

2011 Cemetery Tour



A World War II Cemetery Tour and Tribute to the North Platte Canteen



FRIDAY, SEPT 16TH

4:00pm—8:00pm *Twilight Tour* **North Platte Cemetery** on Rodeo Road

SATURDAY, SEPT 17TH

1:00pm—5:00pm **North Platte Cemetery** on Rodeo Road

TUESDAY, SEPT 20TH

7:00pm—9:00pm *Non-walking Tour* **North Platte Community College South Campus Theater**



CANTEEN MEMORIES CEMETERY TOUR

This Cemetery Tour is dedicated to the servicemen and women of the second World War AND the courageous, dedicated women who ran the North Platte Canteen

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From December 25, 1941 until April 1, 1946 more than 6 million servicemen and women traveled through Nebraska during World War II. Many of them fondly remember the hospitality of the North Platte Canteen. Every troop train was met by volunteers who prepared and served sandwiches, coffee, cookies, cakes, and other homemade 'goodies' during the stop here.

Canteen History

By Sharron Hollen, North Platte Telegraph Newspaper columnist

It was out of a simple gesture, by a handful of folks, that North Platte's World War II Canteen was born.

It was out of an unparalleled spirit shown by thousands that it continued.

It was Christmas Day, 1941. The people of North Platte had heard that boys from Nebraska's Company D Guard Unit would be on a troop train passing through town.

They met the train with baskets of food, only to discover that the servicemen were from another state. If there was disappointment, it didn't keep them from offering up what they had brought to the station platform.

It was from that simple gesture of caring that the North Platte Canteen grew. Every day, round the clock for the next 51 months, the men and women on every troop train that passed through North Platte were greeted with coffee, home cooked food, cakes and warmth.

By the time the North Platte Canteen closed on April 1, 1946, more than six million servicemen and women had been the recipients of its hospitality.

More than 40 years later, the community still receives letters from men and women who, although their stops may have been a mere 10 minutes, never forgot the reception they received at the north Platte Canteen.

Although there were many canteens throughout the country, North Platte's difference was that it made no distinction as to rank; generals and enlisted men rubbed shoulders as equals. No one was charged for anything.

The Canteen was entirely manned and supplied by volunteers from 125 nearby communities in Nebraska and Colorado. See page 17 for a Canteen Honor Roll of communities.



On an average day, the Canteen would use 160-175 loaves of bread, 100 pounds of meat and fried chicken, 15 pounds of cheese, two quarts of peanut butter, 18 pounds of butter, eight pounds of coffee, 10 quarts of cream, 500 half-pints of milk, 25 dozen rolls, 3,000 to 4,000 sandwiches, 18 to 20 birthday cakes and eight huge sheet cakes, each cut into 96 generous pieces.

In addition, the Canteen would, on a daily basis, use bushels of apples, hundreds of cookies and innumerable candy bars, hard candies and all manner of miscellaneous edibles.

It all came from food that people prepared and donated, and from mass purchasing made from cash donations of individuals. At its peak, retail value of what was served daily was estimated at \$5,000.

In those years of rationed sugar, coffee, meat, butter and gasoline, families rationed themselves tighter in order to meet the Canteen's needs. Groups of people in distant towns would pool their gasoline rations to enable their community's volunteers to make the drive to North Platte and take their turn working at the Canteen.

As the war years dragged on, the troop trains continued to roll into the North Platte station. Servicemen and women continued to be greeted with warmth and smiles and laughter—and always with tables laden with food.

Changing times have claimed the Union Pacific depot where the Canteen thrived, alive with love and caring. In its place is a tiny park and a memorial that testified to those 51 months of dedicated love and service by thousands of individuals in the midst of the nation's heartland.

Time itself will one day wipe away all personal recollection of the North Platte Canteen. But the heritage and the legacy of the Canteen will always remain—a tribute not only to North Platte and to Nebraska, but to the unparalleled spirit of this Nation itself.

NEBRASKA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR EFFORT

Partially reprinted from the Nebraska Trailblazer: World War II, No. 21, Nebraska State Historical Society.

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor, a United States military base in Hawaii, was attacked by Japanese air forces. This surprise attack led to the United States' involvement in World War II.

There was already a war going on in Europe. Germany was invading many countries in an attempt to take over as much of the world as it could. Italy and Japan had similar goals. Together with Germany they became known as the **Axis** powers. The United States, Great Britain, China, and the Soviet Union, who wanted to stop these invading forces, were known as the **Allied** powers or **Allies**.

World War II had a great impact on the State of Nebraska and her citizens. Many Nebraskans decided to join

the military in order to help their country fight the Axis forces. Nebraska sent **139,745** men and women to war. They served in every branch of the service—army, navy, coast guard, marines and army air corps. **3,839** lost their lives.

Many Nebraskans contributed to the war effort on the home front. Nebraska's greatest contribution to winning the war was in food production. The nation needed food not only for our own soldiers, but for our allies. Because many of Nebraska's young men had left farms to join the military, there was a labor shortage in rural areas. Women helped on many farms.





Several Nebraska communities were selected as sites for government defense factories. Omaha became the location of the Martin Bomber Plant which manufactured B-26 and B-29 airplanes. Grand Island (shown here), Hastings, Mead, and Sidney had ammunition manufacturing and storage facilities. These defense industries created thousands of jobs for Nebraskans, particularly women. Before the war, it was uncommon for women to work outside the home.

cpicture courtesy of the National Archives>

Eleven Nebraska towns became home to military air bases or satellite airfields during World War II. Bases were located at Ainsworth, Alliance, Bruning, Fairmont, Grand Island, Harvard, Kearney, Lincoln, McCook, Scottsbluff, and Scribner. These bases were used to train crews to fly. The base at Scribner was unusual because it was entirely camouflaged to look like a farm. cpicture courtesy: Omaha World-Herald>





Nebraska was considered a good location for housing prisoners of war. Twelve thousand German and Italian prisoners were held in twenty-three camps across Nebraska. The largest camps were at Scottsbluff, Fort Robinson, and Atlanta. The prisoners were often used to help area farmers. These German prisoners worked in the mess hall at Fort Robinson.

Fort Robinson also became the country's largest K-9 (canine) Corps reception and training center, where thousands of dogs were trained for war duty. Dogs were used to act as guards, to sniff out mines, to carry messages, and to pull sleds.





Because of the war, the military had the top priority for many items. Civilians had to do without some products. A system called *rationing* was set up to distribute scarce goods fairly. All Nebraskans were issued ration books containing coupons which had to be turned over at the time certain items were purchased. Once you were out of coupons for a certain product, you could not purchase more. Sugar, coffee, shoes, gasoline, meat, and tires were some of the items rationed. Rationing makes the North Platte Canteen story even more remarkable!

Even Nebraska families who did not live in rural areas got involved with agriculture through the nationwide "Victory Garden" program. Nebraskans were encouraged to plant gardens to help ease the food shortage. These children from St. Teresa's School in Lincoln are pictured with their victory garden vegetables they raised in 1944.





The war was costly, and the United States government needed to raise money to help pay for it. Nebraskans contributed by buying war bonds, which were loans to the government. Notice that this picture was taken on the corner of the State Capital building in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Germany finally surrendered in May 1945. Japan followed on August 15, following the dropping of the world's first two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is significant to Nebraska history that the plane which dropped the world's first atomic bomb, the Enola Gay, was built in Nebraska at the Martin Bomber Plant.

Nebraskans celebrated the victory wholeheartedly. They looked forward to the return of their loved ones and to a world at peace.



HELEN CHRIST



Helen Theresa Christ was born on April 22, 1899 in Madrid, Nebraska. She became a resident of North Platte in 1918 and lived here the rest of her life. She lived at 118 East 8th St. Her husband was Adam M. Christ and they had two children, Norman and Margaret.

Helen was a member of the Catholic Church, Altar Society, Catholic Daughters, Forresters, Navy Mothers, UP Oldtimers, Auxiliary to the ORC, and the Legion Auxiliary.

As you can see, Helen was very involved in her community and when the war broke out, she volunteered at the North Platte Canteen tirelessly. Not only was she a member of the Original

Workers at the Canteen, but she also served as the president of the North Platte Canteen during World War II.

The North Platte Canteen, because of the tremendous finances and labor involved, was organized and operated on a business basis. The center did experience periodic cash

shortages during its first two years. From then on, voluntary cash contributions were sufficient to pay all bills promptly and to maintain a sizable bank balance.

