currently stands at **\$56,496.85**

Recent Endowment

Donors include:

- Stanley J. Herzinger**
(In Memory of Ormond Smith)
- Frank & Gen Boguslawski**
(In Memory of Clint Taylor)

With 2011 coming to a close, now is an excellent time to make a financial donation to the IMHS. Your help will assure continued expansion of the exhibits, education projects, and programs that are educating young people and citizens on the military's role in our society. When was the last time you visited our Museum? Stop by and you will be pleasantly impressed by our progress.

Also, don't forget **the next time you purchase something on line, check**

this webpage to see if the retailer is listed so the Museum can receive a commission on your purchase.



IDAHO FILE INTO HISTORY



**GEORGE HARPER
WWII VETERAN
FARRAGUT NAVAL TRAINING
STATION GRADUATE**

Sunday, December 7, 1941, San Francisco, California, our home was a few blocks from the Golden Gate bridge and Pacific Ocean. We had just heard the radio report of the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Were they going to continue east and bomb us? Rumors were many, "Enemy Carrier sighted off the Coast"! "Radar had sighted aircraft coming our way"! This was followed by a radio blackout. Neighborhood Wardens were warning people to stay in their homes and take cover. Police Cars with sirens at full strength were racing through the streets.

Mom, Dad, my brother Bill and I went to the kitchen, now armed with two .22 rifles, a .33 Winchester and a 12 gauge shotgun, aimed at the front window and door. About an hour later, police through loudspeakers, announced an all

clear, but to prepare for the blackout that night.

San Francisco was a mixture of many nationalities from countries that were at war or soon would be, China, Japan, Italy, Ethiopia, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Spain, France, England...lots of talk and concerns. Daily radio and newspaper reports and "March of Time" films at the theaters. But this attack on Sunday was a real shock! "We're in it now!"

Dad had joined the army the day he turned 18 and was sent to the Presidio of San Francisco. There he met my Mom-to-be who had been teaching school. I was born in 1926, just in time for Dad to leave the Army and a good job before the 1929 Depression. Now 1941, Dad was thinking of rejoining the Army, but Mom was not ready to be the "bread winner" for their two sons.

It was now Monday, December 8, 1941. I'm 15 and in the 10th grade at George Washington High School. Built on top of a hill, it had a great view of the Gate and the Pacific Ocean. This was now a huge Coastal Defense Area; 16" cannons on both sides of the Gate, minefields and a submarine net across the entrance to the bay.

No more China Clippers and Matson Passenger Liners going west to Hawaii, Hong Kong, or Singapore; they've been replaced with P-38's, P-40's and B-17's in the air and Schooners and Motor Yachts on the water patrolling for submarines and surface ships. Some folks even saw an Aircraft Carrier loaded with B-25's on its deck transporting them somewhere. [Editors Note: At high noon on 2 April 1942, the USS *Hornet* with her 'cargo' of 16 B-25 bombers sailed under the Golden Gate bridge and into the history books. The official story was they were heading to Hawaii.]

Trying to concentrate on school work isn't easy, new classes have been added which included first aid and "How to extinguish an incendiary bomb."



A flotilla of ships passes under the Golden Gate Bridge heading to the Pacific theatre

The next graduation of seniors will be February 1942, but there are several 18 year olds that will be called before that. More Gold Stars are appearing on the neighborhood windows and the Coast Guard Beach Patrol found a Torpedo from a mini Sub next to China Beach where we swim.



Recovering the mini-sub's torpedo

I was in the ROTC in high school at the time and if I was drafted, chances were it would mean the Army. In 1942, I joined the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program and during '42 and through the spring of '43, attended ground school classes. Even got a summer job so I would have money for flying and in December of '43 began flight training.

CAP was sponsored by the Army Air Corp and they asked us to take the written and physical tests. I passed the written, but couldn't pass the eye test. Since I couldn't fly in the military, I decided I would see if I could be a Aviation Mechanic.

