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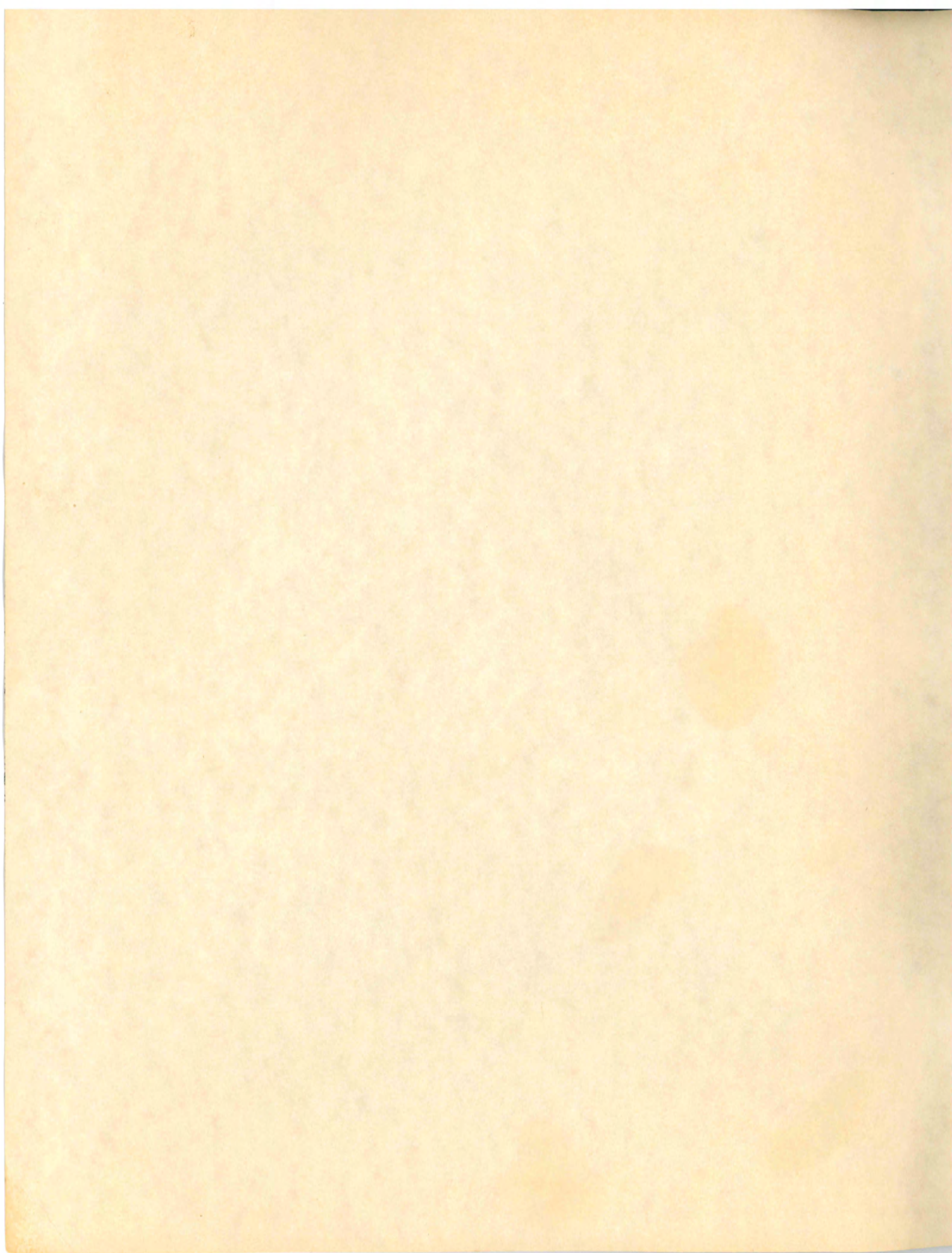
*for the* **U.S. ARMY**  
**ENLIST NOW**