According to canteen records, the total value of the food donated during its operation would be a guess. Only during March 1945 was an exact list of contributed food kept. Sent or brought during this month were

- 40,161 homemade cookies;
- 30,679 hard boiled eggs;
- 6,939 cup, loaf and birthday cakes;
- 2,845 pounds of sandwich meat and more!

Nebraska Trailblazer, No 21

Retail value of the contributed items at that time was about \$6,250. Like many of the original Canteen workers, Helen cherished her

part in the North Platte Canteen.

Helen died in her home after a long illness in 1957;

she was 57 years old. She had been ill and homebound since 1952.



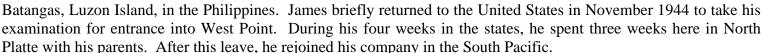


JAMES E. CARR

James Everett Carr was born on April 6, 1924 in Hastings, Nebraska. He was a young child when his father, Edward Carr moved the family to North Platte to join the firm of Hoagland & Hoagland, Attorneys at law. James had one sister, Virginia.

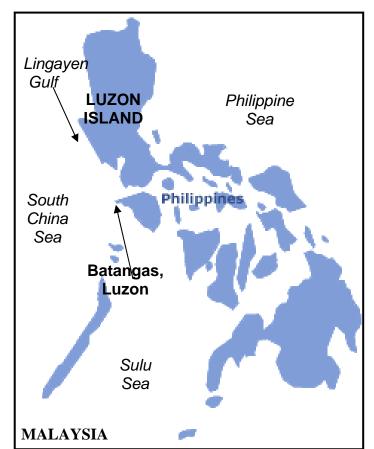
James graduated from North Platte High School with the class of 1942 at mid-semester. Like his father, James liked a good discussion and he became very active on the debate team. He was musically gifted and played in the band, sang in mixed chorus, boy's quartet, and madrigal. According to the 1942 High School Roundup, "Jim" was studying hard to be a chemical engineer. After High School, James attended Wesleyan University for one year before entering the service in January 1943.

James entered the United States army and was a member of Company B., 20th regiment, Sixth Infantry division. This unit was attached to Mat-



The Philippines were considered to be of great strategic importance because their capture by Japan would pose a significant threat to the U.S. As a result, 135,000 troops and 227 aircraft were stationed in the Philippines by October 1941. However, Luzon — the largest island in the Philippines — was captured by Imperial Japanese forces in 1942 during their campaign to capture the Philippines. General Douglas MacArthur — who was in charge of the defense of the Philippines at the time — was ordered to Australia, and the remaining U.S. forces retreated to the Bataan Peninsula. MacArthur felt strongly that the U.S. needed to recapture Luzon, but U.S. Pacific Commander Admiral Chester Nimitz opposed the idea. MacArthur had to wait two years for other military powers to agree to recapture the

Luzon.



alia, and the remaining U.S. forces retreated to the Bataan ed to recapture Luzon, but U.S. Pacific Commander Admiral it two years for other military powers to agree to recapture the Philippines. The island of Leyte was the first objective of the campaign, which was captured by the end of December 1944. This was followed by the attack on Mindoro, and later,

PFC. JAMES EVERETT CARR

CO. B. 20TH INF. 6TH DIV.

BORN APR. 6, 1924 KILLED IN COMBAT

MAR. 25, 1945

LUZON P.I.

The assault on Luzon was launched as planned, on January 9, 1945, code-named S-day. The landings at the Lingayen Gulf on January 9th were carried out by the 6th Army under the command of General Walter Krueger. Approximately 175,000 troops from the 6th Army landed along the 20 mile beachhead. Battles continued throughout the island of Luzon in the following weeks, with more U.S. troops having landed on the island. Filipino and American resistance fighters also attacked Japanese positions and secured several locations. The Allies had taken control of all strategically and economically important locations of Luzon by March. Small groups of the remaining Japanese forces retreated to the mountainous areas of the island, where they were besieged. Pockets of Japanese soldiers held out in the mountains—most ceasing resistance with the unconditional surrender of Japan, but a scattered few holding out for many years afterwards. Casualties were stunningly high for both sides. Japanese losses were 205,535 dead, with 9,050 taken prisoners. Allied losses were far lower, with 8,310 dead and 29,560 wounded.

James was killed in action on March 25, 1945.

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF WORLD WAR II

1940—March

- Finland and the Soviet Union conclude a peace treaty.
- Finland accepts terms of the Treaty of Moscow, retaining independence but giving up Baltic seaports and other territories.

1940—April

- German troops invade Denmark, and German ships launch attacks and landings on Norway. Denmark surrenders within twelve hours.
- British troops begin landing in Norway.

1940—May

- German forces begin a massive assault on the West, attacking and invading Holland, Luxembourg, Belgium, and France.
- British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigns, replaced by Winston Churchill.
- The main Dutch Army surrenders to Germany.
- First German troops reach the French coast near Abbéville, isolating in the north the British Expeditionary Force, the French 1st Army, and part of the Belgian Army.
- Allies begin evacuating from Dunkirk France. Over ten days, 338,000 troops are transported on 860 vessels of all sizes.
- Belgium surrenders to Germany.

1940—June

- Norway surrenders to Germany.
- Italy declares war on France and England.
- France surrenders to Germany.

1940—July

 Adolf Hitler decides that landing troops in England is possible, so long as air superiority is attained.
 He orders the armed forces to prepare for an invasion.



• The Battle of Britain begins, as German bomber planes begin attacking British airfields.

1940—August

Ten German aircraft inadvertently bomb London, leading to a reprisal bombing of Berlin. Hitler then orders German bombing to shift from airfields to cities. This allows the British air force to regain some strength.

1940—September

• The war in Africa begins, as Italian forces in Libya



cross into Egypt, to attempt to gain control of the Suez Canal.

• 1700 German planes attack England, but eighty are shot down. Adolf Hitler decides England cannot be attacked this time, and cancels invasion plans. Though nightly bombing continues, the Battle of Britain is effectively over.

• Japan signs the Tripartite Pact, a defensive alliance with Germany and Italy.

1940—October

Italian forces launch an attack on Greece.

1941—March

Yugoslavia signs an alliance with Germany, but overnight the government is overthrown. Adolf Hitler orders the country bombed and invaded.

1941—April

- German forces invade Yugoslavia and Greece.
- Yugoslavia surrenders to Germany.
- Greece surrenders to Germany.

1941—May

- German forces launch an attack on Crete.
- German battleship *Bismarck* sinks British battleship *Hood* in the North Atlantic. Only three men of a crew of 1422 survive.
- German battleship *Bismarck* sinks, after repeated shelling and torpedo hits from several British planes and ships.



1941—June

- British and Greek forces on Crete surrender. In the battle for the island, 25,000 men (in total) were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner.
- Germany begins a massive attack on the Soviet Union, attacking with three million men along an 1100-mile front.

1941—September

- German forces begin a siege of Leningrad, which will last 900 days.
- In the Soviet Union, the encircled Kiev falls to German forces. 665,000 men are captured, the largest number of prisoners ever in one battle, and the largest single military success in history.
- German forces with 70 divisions begin a final assault to capture Moscow before winter sets in.

1941—December

- Soviet forces counterattack the over-extended German forces 25 miles outside of Moscow, driving them back as much as 100 miles.
- A large Japanese naval task force launches hundreds of aircraft to attack the American Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Several ships are sunk, but the primary targets, the American aircraft carriers, are not at the base.
- Canada declares war on Japan.
- Japanese forces



launch an attack on Hong Kong.

- The United States of America declares war on Japan.
- Japanese forces attack the Philippine Islands.
- Adolf Hitler declares war on the United States.
- Italy declares war on the United States.
- American Marines surrender Wake Island to Japan.
- Hong Kong surrenders to Japan.

1942—January

In Germany, Reinhard Heydrich holds the Wannsee Conference, for planning the coordination of the murder of Jews all across Europe.

1942—February

- American forces begin launching air strikes on Japanese-occupied island bases, beginning with the Gilbert and Marshall Islands.
- Japanese troops land on Singapore.
- Singapore surrenders to Japan. 130,000 British, Indian, and Australians form the greatest mass surrender in British history.

1942—March

All Allied forces in the Netherlands East Indies surrender unconditionally to Japan.