September was back to school; my brother Bill and I were both tackles on the football team. I graduated high school and enrolled in Junior College three days a week. I also began aircraft engine training two days a week.

It's decision time, besides wanting to be around airplanes, it would be nice to have a warm dry place to sleep and hot meals, so 'Let's Go Navy'! I went to the recruiting office, passed the physical, answered all their questions, gave them all my brilliant history, what jobs I would like, letters of recommendations and was sworn in. They say that 'Bad decisions make a good story'. The Navy was my best choice, but once sworn in, you don't get to vote! This was late April of 1944.

My Boot training was to be at **Farragut, Idaho** instead of San Diego so I asked my Dad about the area. He knew about Lake Pend Oreille, but was more familiar with the north end near Sandpoint. He was born in Grangeville and lived in Lewiston and Laclede before moving to Spokane.

On May 6, 1944, I rode the Ferry Boat across the bay to the Oakland Mole with family and friends, tears and goodbye's, boarded my private car, a Pullman Troop Sleeper. It was MUCH better than sitting in Coach Seats all night!

The following late afternoon, I arrived in Athol, Idaho and boarded the bus to Camp Scott's Drill Hall. It was now about 8 p.m., or more properly "20 hundred" Navy Time. Met with the rest of the Company; they were from Oklahoma and Minnesota. It was May 8, 1944, just 5 days before my 18th birthday. We missed dinner, but we'll live. Received orders to lineup and pickup a cot, blanket and pillow, to be setup as directed. Then we had a few words from our Company Commander, and at 22 hundred, it was lights out.

At 0430 next morning, lights on, oh did I want a shower! We lined up to "march" to the mess hall, heard a few "You'll be sorry's"! After eating, happenings were a blur! Haircuts, shots, clothing and gear issue, finally a shower at our new home, second floor of a barracks.



Next day the blur continued, beginning with a presentation from our Company Commander, **Chief Copeland, Sp.A. Company 550-44, Regiment 5, Battalion 18.**

He provided an outline of our future, beginning with; you will memorize the 11 General Orders of a Sentry! Then our training, Marching Drills, Physical Exercise, Training

Films, Learning the Navy Way.

Field Day's, everything will be spotless! Every Company has a duty to serve each other; it's called Mess Duty, you serve them and then clean up afterwards. Inspections, and more inspections, until it's perfect, which it never is. Knot Tying, Morse Code, Rowing and Rifle Target Practice - .22 indoor, 30.06 outdoor, Aerial Targets with indoor camera gun. Simulated 'Oil Fire' on water, under water swimming test, high jump with Kapok life preserver, a time not to knock yourself out. (Read Gayle and Dennis' book!)

The one thing I recall at Boot Camp, was how prepared I was for the training program; knot tying, semaphore, marching, shooting, rowing, we didn't have cargo nets, but we had cliffs to climb. The one thing that training couldn't teach me was to enjoy getting up at 4 a.m.!

At my first week at Farragut's Camp Scott, we were on the second floor of the Barracks. We had seen other Companies fall out, fall in, and begin marching. Today was our day. On the landing half way down the stairs, was a rack holding the Companies Guidon. I knew what it was and how it was used, so I just grabbed it, went out and stood in front of the Company, facing the Chief.

I didn't know it at the time but this was his first Company. He was however a school teacher and a quick learner. It was the practice to have all the Company Guidon Bearers be the same height, about 5'5". I was 6'2". I could read his mind, when he looked at me he thought, he's too tall! Any way, we were all standing at attention, waiting for his command. I said to myself, he's forgotten the first command.

Having spent the last three years in the ROTC, the third year as a Lieutenant, I was about 8' in front of him. I looked at him and mouthed "Company, Right Turn"! I could tell, when he heard "Coo", he remembered. After the practice march, he never said anything and I sure didn't!!

I didn't discover this until much later but I was given the Rating of Apprentice Guidon Bearer, Petty Officer 3/c.