**WAR**  
**MEMORIES**

*Stories of  
World War II told by  
Veterans to the  
Highland High School  
American History Class,  
Fall 1992*



**BUY WAR BONDS**



# *War Memories:*

*Stories of World War II told by Veterans to  
the Highland High School American History  
class, Fall 1992*

HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL  
HIGHLAND, KANSAS 66035  
MARCH, 1993

*“We are now in the midst of a war, not of conquest, not for vengeance, but for a world in which this nation, and all that this nation represents, will be safe for our children . . . We are going to win the war and we are going to win the peace that follows.”*

**Franklin D. Roosevelt,**  
**war broadcast to the nation**  
**December 9, 1941**

**WAR MEMORIES: STORIES OF WORLD WAR II TOLD BY VETERANS TO THE  
HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL AMERICAN HISTORY CLASS, FALL 1992  
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# PREFACE

These stories of the World War II veteran who reside or have connections in the area covered by Unified School District 425 were written by the Highland High School Class of 1994. As part of their work in American history, the students conducted the interviews in October 1992 while they were juniors.

The students taped the interviews, and the tapes are stored in the Highland High School library.

Through various press releases and referrals, the students made every effort to contact all veterans. A few veterans declined to be interviewed and some were too ill to be interviewed. If they have overlooked anyone, they sincerely apologize.

The project was the brainchild of William N. Noll, Highland High School Class of 1965, who provided the instructional leadership while completing his student teaching for Kansas State University at Highland High School.

The Class of 1994 would like to thank the veterans who agreed to be interviewed and Amy Batchelder, Class of 1993, for helping edit this book. The class also appreciated the patience and understanding of the faculty, administration, and staff of Highland High School who had to endure students returning to school at odd times after conducting their interviews.

The book was published by Highland High School. Each student and each veteran received a copy. The libraries of Highland High School, Highland Community College, and Doniphan County at Troy were given copies. A few extra copies were printed and are on sale at Highland High School.

**Donna Parish**

American History Teacher

## The Class of 1994

Crystal Blanton  
Shandala Feedback  
Scott Jeschke  
Holly Lucas  
Thad Reist  
Leah Twombly  
Mary Weis

Christi Collins  
Merideth Harness  
Benjamin Kent  
Traci McCauley  
Kim Streib  
Paul Twombly  
JoEllen Whetstine  
Kristie Rathman

Brian Edie  
Brad Haynes  
Steven Lackey  
Robert Powell  
Cory Sutherland  
Jeff Veach  
Craig Windmeyer

# JOHN BATCHELDER

By Kristi Rathmann

When the war started in 1941, John Batchelder lived south of Hiawatha on a farm. At that time, he was deferred from service for several years in order to farm. He farmed clear up until he was called into the service. In the meantime, he had a family and moved to Denton, Kansas.

At that time most young men were drafted. They were given a draft notice and rating. He had a different classification of 2C. When he was living in Denton, the war ended in 1945. When the war ended, he received his 1-A notice that he wouldn't have to farm any longer. He was able to join the service, a "Determined Termination Date."

Batchelder was in the service for about a week before they called him for the draft. Drafties went to Fort Leavenworth. Most draftees went into the Army. Batchelder also went into the Army. At Fort Leavenworth, they were started off with orientation, which meant the facts of military life, most of which was discipline. "They let them know that the U.S. is their master and they're to obey," said Batchelder. At this point he began basic training at Camp T. Robinson. "Most of our training was in the summer time. We trained on rocks and gravel, mostly. When they tell the soldiers to hit the dirt, they mean you to hit it," said Batchelder.