1942—April

American Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle leads a group of B-25 bombers on an attack on Tokyo and four other Japanese cities. The planes were launched from the carrier Hornet, and land in China.



- Japanese forces complete the capture of the Philippines.
- Over 1000 British bombers attack Cologne. Germany. devastating 600 acres, including hundreds of factories.

leaving 45,000 homeless.

1942—June

- A large Japanese naval strike force makes an attack on Midway. American aircraft carriers launch attacks on the Japanese ships, sinking all four aircraft carriers. Japanese planes sink American carrier Yorktown. The Japanese lose 3500 men and 322 planes.
- In Libya, German General Erwin Rommel's Africa Corps captures Tobruk, taking 35,000 prisoners.

1942—September

German troops begin the battle for Stalingrad.

1942—November

- Allied forces land in Morocco and Algeria, beginning Operation Torch, to rid North Africa of Italian and German forces.
- The British 8th Army, led by General Bernhard Montgomery, recaptures Tobruk, Libya.

- Soviet forces with one million soldiers break through German and Romanian lines north and south of Stalingrad, aiming to link up and surround German forces in the city.
- As German forces approach, French fleet commander at Toulon orders the French fleet scuttled and destroyed in the harbor.

1943—February

The surrounded German 6th Army at Stalingrad surrenders. About 450,000 soldiers in total died in the fight for the city.

1943—May

THE WANNSEE

CONFERENCE

AND THE FINAL

SOLUTION

A RECONSIDERATION

MARK ROSEMAN

The German Afrika Korps surrenders 275,000 troops in Tunisia.

1943<u>July</u>

- An Allied armada with 500,000 troops begins landing on Sicily.
- Italian Premier Benito Mussolini is removed from power, replaced by Marshal Badoglio.
- British bomber planes attack Hamburg, Germany, creating a firestorm over nine square miles, reaching 1800 degrees Fahrenheit, killing 40,000.

1943—August

Allied forces complete the capture of Sicily.

1943—September

- The British 8th Army begins landing on Italy, across the Strait of Messina, from Sicily.
- Italy signs its surrender to the Allies. German forces quickly move in to take over strategic positions, and capture the Italian fleet.
- British midget submarines penetrate anti-submarine nets at Kaalfjord in northern Norway, allowing engineers to attach mines to the hull of German battleship Tirpitz. The ship's hull is severely damaged in the explosion, the port engine is destroyed, and the propeller shaft is bent.

1943—October

265 American B-17 Flying Fortress bombers based in England make an attack on ball-bearing plants Schweinfurt, Germany. Sixty are shot down, and 140 suffer significant damage.



1943—November

- Adolf Hitler issues a directive warning of an Allied landing in western Europe in the spring of 1944, noting that an Allied landing would be more troublesome than Russian advances in the East.
- British bomber planes begin the Battle of Berlin, under the assumption that sustained bombing would bring about German defeat.

1944—March

The final British bombing in the Battle of Berlin is

made. Of 811 bombers, 71 are shot down, killing 392 crew members. Since August 1943, 10,000 sorties were flown, dropping 30,000 tons of bombs. The British official history considers the battle an operational defeat for Britain.



1944—June

- American forces capture Rome, Italy.
- D-Day, Operation Overlord begins, with British, American, and Canadian forces landing on Normandy beaches in northern

France. Landings are difficult but successful. By the end of the day, 175,000 men have landed over 90-km of coastline, incurring 4,900 casualties.

• Germany begins launching V-1 flying bombs at London.

1944—July

Adolf Hitler is slightly wounded in an assassination attempt by Claus von Stauffenberg, involving several high-ranking Germans.

1944—August

French General Charles de Gaulle enters liberated Paris.

1944—September

- The British 2nd Army liberates Brussels, Belgium.
- The British 2nd Army captures Antwerp, Belguim, with the important sea port largely undamaged.
- The first German V-2 rocket hits London.
- Operation Market Garden takes place, as gliders drop British and American troops along sixty miles of road in Holland, leading into Germany. The plan is to quickly capture bridges over the Rhine river, and hold them until ground forces can link up.
- Finland and the Soviet Union cease fighting each other.

1944—October

American forces return to the Philippines.

1944—November

German battleship Tirpitz is sunk near Tromsö, Norway by British 12,000-pound bombs.

1944—December

A German force of 22 divisions strikes through the Ardennes, in a surprise attack on the west. Their goal is to again make a quick drive for the coast, splitting the Allied forces. They create a bulge in the front line, but cannot maintain the momentum. Allied forces push the



line back to the start point by January 28. Germany lost 220,000 men and over 1400 tanks in the "Battle of the Bulge".

1945—February

Dresden is subjected to

intense Allied aerial bombing, destroying over 1680 acres, 86,000 houses, killing about 40,000.

1945—March

- Tokyo, Japan, is bombed, destroying sixteen square miles of the city, killing about 85,000.
- American forces complete the capture of the Japanese island of Americans suffer Jima. 26,038 casualties, including 6,821 dead. Of the 21,000 Japanese defenders, only 1083 survive.



1945—April

- Japan launches the largest kamikaze suicide attack of the war, as 355 kamikaze planes attack the American fleet near Okinawa.
- Allies capture 320,000 Germans surrounded in the Ruhr area.
- Soviet ground forces begin an assault on Berlin.
- · Adolf Hitler commits suicide in his underground bunker.
- · Rear Admiral Karl Dönitz is sworn in as new president of Germany, who immediately begins a progressive total surrender.

1945—May

- Soviet forces complete the capture of Berlin.
- German armed forces surrender unconditionally to the Allies.

1945—August

• The American B-29 Enola Gay drops a uranium-based atomic bomb over Hiroshima, Japan, which detonates 1850 feet above the city. The blast has the impact of a 500-mph wind, leveling almost everything within a two-mile radius, destroying 70,000 buildings, sixty percent of the city.



70,000 are killed, and 80,000 wounded. By the end of the year, a further 60,000 have died from burns, wounds, and radiation sickness.

- The Soviet Union declares war on Japan, and troops enter Manchuria and Outer Mongolia.
- An American plane drops a plutonium-based atomic bomb over the Urakami suburb of Nagasaki, Japan, off-target by three miles. Estimated dead are 38-70,000.

The Charlotte Observer

• Emperor Hirohito announces the surrender of Japan.

1945—September

Japan signs official

surrender, accepted by General Douglas MacArthur on the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.



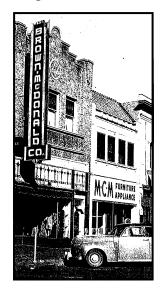
ORIO EGIEHOFF

Orlo's story as told by his father, Ellis Eglehoff

Orlo E. Eglehoff was born July 10, 1910 in Arcadia, Nebraska to Ellis and Emma Eglehoff. Orlo graduated from North Platte High School. On May 17, 1931, he married Wilma Todd and they had two daughters, JoAnn and Patricia.

JoAnn (Bettinger) still lives in North Platte and Patricia (Young) of Las Cruces, New Mexico. JoAnn was 11 years old and Patricia was 9, when their father died. Orlo and his family lived at 810 North Maple Street in North Platte.





After High School, Orlo worked at the Brown-McDonald store. He was assistant manager of the store at the time of his departure for military service. Brown-McDonald started out as a men's clothing store, then became a department store. Orlo enlisted in the United States Army on December 3, 1943 and trained at Camp Blanding, Florida and in Mississippi before going overseas in August 1944. In 1938, France joined Great Britain in an attempt to appease Nazi aggression. France signed the Munich Pact and helped give Germany "permission" to invade the Sudeten territories of Czechoslovakia. It was soon clear that this attempt at appeasement failed. After Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, France declared war.

France's war against Germany did not last long. On June 22, 1940, France surrendered to Germany. France was occupied by the Germans until 1944. June 6 of that year was D-Day. A massive Allied force invaded the

beaches of Normandy. Through the summer and fall, the Allies pushed eastward through France towards Germany. In August, Allied troops also landed in the South of France.

By the end of the war, about 350,000 French soldiers had been killed, and almost a half million French civilians had died.





Orlo was a member of the Air Ground Forces, Infantry, and had been in France only a few weeks when he was killed in action on November 12, 1944. He was killed by a sniper.