George's Appointment to Petty Officer Certificate

The hardest part of my Boot Training was:

- 1) Trying to memorize the 11 General Orders and to repeat them at 0200 when ready to be relieved from Barracks Sentry Duty,
- 2) Trying to stay awake during after lunch Training Films,
- 3) Trying to quickly lower my temperature from "Cat Fever" before being sent back to a new Company.

When I was in Sick Bay with "Cat Fever," my temperature stayed between 102° and 103°. Sick Bay was a small room with about 8 or 10 bunks. One morning I heard a Nurse say, "If his temp isn't 99° this morning he'll be held back for a new company." I was in a lower bunk, she reached down and put the thermometer in my mouth, I could almost hear the mercury rising!

I pulled it out to check and it was going up towards 102°. I shook it down to 99° and held it until she reached down then shoved it back in my mouth. She removed it and said, "Good you can return to your Barracks after breakfast." She brought my clothes, I tried to stand up and fell back into the bunk. She then replied, "Well you're still weak, I'll give you a two day bed pass." Two buddies brought milkshakes for me and I survived!

The last morning of training, the Chief makes sure we will be on time to catch the 'Home Leave' train, by getting us up at 0200! Pack up your Duffle Bag, roll your Hammock but remember to have all the right clothes out for the trip. We graduated on June 20, 1944 and I left for Home Leave that same day. Home Leave was great, but hectic. I got less sleep than in camp! More Gold Stars in the hometown windows; three were close friends.

This will be my second time 'outside' since arriving at Farragut. Our boat won a rowing contest and the crew got liberty, some of us went to Spokane.



George Harper, Guidon Bearer

No Troop Sleeper on this trip, I was lucky to find a coach seat as the train was packed. Boarded the Ferry at Oakland Mole, crowded with Sailors, some wearing Whites. When we were coming into the slip at San Francisco, anxious Sailors rushed to the Bow. I told my buddies to wait and stand under the upper deck until the boat was secured. When the boat hit the pier, **hundreds** of Seagulls took off, dropping a Welcome Home 'present' on the first in line.

Mom and Dad were concerned about where I was going next. I didn't know, but I said I'm sure to go to a service school somewhere. My brother Bill was 17 and we hoped he could finish high school. News from the Atlantic and Pacific was bad; fighting after D-Day in Normandy was rough. Every day was a D-Day in the Pacific!

Back to Farragut and OGU (Outgoing Unit); was there about 10 Days. Some of the Schools - Aviation Machinist and PT Boat Machinist were closed. At the end of the Boot training period you were asked to list three duty preferences and then you left for Home Leave. When you returned, you had no idea whether you were going to be a Coxin on a landing barge, (the main threat if you fouled up) or go for further training. The OGU was a mystery! You wondered if your next assignment was based on #1, Alphabet, #2, Coin flipping or #3, A real effort to put the peg in the right hole.

I finally received orders for Great Lakes and Basic Engineering School. Left the next day on a train ride across

North America, from Idaho to Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois. Back to barracks life and school rooms. Basic Engineering was the same subject I was taking at college, same books etc.; this was great! Liberties were in Milwaukee, real nice people.

Then on to Diesel School in Richmond, Virginia, very humid! The James River had flooded the school, most of the cleanup was over, but our training began by restoring all the engines to working order. It was hard work, but great experience.

November 3, 1944, Graduation ceremonies in the morning and on a train to Norfolk in the afternoon. Marched to a Grinder by the Bay, it was really an outdoor waiting room to receive Ship assignments. It was getting dark, cool and very foggy. All we could see were lights from the stanchion where we were standing. Each one had a number and when your name was called you would give your stanchion number and someone would guide you to your ship.