From there he went to Camp Stoneman, California, in August. They were shipped there with only the shirts that they had on their backs. Then went to Japan on a ship that carried at least 3,000 or so troops. So Batchelder carried this big overcoat clear to Japan in August; they would retrieve it from him when he got there. On the ship going overseas the meals were basic, nothing



elaborate. The most decent meal was when they left San Francisco, which didn't last very long. Then he went to Yokohama; from there he was stationed at General Headquarters Army Bases in Tokyo. While he was in the base, he was in the motor pool, just the same as an automobile dealer in the service area. His company was known as the "50th Technical Intelligence Company".

After the war they had to do a lot of preparations. They didn't have to shoot anyone since they were in the Army of Occupation. All they really did was put in their time. "My job was to take care of the jeeps, cars, fire trucks, and airplanes, etc," Batchelder said. It took them 15 days to get back home. On their way home they stopped by Pearl Harbor for about three or four hours, so people could get off.

"The only medal I got was a campaign medal for being in the east." He left the service and went back to farming. His experience was that discipline was necessary and that he had to learn to accept and get along with one another. At the present time he is married and has three children. He is retired from farming but still helping out with his own farm.

# VIRGIL BAUER

By Holly Lucas

It was 1941, and Virgil Bauer was 21 and working in Kansas City, Missouri, when the outbreak of World War II drastically changed his life. Bauer said, "The patriotic thing to do when the war began was to enlist, volunteer, or seek certain parts of the service. My first attempt was to get into the Army Air Force as a pilot, but I didn't qualify for some physical reasons, although I did receive the rank of Sergeant. So in April, 1942, I enrolled in the Naval Air Force Cadet Training Program and went to St. Mary's College in Moraga, California, for some of my training, and then I moved to another base in California for actual flight training, where I stayed for six months," Bauer said. Bauer continued service in the Navy from July 1942 to January 1943. "I was not a good pilot; I washed out as we called it in those days," Bauer said.

"In February, 1943, I came back to Highland and married Marjorie Lou Ukena. Three weeks later I volunteered to be drafted into the service arm of the Air Force," Bauer said. Bauer went to Florida for most of his training, and he also went to North Dakota to college. Eventually Bauer ended up on the West Coast in Seattle, Washington, where he boarded a ship and spent two weeks traveling to the Aleutian Islands (a chain of islands stretching east off the coast of Alaska). Bauer said, "We didn't see any combat. By the time we got there, our ground forces had moved the Japanese out of the Islands."

Shemya, the island Bauer was stationed on for 18 months, had an area of 3 x 5 miles and mainly could be described as a stationary aircraft carrier perched out in the North Pacific. Bauer's unit, the 28th Bomb Group, was sta-

tioned 1800 miles from their headquarters at Elmendorf Field in Alaska. "We had no boat docks; everything we lived on or needed came in by air," Bauer said. Bauer's position at that time was a clerk/typist. Due to the strong winds that blew most of the year, a lot of their activities on the island took place underground in buildings called 'Quonset Huts.' "My job, for the 18 months that I was there, was to work with and for a general and a colonel securing parts and maintaining aircraft based on this island. It was our job to keep parts flowing and repairs and modifications on schedule. I primarily did secretarial work in the parts department," Bauer said.

The aircraft they had then were the B-24's, and their strikes took them to the northern parts of Japan, called the Kurile Islands. The greatest problem Bauer's unit encountered was that they could only fly 6 or 7 days a month because of the inclement weather--the fog, snow, and sleet. Bauer said, "We had very little sun in 18 months. We were starved for orange juice, sunshine, and vitamins; it was one of the health hazards of the area." Bauer said service there was very boring. "If you didn't have enough work, you ran the risk of becoming homesick or going off your rocker. We called it 'Section 8' back then and a lot of people faked this, saying they just weren't mentally with it, so they could earn a trip back to the United States and be transferred. Fortunately, I had plenty of work to keep me busy, so I didn't have that problem."