By the time the second world war erupted across Europe, the nations involved had long since discovered the important part a well-trained sniper force can play in turning the tides of war. Snipers, when properly employed, can cause mass panic and loss of morale in the enemy's forces. However, most countries had no formally trained snipers and had no training program with which to train them. Most WWII snipers were simply avid hunters and sharpshooters equipped with high-powered and accurate weapons. Despite their lack of formal training, the snipers with the highest number of killers were active during WWII.

Like many soldiers who were killed during the war, their bodies did not come home until after the war. Orlo Eglehoff was finally laid to rest on September 20, 1948. Post 3 of the Disabled American Veterans in North Platte was named in his honor.

LEOTA BEBEE



Leota Hannibal was born on September 17, 1915 at McGrew, Nebraska to Sankey and Clara (Stiefvater) Hannibal. As a young child, she moved with her family to Dannebrog, Nebraska where she graduated from high school in 1934. Sometime after graduation, Leota moved to North Platte, Nebraska as a Northwestern Bell Telephone operator.

Everett Lester Bebee was born on January 10, 1903 in Ord Nebraska. He moved to North Platte in 1936 and worked for the Texaco Oil Company as a bulk plant operator.

Leota married Everett on September 10, 1943 at Grand Island, Nebraska. Both were dedicated to helping the war effort during WWII; so she served in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps at

Fort Banks, Massachusetts in the Motor Corps. Everett was a private in the US Army.

The Women's Army Corps (WAC) was the women's branch of the US Army. It was created as an auxiliary unit, the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) on May 15, 1942, then converted to full status as the WAC in 1943. The WAAC was modeled after comparable British units, especially the ATS. In 1942, the first contingent of 800 members began basic training at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. The women were fitted for uniforms, interviewed, assigned to companies and barracks and inoculated against disease during the first day.

A physical training manual was published by the War Department in July 1943, aimed at bringing the women recruits to top physical standards. About 150,000 American women served in the WAAC and WAC during WWII. They were the first women other than nurses to serve with the Army. While conservative opinion in the leadership of the Army and public opinion generally was initially opposed to women serving in uniform, the shortage of men necessitated a new policy. While most women served stateside, some went to various places around the World, including Europe, North Africa and New Guinea.

The WAC as a branch was disbanded in 1978. Women serving as WACs at that time converted their branches to whatever Military Occupational Specialty they were working in. Since then, women in the US Army have served in

the same units as men, though they have only been allowed in or near combat situations since 1994 when Defense Secretary Les Aspin ordered the removal of "substantial risk of capture" from the list of grounds for excluding women from certain military units.

Throughout their marriage, Leota and Everett never had any children. From 1944 to 1960 they owned and operated the McCabe Hotel in North Platte. Leota volunteered tirelessly for the many organizations she belonged. She was a member of the First Christian Church; served at the North Platte Canteen; Fraternal Order of Eagles Auxiliary 2839; P.R. Halligan Post 163 American Legion; Lincoln County Historical Society; Lincoln County Republican Women; and past president 1990-1994 and charter member of the B.P.O. Does Drove 107. She was even a founding member on the Board of Directors for the 20th Century Veterans' Memorial (see adjoining page).

Leota Street was named after her in 1949, when she and Everett purchased 13 acres there and put the street through.

Leota died on July 25, 2008 in North Platte. Sadly, she did not get to see the statue of

Rae Wilson (see middle picture). The Everett and Leota Bebee Fund at the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation donated the money for this bronze statue, called *The Canteen Lady*. Of course Rae Wilson-Sleight was the inspiration for this statue.

Leota was dedicated to her community and her country.



THE CANTEEN LADY STATUE, DEPICTING RAE
WILSON SLEIGHT, WAS DONATED BY THE EVERETT
AND LEOTA BEBEE FUND AT THE MID-NEBRASKA
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION. DURING WWII LEOTA
BEBEE VOLUNTEERED AT THE NORTH PLATTE
CANTEEN AND SERVED IN THE WOMEN'S ARMY
AUXILIARY CORPS. EVERETT BEBEE SERVED
IN THE US ARMY DURING WWII.
LEOTA WAS AN ORIGINAL BOARD MEMBER OF THE
20TH CENTURY VETERANS' MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION.

America's 20th Century Veterans' Memorial



The Veterans' Memorial

The monument is located in Iron Horse Park at a point where Interstate 80 crosses U.S. Highway 83 in North Platte, Nebraska. This prominent location and the easy access from these heavily used travel arteries make it convenient for thousands of interested individuals to pause for a commemorative moment at the Veterans' Memorial park.

The Memorial Monument highlights:

- All of the men and women who served before and during the Twentieth Century and those who serve now.
- Each branch of the armed forces of the United States.
- A graphic depiction of all of the armed conflicts of the Twentieth Century.
- A very special commemoration of those men and women from the Nebraska area who gave their lives for the winning of peace and the maintaining of peace during this highlighted Twentieth Century.
- A fitting recognition of those wonderful people who developed and served the Canteen that encouraged more than six million military men and women as they passed through North Platte on troop trains during World War II.

If you are interested in purchasing a brick or making a donation to America's Twentieth Century Veteran's Memorial, their contact information is below. More information regarding the Memorial may be found on their website at: http://www.20thcvetsmem.org/

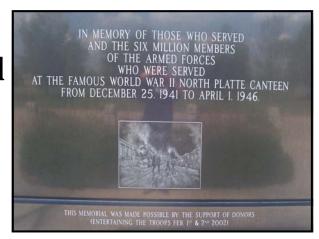
America's Twentieth Century Veterans' Memorial

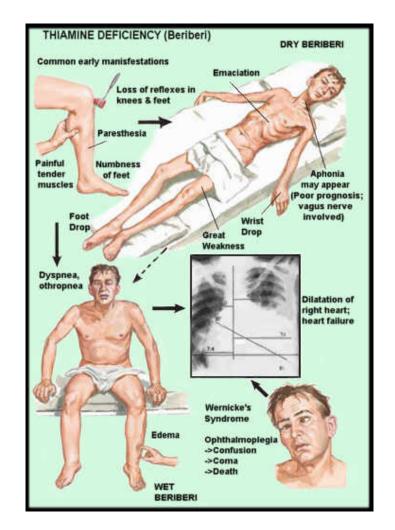
Our Office is located in the Pawnee Hotel
221 East 5th Street
Our mailing address is:
P.O. Box 1393

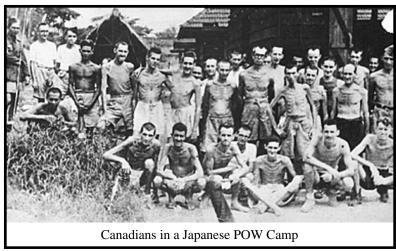
North Platte, NE 69103-1393

Telephone: (308) 532-6579 or (308) 636-2461

Email us at: 20cvetmem@hamilton.net





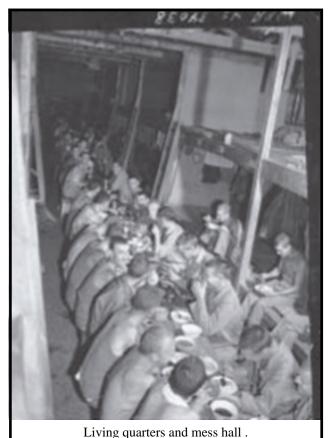


13,851 **United States** soldiers died or were killed in Japanese **Prisoner of War** Camps

There were 130,201 US Military captured and interned during WWII. Of the total count of US POWs in WWII:

- 36,260 were captured & interned by the Japanese, 13,851 died or were killed in the POW camps. (38.2%)
- 93,941 were captured & interned by the Nazis, 1,121 died or were killed in the POW camps. (1.1%)





Prison Camp No 3 (northern Japan). Showing POWs eating a meal of dog meat stew, a much cherished diet,

when dogs were available. 13 Sept 1945

ARTHUR GEORGE MUDGE

Arthur's story as told by his wife, Jean Helen Osbourne Mudge

Arthur George Mudge ("Artie") was born in North Platte, Nebraska on January 27 1914. According to research, Artie's early years must have been difficult ones. His father was a violent drunk that ended up in jail and his mother, who was frequently in the newspaper for petty theft, could not care for him. In 1920 (age 6) he and his brother Byron are reported to be living at 609 S Willow Street in North Platte with Allen and Agnes Smith and their 10 children. By age



16, Artie was living with his grandparents, John and Edith Rodine at 102 South Dewey Street.