There were three of us left, Harper, Harpel and Harrington, you could tell our selection had been based on 'Intelligence.' The voice said, "Well I think that's all!" We yelled "No!!!" "Ok what's your name's and where are you?" Finally, after two hours we were on a whaleboat searching for our ship at anchor, **the PCE 846.**



The next morning was a beautiful morning and hundreds of ships were at anchor and moving in or out of the bay. We met with the Engineering Officer and Chief Motor Machinist Mate and received our Engine Room duties. We were leaving for Bermuda, but first Target Practice! North into Chesapeake Bay, airplane towing a sleeve target, 20mm guns shooting, and then one of the 40mm's, followed by depth charge K-Guns and stern rack. From the aft Engine Room, I thought we were under attack!

My vision may not have been good enough for flying but I was soon 'promoted' to lookout. A few times at anchor, swimming was allowed. There would be one or more people on guard for sharks that might appear, it was called "Shark Guard." I was always worried I might not see one in time to

shoot it, and I sure didn't want to miss! The guy's didn't actually do much swimming, they just dove or jumped in and climbed the ladder and jumped again.

All quiet and underway to St George's Harbour [English], Bermuda. Our dock space was next to Kindley Field, a stop off for Bombers enroute to Europe and Africa. Our duties were Sub patrol, Escort/Convoy, North Atlantic. This included trips to Casablanca, Gibraltar, Murmansk and Iceland. Other missions were escorting Ocean Tugs to tow ships damaged in convoys.

After VE Day, we were assigned Pacific duties and even escorted the German Sub U-505 on an east coast war bond tour. We spent five days in each city; Norfolk, DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City. Civilian tickets for the tour were \$18.75 for a Bond but we were allowed on for free any time we wanted. The Sub had been "hidden in the open" in a small bay near our Harbor; a very well kept secret. There were lot's of US Subs and Italian Subs nearby.

[Editors note, the U-505 was a German submarine captured on 4 June 1944. "This event marked the first time a U.S. Navy vessel had captured an enemy vessel at sea since the nineteenth century."¹ On September 15, 1954, it was dedicated as a war memorial and made a permanent exhibit at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry. In 1989, the sub was designated as a National Historic Landmark.

The U-505 is the only Type IX-C U-boat in existence today. Numerous awards went to the subs captors to include Silver Stars, Navy Crosses, at least one Distinguished Flying Cross and a Medal of Honor.]



The U-505 in her new berth at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry²

We finished the tour with the U-505 and went to the Staten Island Shipyard knowing we were going somewhere in the Pacific. We noticed the other ships in the yard all with severely damaged decks and super structures. Turned out the

damage was from Kamikaze attacks. When they installed new twin 40mm guns along with the newest Fire Control Systems, we knew that we were going to the same place these damaged ships had been. We also picked up a Radiosonde Balloon Inflation Hanger and an additional five Aerographers, three Gunners Mates, and two Fire Controlman.

Rumors were many and the talk was of the need to invade Japan being the only way to end the war. It will be very costly in lives! Then when weather equipment was installed, we knew we would be alone somewhere and fending for ourselves.

Then we were on our way to the Panama Canal and the Pacific. Scuttlebutt was we were going to the Sea of Japan to gather weather data for the Fleet. We were almost to Guam when the atomic bomb was dropped. August 15, 1945, VJ Day! We all felt that the Big Bomb's saved our lives. We received new orders - Treasure Island, San Francisco!!! We did confirm orders for the Sea of Japan.

Don't remember the date, but it was 0200, coming in the Golden Gate. I was the only one from San Francisco. The Skipper called from the 'Flying Bridge' for me to come up. He asked, "Is this the Place"? "Yes, but I haven't seen so many lights since December 7th!" Pointing starboard I said "That's where I live!"

Now we had new duties. We were assigned different stations throughout the northeastern Pacific, from Adak to Hawaii and San Francisco to Portland. We were 30 days on station, sailing in a 10-mile circle, providing navigation, weather aids and air sea rescue for aircraft returning from the western Pacific.