This Aleutian Island that Bauer served on had some really terrible weather which limited their air striking ability. They especially had a problem with the wind; even their equipment was known to blow away if it wasn't tied down. When they actually had a clear day, they would often fly for 24 hours at a time, but that often led to the problem of adding fuel tanks to the airplanes, so they could have enough gas to finish their bombing run and return home. Bauer said, "We lost more planes due to bad weather and lack of fuel, than we

did to the Japanese anti-aircraft."

In Bauer's unit, after 18 months, they were eligible for a 45-day leave for rest and recuperation. "When my turn came up, two other guys were also eligible to return to the States too, so we drew high cards to see who would get to go. I drew the highest card, the five of clubs, so I got to return. It took me 17 hours of flying time to get home, and while I was home, the war ended. The Army decided it was not worth the money to send me back, so after 45 days I went to Florida for more R & R and a lot of juice and sunshine," Bauer said.

Bauer served in the North Pacific Campaign and received the North Pacific Campaign ribbon. After 42 months in service, Bauer returned to Highland, "I wanted to make my home here, so I got a start at Ukena Hardware for about a year. Then in 1946, I purchased Parker Mercantile, an all around self-servicing grocery store where Rush Seeds used to be," Bauer said. Bauer ran the grocery store, which he changed to Bauer A & G Market, from 1946 until 1960, when he decided it was time for a change, so he sold the store and went into sales. "I worked for Swift and Co. in Liberal, Kansas, as a salesperson for southwest Kansas. I only worked there a short time before I came back to Highland, and in 1960, I started to work for Dannon Mills in sales for northwest Missouri. Fortunately, I never had to leave Highland after that--just drive. When I left the sales program and retired in 1986, I was working on my second million miles. I had a very enjoyable 26 years of selling, very profitable and rewarding. I was blessed in many ways," Bauer said. In 1960, Bauer also met the qualifications and testing to become a real estate broker. "I used that as moonlighting to supplement my income from 1960-1986, but because I worked six and a half to seven days a week in sales, I didn't get to use it much," Bauer stated.

Today Bauer is semi-retired, but he is still keeping busy. "At the present

time, I've decided to work in real estate. It's supposed to be a part-time job, but some days it seems like it's full-time. It has not been supplementing my income, but it has been very interesting and keeping me very busy. One of these days I'm going to totally retire and let someone else have the real estate business, and then I hope to do some traveling and things I haven't been able to. One of the most enjoyable things we are doing at the present is working in the church, serving the Lord. I hope to spend even more time working for the Lord when I get out of the real estate business," Bauer said. Bauer and his wife Lou have four children: Becky, Gene, Neil, and Ellen.

Bauer stated, "For me, the war was a time to mature; like many others, I had never been away from home. I had my first train ride, which was to California, and I had many other interesting experiences--primarily in the area of travel. I think the war helped us all to grow and be ready to go out and be on our own and pursue a living and prepare for a family."

# **BILL CRABTREE**

By Benjamin Kent

"When the war started, I was home on the farm, and I had a date with my future wife that night," said Bill Crabtree. That was when he knew that there was going to be war. Crabtree was notified of his call to service when he received a letter in the mail from Uncle Sam. Crabtree was inducted into the army in Kansas City, Missouri, and received his basic training at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. From Jefferson Barracks, he went to Madison, Wisconsin, to a school for advanced training in radio communications. From Madison, he was shipped to Fresno, California, where he learned Morse Code and to become a full fledged radio operator assigned to the Army Air Corps Communication System.

He was stationed at Merrecan Field in Puerto Rico for about ten months and then he was stationed in Port-au-Prince, Haiti for approximately eighteen months. His job was working in the control tower at the airfield and with the weather communications system. Crabtree did not see any combat during his time in the service. One of the most interesting things about the war that Crabtree remembers was "being in a different country as far as the USA is concerned, for instance, Puerto Rico and Haiti." The most interesting thing that happened to him were his ship rides from New Orleans to Puerto Rico and back -- he spent the entire time in his bunk for he was seasick. Crabtree attained the rank of Corporal in the war.