Arthur attended school and graduated from North Platte High School in 1933. His High School picture caption read: Artie is an extremely likeable fellow with a hearty laugh, a sense of humor, and a love of a good time. He has a year of basketball and participation in the operetta to his credit. Artie's most characteristic utterance is "Well, well, well." He makes friends easily with his winning ways and can always be depended upon to lend a helping hand.

After High School, Artie didn't have many options and with the Great Depression in full swing, he enlisted in the United States Navy. He served for four years and then went into the National Guards.

On October 16, 1937, Artie married Jean Helen Osborn. They had one son, Allen. Artie supported his family by working at the JC Penny store. Like many of the men and women in Lincoln County, Artie felt it was his patriotic duty to support our country, so he re-enlisted and reported for active duty in the Navy on May 7, 1942. He became a Radioman, First Class and assigned to Fort Mills, Corregidor, Philippines. He was on this assignment when he was captured by the Japanese. The first prison camp he was sent to was in Taiwan. At some point he was transferred to the Tokyo Prisoner of War Camp, at Omori, Japan. Artie died on December 14, 1942 of beriberi disease.

Prisoners of War held by the Japanese armed forces were subject to murder, beatings, summary punishment, brutal treatment, forced labor, medical experimentation, starvation rations, and poor medical treatment. POWs quickly learned how to take a beating to avoid prolonging the agony by keeping an impassive stare and avoiding eye contact. POWs learned not to scream because doing so resulted in being hit much harder. Most importantly, POWs learned not to duck or otherwise dodge a blow because this too resulted in a more severe and prolonged beating. POWs adjusted their attitude to reflect the expectations of their Japanese captors in order to survive. No direct access to the International Red Cross was provided.

With little food available, POWs exhibited attitudes of hopelessness and despair as their health declined. POWs suffered from a number of dietary deficiency diseases that caused skin disorders, eye problems, and more serious health problems. The single most prevalent and debilitating disease reported by all POWs was beriberi. (See upper left photo on facing page.)

There are two types of beriberi: wet and dry. Dry beriberi symptoms include: pain in the feet, loss of feeling in the feet, partial paralysis in the legs, muscle weakness, and finally, wasting away. Due to the pain in their feet, POWs had a distinctive gait that was nicknamed the beriberi shuffle. Many cases of dry beriberi developed into wet beriberi which had more serious complications. Due to the lack of protein, the kidneys failed to function properly which led to urine retention. As a result, the body retained fluid. The ankles, legs, scrotum, and abdomen would swell to enormous sizes. POW doctors relieved much of the swelling by draining the body part with a hypodermic needle. Other serious effects of beriberi were enlargement of the heart, peripheral nerve damage, cardiac arrest, and blindness.

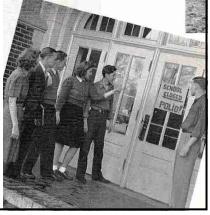


NORTH PLATTE HIGH SCHOOL REMEMBERS

The High School annuals during the war years are of particular interest to both World War II and the North Platte Canteen. They captured the fear of polio, the patriotism of our young people, and the American spirit to carry on, no

matter what happened.

WHAT? School Closed? - Exclaimed Joy Tramp to fellow classmates Maxine Carpenter, Bob Pitzer, Alvin Cooper, Bob Guilliaume, Don Wing as they report to register for their last year on September 8, 1942, only to find the doors locked because of the poliomyelitis epidemic.



OLD GLORY RIS-ES—Neil Extrom and Sam Van Doran proudly haul the banner to the top of the flag pole on the North Platte High School grounds while the trumpeters are inside playing. Every student stands at attention while the flag is being raised each morning at two minutes before nine.





HOLD STILL—Says
Lorene Bensen to Shirley
Anderson as Roberta
McFarland, Betty Neve,
and Jean Thomas practice
tying bandages in the first
aid class. This class was
placed in the school
curriculum at the

beginning of the second semester so girls would be able to apply first aid in an emergency.



CAN WE GET IN? - With our country at war, everyone wants to enlist. So Vaughn Berry and Art Hickman went down look over information on naval enlistments with the recruiting officer, Chief Petty Officer Miklashek. But fighting isn't all there is to do in a war, so they will probably stay here.

WE MEET THE CHALLENGE

Closing of schools because of poliomyelitis was only a forecast of the events that hit the class of '43. In spite of the fact that school was delayed for two weeks we made it up by preparing longer assignments each day during the first semester.

We responded eagerly to the many requests for aid in the war effort. We were called upon to collect scrap. As a result we dug up 22 TONS of metal.

During the senior conferences, many seniors debated whether to remain in high school or to enroll in college in the second semester.

In order to further the war effort, many new subjects were added to the school curriculum. Among them were mechanics and electricity, physical fitness, refresher mathematics, blueprint reading, and senior manual arts. Many students



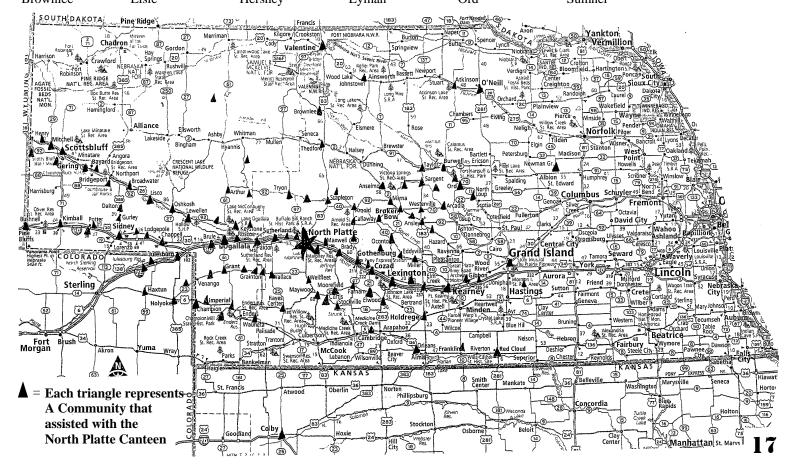
registered for these classes in order to prepare themselves to help win the war.

THE CANTEEN HONOR ROLL

By war's end, the North Platte Canteen "Honor Roll" consisted of about 125 Nebraska, Colorado and Kansas communities that contributed either labor or sizable donations to keep the canteen operating. One estimate of the number of volunteers who worked at the center one time or another is 55,000.

Ogallala, Neb. was the first outside of North Platte to send volunteers. Others later came from as far as 200 miles by motor vehicle or train. Farmers, ranchers, housewives and businessmen all took time off from their own work to spend a monthly 10-hour day making sandwiches, sweeping floors, washing dishes or serving food. Some communities too small to muster much of a volunteer force went in with other towns on their work days. The canteen committee, to give recognition to the out-of-town help, installed an Honor Roll sign in the canteen on December 24, 1943, that listed those towns with monthly service dates. Information and Honor Roll list are from James Reisdorff's book **The North Platte Canteen.**

Amherst, Colo.	Brule	Elwood	Holbrook	Madrid	Orleans	Sunol
Anselmo	Bucktail	Elyria	Holdrege	Mason City	Oshkosh	Sutherland
Ansley	Buffalo Grove	Eustis	Holyoke, Colo.	Maxwell	Overton	Tallin Table
Arcadia	Burwell	Fairfield, Colo.	Imperial	Maywood	Ovid, Colo.	Taylor
Arnold	Bushnell	Farnam	Ingham	Merna	Paxton	Thedford
Arthur	Callaway	Flats	Johnstown	McGrew	Potter	Thune
Atkinson	Champion	Franklin	Julesburg, Colo.	Mitchell	Red Cloud	Trumbull
Bayard	Chappell	Gandy	Kearney	Moorefield	Ringgold	Tryon
Berwyn	Comstock	Gering	Keystone	Morrill	Roscoe	Valentine
Bignell	Cozad	Gibbon	Kimball	Newman Grove	Sarben	Venango
Big Springs	Curtis	Gothenburg	Lamar	Nichols	Sargent	Wallace
Birdwood	Dalton	Grainton	Lemoyne	North Loup	Scottsbluff	Wauneta
Brady	Dickens	Grand Island	Lewellen	North Port	Sedgewick, Colo.	Weisert
Brandon	Dix	Grant	Lexington	Oconto	Shelton	Wellfleet
Bridgeport	Dry Valley	Gurley	Lillian	O'Fallons	Sidney	Westerville
Broadwater	Eddyville	Haxtun, Colo.	Lisco	Ogallala	Stapleton	Willow Island
Broken Bow	Elm Creek	Hayes Center	Lodgepole	O'Neill	Stockville	
Brownlee	Elsie	Hershev	Lvman	Ord	Sumner	



PAUL DE LUNA



Paul De Luna was born on April 29, 1916 in Sutherland, Nebraska to Petra T. and R. Hernandez (step-father). Petra Hernandez came to the United States in 1910 and moved to Sutherland in 1912. She was the first Mexican woman to settle in the Sutherland area. In 1919, she moved to North Platte. The De Luna/Hernandez family were members of St. Patrick's Catholic Church.