I was discharged on May 25, 1946. I returned to college and was that ever a shock! 70% of the students were recent high school grads; I felt like I was back in grammar school! By the end of the year, I had completed the subjects begun in 1944. Just by chance, I came across an article in the Sunday paper, "Athletes Wanted at the **Farragut College and Technical Institute,**" WOW! Farragut was now a College! Reading more, it sounded like what I wanted, Vet's, no children. I sent for more information and included my phone number. They called and said come on up, you know the way! Tuition and books etc., were \$499.99/year and covered by the GI Bill. \$100 per month would more than cover food and room.

Arrived back at Farragut in March 1947. By now, most all Camp buildings were gone and the college was in the former hospital. There were between 5 and 10 per class with great teachers and a few professors. Best of all, two of the students were ex Army Air Corp Flight Instructors and had a lease on two Aeronca Chiefs. They would form a Club and charge

\$5/hr solo and \$8/hr dual with instruction. I will stay here forever!

Unfortunately, the College had too much competition and not enough public support. Teachers and students began leaving. I stayed until the planes flew off to their home in Kalispell. I then went back to the 'Bay Area School Mobs' and continued my education. In February 1950 I landed a great job at 3M and retired in May 1987.

"Life is Good, each day is a beautiful day, I shall accept as many as provided" - George Harper

Editors Note: A very special thank you to George Harper for sharing his story with us! ☆

Footnote sources:

¹ <http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq91-1.htm>

² Photo from Gayle Alvarez' personal collection

MOST WANTED



➤ We are looking for information on Genevra Robinson pictured here.

She is believed to have been from Nampa, Idaho and served as a nurse during WWI.

She died at Base Hospital 68, A.E.F. France on 22 October 1918 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.



That is the extent of our knowledge of her. If you have information on her you can share, please contact Gayle. ☆

FROM THE ADMIN SECTION

Please don't forget to include the Museum in your notifications when you move or change e-mail addresses.

If you have a new address, e-mail or otherwise, please send it to Gayle so we can update our records. We've had several "return to sender" pieces of mail and 'bounced' emails of late. Also, postage rates are set to go up again in January. ☆

FROM ALL OF US

at the Idaho Military Historical Society and Museum -a very

Merry Christmas
And Happy New Year!



Produced by The Idaho Military Historical Society.
Feature Stories, Editor & Production: Gayle Alvarez.
Comments or article suggestions are welcome, contact us at 272-4841 or visit our web site at: <http://museum.mil.idaho.gov>


BREAKING NEWS!!!!

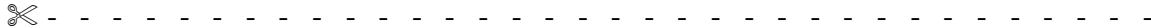
We just received word that the Kathryn Albertson Foundation has approved a grant of \$60,000 plus transportation costs to purchase and transport an F86 Saberjet in Ontario, Oregon to the Idaho Military History Museum! There are still many details to work through but we will keep you updated as things progress.



Our new jet is on the left ☆

JUST IN CASE - Have you sent in your renewal for 2012? Don't forget, *donations are tax deductible.*

	IDAHO MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 4040 W. Guard Street, Boise, Idaho 83705-5004 <i>Donation/Membership Application/Renewal Form</i>		
	<p>YES! Please enter my tax-deductible membership application/renewal in the category checked below. I have enclosed a check or money order in the amount indicated. I understand my donation is tax-deductible and am pleased to accept my canceled check as my receipt. Please find enclosed my donation for the amount indicated. <i>(The IMHS is a 501(c)(3) Organization.)</i></p>		
INDIVIDUAL:	\$ 25 <input type="checkbox"/> General	\$ 375 <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime	\$ 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Student
	\$ 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Associate (Members Spouse)	\$ 15 <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (60+)	
ORGANIZATIONAL:	\$ 500 <input type="checkbox"/> Platinum	\$ 100 <input type="checkbox"/> Silver	
	\$ 250 <input type="checkbox"/> Gold	\$ 50 <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze	
OTHER: <i>(Endowment, Contributions, etc.)</i>			
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Address: <i>(City, State, Zip)</i> _____			
Interests: <i>(Volunteering, Research, Displays, etc.)</i> _____		E-Mail Address: _____	



Heretic Past... Proud Future

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