Paul was very proud to serve his country and enlisted in the United States Air Force and served as a tail gunner on his crew.

A tail gunner or rear gunner is a crewman on a military aircraft who functions as a gunner defending against enemy fighter attacks from the rear, or "tail," of the plant. The tail gunner operates a flexible machine gun placed on either the top or tail end of the aircraft with a generally unobstructed view toward the rear of the air craft. While the term tail gunner is usually associated with a crewman inside a gun turret, tail gun armaments may also be operated by remote control from another part of the aircraft.

During WWII, USAAF heavy bomber designs such as the B-17 Flying Fortress and B-29 Super fortress used a fixed gunner position with the guns themselves in a separate turret covering an approximately 90-degree rear arc. Typical armament was two 0.50 inch M2 Browning machine guns.

Prior to 1941, there were no specialized flexible gunnery schools. However, a five week course was adopted by the Chief of the Air Corps in March of 1941. Over a four year period, seven schools produced nearly 215,000 aerial gunners. Initially, gunners volunteered for combat duty. In 1943, volunteers became scarce primarily due to the tales told by combat veterans, and the voluntary system was eventually abandoned. After that period, only radio operators, armorers, and aircraft mechanics were allowed to become aerial gunners. Once assigned to a gunnery school, the pace was hectic.

Gunnery school was high paced and grueling. The training started with equipment familiarization so in-depth that a gunner could field strip and reassemble a 50 caliber machine gun—blindfolded. He could also troubleshoot and repair 17 other alignment and malfunction problems. Aerial gunners also received ground training that included shooting at skeet targets from the back of moving jeeps. For final qualification, one had to score 20 hits on a target plane from 100 rounds of ammunition fired. An established fear of flying or medical problems, identified during altitude chamber training, eliminated more men than poor gunnery skills. Upon completion of gunnery school, all enlisted men were promoted to the rank of staff sergeant, placed on flying status, and awarded the combat crew badge. Successful

graduates of gunnery school then proceeded to combat transition learning.

Combat Crew Transition Training was probably the most important phase of the gunner's training. Here he would be assigned to a specific type of aircraft, and the crew he would fly with and depend on until the end of the war. The crew would fly simulated combat missions and would be taught how to deal with the rigors of high altitude bombing. Transition training was sometimes less than adequate as the availability of aircraft, fuel, and munitions was hampered by the needs of actual combat. After four to six months of combat preparation, the crew headed for its first combat assignment.

Flying in WWII was hazardous at all times.
Crewmembers suffered frostbite almost



continuously due to the unpressurized and unheated aircraft being flown at altitudes often exceeding 25,000 feet. The gun positions were usually mounted in open windows, and the noise and 200 mile per hour winds made the aft section of an aircraft a miserable place to work.

Twenty five combat missions were required for rotation out of the war zone. To get credit for a combat mission, one had to drop bombs on the enemy, encounter anti-aircraft fire, or confront enemy fighter aircraft. Getting into a combat situation was easy, coming home was not.

Paul was killed over Germany on June 21, 1944. His plane had dropped bombs on Berlin and were on their way home. He was 28 years old and was on his 22nd combat mission.

Hershey Vets Honored With Monument

MR. CECIL HERNANDEZ OF OMAHA WANTED THE READERS OF NUESTRO MUNDO TO KNOW OF THE EFFORTS BEING PUT FORTH TO HONOR HERSHEY, NEBRASKA VETERANS. HE ASKED US TO REPRINT MARY ANN KOCH'S COLUMN IN THE NORTH PLATTE TELEGRAPH, OF APRIL 2, 1993.

THE COLUMN INCLUDES A HEARTFELT LETTER FROM A FORMER RESIDENT, RAYMOND REYES. CECIL HERNANDEZ IS ALSO A HERSHEY "HOME-BOY," AS ARE MANY OTHERS HERE IN OMAHA AND OTHER TOWNS IN NEBRASKA.

THE "MEXICAN-AMERICAN HERO," THAT REYES REFERS TO IN HIS LETTER IS CECIL'S OLDER BROTHER PAUL. ALSO MISSING FROM THOSE LISTED INCLUDE SUCH VETS AS AL RIVERA, MANUEL REYES, RICK ARELLANO, BILL ARELLANO, JOE CONTRERAS, JOE OROSCO, JIM OROSCO, CECIL HERNANDEZ, HENRY CERVANTES AND DAN ARELLANO.

BY THE WAY, RICK ARELLANO DESERVES SPECIAL MENTION. RICK HAD BEEN RECOMMENDED FOR A SILVER STAR FOR BRAVERY, BUT UNFORTUNATELY HIS CAPTAIN.



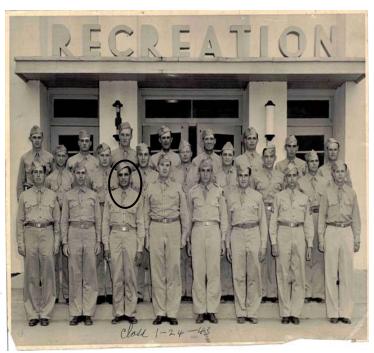
Sgt. Paul DeLuna Killed in Action 1944

WHO HAD RECOMMENDED HIM, DIED BEFORE CONFIRMATION COULD BE MADE. SO RICK WAS AWARDED THE BRONZE STAR INSTEAD.

HERE'S THE ARTICLE;



Paul's actual aircraft assignment was named "**Double Trouble**." He and his crew decided to spontaneously pose on the tarmac in front of "Perils of Pauline".



Hershey vet's letter invokes home, heroes

In February the Hershey Veterans Monument Committee launched a campaign to raise money to build a memorial recording the names of the nearly 600 Hershey veterans who served their country.

The following letter was sent to the committee by a Bronze Star recipient, a former Hershey resident who now lives in California. The letter eloquently expresses how much a "hometown" means and how fortunate Hershey is to have "hometown boys" with such outstanding service records.

"To the Bank Manager of The Hershey State Bank:

My name is Raymond Reyes and I have two sons that were born in Hershey and started school here. But I went to California seeking a better life for them. I did not want them to go through the hardship I went through.

You say that any veteran who calls

You say that any veteran who calls Hershey their home is eligible to have their name carved or inscribed in the granite stone. You see, our family is one of the original families that came from Kansas in the mid-20s to work here and we made Hershey our home.

Our family had five boys (Raymond,

Our family had five boys (Raymond, John, Joe, Nish and Julius) and four went to the service. Only Julius stayed and worked on the farm. Adela Hernandez is my sister and she still lives in Hershey.

Although I live in California, I still come back about every two years. That is why I want my two sons' names (Bobby and Ricky Reyes) put in along with me and John, Joe and Nish.

Please let LeRoy know so I can send him their names and my contributions. Thank you.

And now I will pass on to you a little more information about the Mexican-Americans who served in the armed forces during World War II. There were about 40 young men who went to the service (from Hershey) and I knew them all. There were seven who went to the Navy, three or four who went to the Air Force and the paratroops and the rest went to armor and engineers and infantry.

There were nine Purple Hearts, two



4-2-93

DEAR PEOPLE

MARY ANN KOCH

Bronze Stars and one Silver Star, Raymond Reyes and Andrew Contreras were awarded Bronze Stars and Sisto Briseno the Silver Star.

There were two volunteers, Paul DeLuna and Nish Reyes. Paul DeLuna was our Mexican-American hero, flying 28 or 30 missions, just like Ben Kuroki was to the Japanese-Americans.

They were both volunteers and both were gunners.

The only difference was that Paul was

All Mexican-Americans are very proud to be part of this beautiful community. I am very proud to call Hershey my home.

Very truly yours,

Raymond A. Reyes Los Angeles, Calif."

In 1990, the Mexican-American Veterans Reunion, "Beet Fields to Battle Fields," was held during the Nebraskaland Days Mexican Fiesta. All the surviving veterans mentioned above attended.

The veterans' monument will stand in the new Hershey Centennial Park now under construction. The veterans' name and dates of service will be inscribed.

Donations are needed by April 15 to have the monument in place by Veterans Day. Monument committee members are Bill Younghans, LeRoy Hernandez, Marvin Fisher, Larry Paulman, Don Odean, Shirley Lindekugel and Bob Brown and Doug Downs of the Centennial Committee

Send contributions to Hershey State Bank, PO Box 459, in care of Thomas Pinion, Hershey 69143.

Mary Ann Koch is regional editor of the Telegraph.

WILLAM W. WALTEMATH



There is not a lot known about William Waltemath; researchers were unable to locate an obituary for him and almost all of his military records were destroyed by a fire. However, researchers did find some family information because the Waltemath family were original pioneers and homesteaders in Lincoln County in the 1860s.

In 1916, William F. Waltemath and his brother Henry started the Waltemath Lumber and Coal Company, located at 800 East Front Street, where Kildare Lumber Company currently operates. The Waltemath families all lived on an estate of what is now the 400 block between 3rd and 4th Streets (Formerly Linden Manor and now

Liberty House). William F. and Margaret Waltemath had four children: Elizabeth (Betty) (1917-1987), William W. (March 11, 1919-1943), Helen (1923-2007), and Mary (1925-2011).

William attended school and graduated from North Platte High School in 1936. His High School picture caption read "And the last of the "Three Musketeers" is Bill Waltemath. Bill good-naturedly went into Football 1,2,4; Hi-Y 1,2,3,4; Student Manager 3; and Track 4. How about a ride in your snitzy car, some rainy day, Bill? After High School, Bill attended college. After college, he enlisted in the United States Army and rose to the rank of second lieutenant. He was assigned to the 168th Infantry Regiment, 34th Infantry Division.

After a 12 day voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, some 4,508 soldiers stepped ashore on January 26th at Dufferin Quay, Belfast, Ireland. After continuing their training in Northern Ireland, this division saw their first combat in North Africa on November 8, 1942.

William was assigned to a tank unit. The iconic American tank of World War II was the M4 Sherman tank. The Sherman initially mounted a 75mm gun and had a crew of five. Christened "Sherman" by the British, who named their US-built tanks after Civil War generals, the designation quickly caught on with American forces.

By February 19, 1943, the U.S Army actively fought the Germans over the Kasserine Pass near Tunisia, North Africa. The Kasserine Pass is a 2 mile wide gap in the Grand Dorsal chain of the Atlas Mountains in west central Tunisia. The Axis forces involved were primarily from the German-Italian Panzer Army, led by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel and two Panzer divisions attached from the 5th Panzer Army. The Allied forces involved came mostly from the U.S. Army's II Corps commanded by Major General Lloyd Fredendall, which was part of the British 1st Army commanded by Lieutenant General Kenneth Anderson.

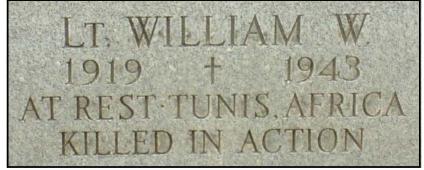


The Battle of Kasserine Pass was the first large-scale meeting of the American and German forces in Africa. The untested and poorly-led American troops suffered heavy casualties and were pushed back over 50 miles from their original position. In the aftermath of this defeat, the U.S. Army instituted sweeping changes from unit-level organization to the replacing of commanders. When they next met, in some cases only weeks later, the U.S. forces were considerably more effective.

Researchers believe that William was severely injured in tank combat during one of the many Battle of Kasserine Pass combat missions because one of the military records that survived the fire noted that he had died of his wounds on March 16, 1943.

Field hospitals were large, fixed facilities, unable to advance with rapidly moving combat troops, and evacuation to these hospitals required the use of ground ambulance. The time required for evacuation was often lengthy, and many of the most severely injured patients did not survive transport.

Mobile field hospitals were not readily available in combat until the Korean War.



RAE WILSON SLEIGHT

Rae Wilson Sleight was born March 31, 1916 to George and Blanche Wilson. She grew up in North Platte, Nebraska, graduating from high school in 1933. The Great Depression was in full swing and the "dust bowl" came into the American vocabulary, as great clouds of dust rolled across the drought-stricken Plains. President Franklin D. Roosevelt also took office that year and soon American optimism returned, thanks to his New Deal legislation.





Rae was working as a store clerk when Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. Now the United States was in a war that had been raging in Europe and Asia for some time. The attack came as a great shock to the small community of North Platte, as it did to the entire nation.

Ten days after the attack, word reached Rae that her brother and the local Nebraska Guard unit were due to stop briefly in North Platte. The news spread quickly and the families of the men gathered at the train depot with gifts. As the train came to a stop, it became apparent that these were not soldiers from Nebraska. Instead, the troops were part of the Kansas National Guard. The crowd froze as the mix-up sank in -- but not for long! That now-famous North Platte hospitality and goodwill triumphed over disappointment as they handed their presents to the astonished troops.

That might have been the end of the story, except for the efforts of Rae Wilson. The joy on the faces of those men sparked an idea in Rae's mind. Why not do this for every soldier passing through North Platte? So, on December 18th, she wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper proposing the idea of a canteen. Driven by the positive responses, she organized a committee. Using the Cody Hotel, located near the railroad tracks, they started serving the troops on Christmas Day 1941.

This, however, did not satisfy Rae. She saw the need to expand immediately. Confident and by no means shy, she approached the president of the Union Pacific Railroad, William Jeffers, and asked him for the use of the North Platte train depot's abandoned lunchroom. He readily agreed, and directed Union Pacific employees to help in any way possible.

With the vastly improved location and facilities, the canteen began to take off. Rae worked hard and soon became ill. Doctors told her that she needed to move to a different climate to recover. So, in April 1942, she handed over the canteen to Helen Christ. Helen managed the canteen until it closed on April 1, 1946.

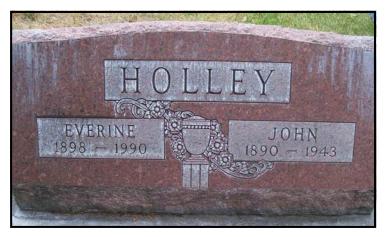
Rae returned from California to participate in the closing ceremonies. The organization she started served 6 million uniformed personnel. It had grown to involve 125 communities and countless numbers of volunteers. Rae eventually recovered from her illness and returned to North Platte, where she died in 1986. Her work continues to be honored in the memories of veterans and canteen workers alike.





PAUL HOLLEY

Paul's story as told by his mother, Everine Holley



Paul Holley was born in 1918 in St Albert, Missouri to John and Everine Holley. John was serving his country during World War I when his son, Paul was born. They moved to North Platte when Paul was 11 months old and the Holley family lived at 415 West B Street.

Paul attended school in North Platte and graduated from North Platte High School in 1937. In High School, he was active in orchestra.

Paul and his brother, Errette, enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1938 after Errette's graduation from high school. brothers were assigned to the USS California and were stationed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Paul never really had a

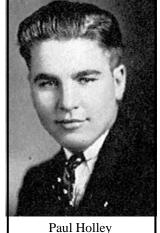
chance to live.

At dawn on December 7, 1941, the 23-year-old NPHS graduate was on duty on board the USS California as a gunner. At 7:50 a.m., the first Japanese bombers appeared in the sky. The attack lasted two hours and hit other military bases and sections of the island. Twentyone ships were heavily damaged and 323 aircraft were damaged or destroyed.

The California, a flagship of the battle force, was hit fore and aft by two Japanese torpedoes in the early minutes of the raid. The ship was later hit by a bomb and near-missed by another, both of which caused additional flooding. A large mass of burning oil drifting down

> "Battleship Row" threatened to set the wounded ship afire. She was ordered abandoned.

> Errette followed the abandon ship order and jumped overboard into the oily burning sea. He and other surviving crewmen were picked up by a PT boat and immediately put to work trying to extinguish and control the fires that threatened to destroy the ships.



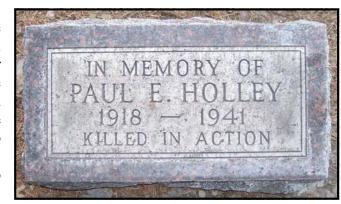


Despite the crew's effort to keep the ship afloat, the California settled on the bottom of the bay on December 10th. She was later refloated in March 1942, repaired and put back into service. Bodies were removed from the ship's hull and from the water all around her. Nearly a hundred of her officers and men were killed in action during the attack. Some were never identified, including Paul Holley. The nation didn't have the manpower or resources to identify all the bodies right away because there was a war to be fought.

Paul was one of the 647 unidentified servicemen that died that day. Like the others, he was buried in an unmarked grave in Hawaii.

It was years before Paul Holley's remains were able to be identified. Ray Emory, an 89-year-old member of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, and Hawaii-based Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command and the American Grave Registration Service Group has an obsession with collecting official WWII documents and doing detective work to link the bodies with their records. He does this work to honor the men he served with, as he was aboard the USS

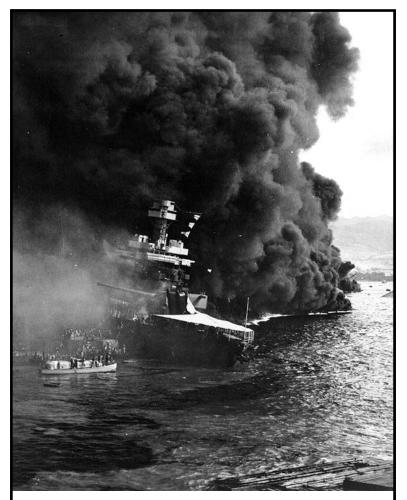
Honolulu that Sunday morning and said it was difficult to grasp that history and fate had collided in Pearl Harbor.



Pearl Harbor Raid, 7 December 1941

Scene on the southeastern part of Ford Island, looking northeasterly, with USS *California* (BB-44) in right center, listing to port after being hit by Japanese aerial torpedoes and bombs.

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, National Archives Collection.



Pearl Harbor Attack, 7 December 1941

Crew abandoning the damaged USS *California* (BB-44) as burning oil drifts down on the ship, at about 1000 hrs on the morning of 7 December 1941, shortly after the end of the Japanese raid.

An Officers' Motor Boat is at left.

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, National Archives Collection.





Pearl Harbor Attack, 7 December 1941

USS *California* (BB-44) slowly sinking alongside Ford Island as a result of bomb and torpedo damage, 7 December 1941.

USS *Shaw* (DD-373) is burning in the floating dry dock *YFD-2* in the left distance.

USS *Nevada* (BB-36) is beached in the left-center distance.

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, National Archives Collection.



Pearl Harbor Attack, 7 December 1941

Torpedo damage to the hull of USS *California* (BB-44), photographed at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard in April 1942, soon after the ship had been dry-docked for repairs.

This is *California*'s forward torpedo hole, centered at about Frame 52. Note armor belt at the top of the hole and bilge keel below it.

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, National Archives Collection.

Look for our donation jar by our mini Canteen during the Cemetery Tours

North Platte **City Cemetery Electronic Directory Project**

A Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation Fund

http://npgs.nesgs.org



A Fundraising Project of the North Platte Genealogical Society

The Project: There is no directory at the North Platte City Cemetery. This project intends to rectify that by providing a walk-up directory allowing visitors to search for and locate graves within the cemetery.

The Plan: Repurpose a portion of the small building on site near the east entrance to the cemetery off Rodeo Road as a shelter for an electronic directory. Purchase necessary equipment and software to manage and remotely update the database that would be searchable through this directory.

The Goal: Raise a minimum of \$25,000 for an electronic Cemetery Directory for the North Platte City Cemetery.



Above is one of several monuments in the Cemetery that could also be more easily **24** found with a directory.

Donation Tax Status: The North Platte Cemetery Directory Fund is a non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. All donations to the North Platte Cemetery Directory fund are tax deductible.

Donations to the fund may also be made through:

Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation 120 N Dewey ST North Platte NE 69101





North Platte City Cemetery History

The North Platte Cemetery Association was formed in 1872 and five acres of land was purchased Northwest of town along what is now Rodeo Road at a cost of \$20 per acre. In 1873 these five acres were divided into lots and were offered to the public at a cost of \$10 per lot.

Ten more acres of land, adjacent to the original five acres, were purchased from Mrs. W. F. Cody in 1884.

Today the North Platte City Cemetery is managed and maintained through the City of North Platte Public Service Department. The small building (pictured on the front of this brochure) has a listing of burials and a map to help find locations, however this building is not open to the public 365 days per year.

Records with lot and space numbers are available on the City of North Platte's website at http:// www.ci.north-platte.ne.us. This is only half of the information one needs to locate a grave in a city of over 12,500 graves. The other half is linking the grave entry to a map to aid in finding the actual location.

An electronic directory would allow the public to walk up and search for a loved one then provide an interactive map to help them locate the grave. The electronic directory would be available everyday, not just when maintenance personnel are on the grounds.

WE PAY TRIBUTE

NORTH PLATTE IS PROUD TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE MANY MEN AND WOMEN FROM LINCOLN COUNTY, NEBRASKA AND VICINITY WHO HELPED WIN OUR GREAT VICTORY IN WORLD WAR II: ALL OVER THE WORLD — IN THE ARMY, THE NAVY, THE MARINES, THE AIR CORPS AND IN EVERY BRANCH OF OUR ARMED FORCES

From General Marshall's Victory Report On Winning of World War II in Europe and the Pacific: Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, 1943 to 1945, to the Secretary of War

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Thank you to all of our veterans; as well as the men and women currently serving in the military.

CANTEEN MEMORIES CEMETERY TOUR

CREDITS AND REFERENCES

Thank you to the following researchers, individuals, actors, volunteers, and websites that helped create the **CANTEEN MEMORIES** Cemetery Tour

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PHOTOGRAPH CREDIT

Heritage Images North Platte Telegraph North Platte High School Round-Up

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Scotties Potties

WEBSITE AND BOOK RESEARCH CREDIT

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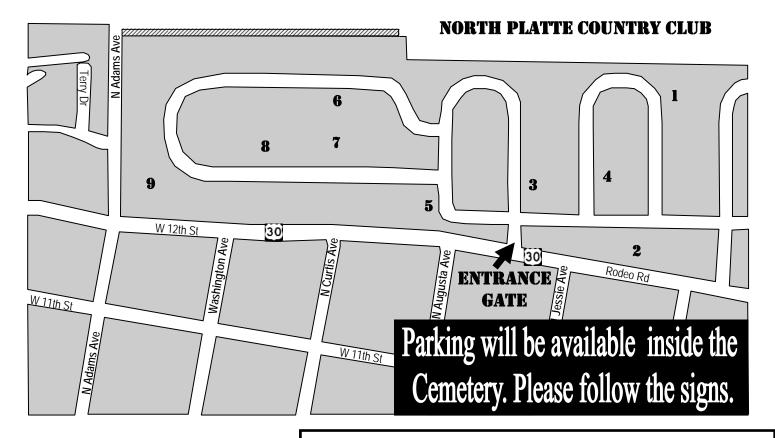
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Various Years.

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This tour is self-guided, so just pick a starting point and enjoy!

CEMETERY TOUR MAP

- Helen Christ
- 2. Orlo Eglehoff
- 3. Leota Bebee
- 4. James E. Carr
- 5. Paul Holley
- 6. Arthur Mudge
- 7. Paul DeLuna
- 8. Rae Wilson-Sleight
- 9. William Waltemath

Pioneers of Lincol n county

HOLD ON TO YOUR HATS!

2012 celebrates the North Platte Public Library's 100th anniversary! So we are going back to our



Lincoln County Roots and celebrating the

Pioneers of Lincoln County!

There are so many pioneers and homesteaders that travelled to this area that we are going to have <u>TWO</u> Cemetery Tours in 2012.

Plan on the first tour during NebraskaLand Days in June and the second tour during Railfest in September. Be sure to check in at the North Platte Public Library as our centennial celebration begins in 2012!