After Crabtree left the service, he married Jane Ukena and went into the hardware business with his father-in-law, Cornelius Ukena, and his brother-in-law, Neil Ukena. His life did not change much after the war. Crabtree is semi-retired; he is working with the community ambulance department as a

director, working for a monument company, and generally keeping busy in his spare time. Crabtree and his wife have raised "five wonderful daughters" who attended all schools in Highland. Crabtree said, "Having five daughters is considered the Crabtree syndrome." He has eight granddaughters and four grandsons.

# ERNEST DELK

By Leah Twombly

The beginning of the war found Ernest Delk in Alliance, Nebraska, working on harvest. Delk said, "I knew that I would probably be drafted, so I went back home to wait for the call. Pretty soon it came in, and I was officially in the army in 1941. I was shipped off to Fort Bliss, Texas, which was where I was going to get all my training in procedures and manuevers." He spent seven months there in training before the army determined him ready for combat, and after a brief stop in the New England states, "We were shipped off to northern Africa on April 13, 1942," Delk recalled.

Although the group was right next to the areas of fighting, most of Delk's group wasn't involved in actual hand-to-hand combat. Delk commented, "I was one of the truck drivers. I transported many of the weapons and machinery used in some of the main battles." Delk was not only stationed in northern Africa, but after a brief stay there, he was transferred to Italy, where he went to Rome and several other towns. After leaving Italy, he went to southern France, Germany, and Austria. Delk commented, "I wasn't in these countries while the actual war was going on. I didn't get to see them until after the war was over. The towns we did get to see weren't in very good shape. I remember, though, when we went through Rome, we got to see the Vatican, and surprisingly, there was very little damage. It was almost like it had been protected and spared from all the damage." Delk was not wounded during the war, but he recalled, "Once I was standing next to my truck and all of a sudden, something came flying down out of the sky, and when I looked over, I saw the shell that had landed barely fifty feet away." Delk recalled



many times when he saw sights that should have never been seen by anyone. He commented, "War is not a pretty sight. No one should ever have to go through it."

After leaving the service, Delk came back to Bendena, Kansas, and worked on a farm for a while and went on harvest. He then left farming and worked in St. Joseph, Missouri, at Armor's Packing House for a while. Delk had two brothers, one of whom was also in the service, and two sisters. Delk was married in 1946 in Atchison, Kansas, to Doris Johnson. In 1950, Delk and his wife moved to Wichita, Kansas, and Delk went to work for Boeing. The Delks had one daughter and two sons. Delk now has seven grandchildren. Delk retired from Boeing in 1983 and is now living with his wife in Wichita. Delk still likes to keep track of his old army buddies and regularly meets with most of them.

# WARREN DENTON

By Craig Windmeyer

Before the war started, Warren Denton was working on the farm with his dad until he got drafted into the army. When he got into the service, he was a part of the anti-aircraft operation detachment. He received his basic training at Fort Smith (Camp Chaffee), Arkansas. He went for all of his other training at Fort Bliss, Texas. He was stationed there for about a year. Denton's unit was an anti-aircraft operations detachment.

He didn't see any combat or any other type of campaigns during his time in the service. Denton said, his most interesting experience was, "It was an interesting experience to see how they ran an operations detachment spotting the enemy planes." Denton attained the rank of Corporal.

After the service, he said, "I went back and got my old job driving a truck." Denton said, "It gave me a little more insight on how the rest of the world lived and got along." After the war Denton didn't have any family other than his immediate family. Today Denton is a retired farmer who works at the White Cloud American Legion Hall on occasion.

# DOYLE DERRICK

By JoEllen Whetstine

Doyle Derrick today is better known, not as a soldier, but as a tree farmer. Living in rural Hiawatha, he has over 30,000 black walnut trees on a span of 70 acres. Surviving his wife who died of cancer in 1985 are Doyle and his daughter Barbara.

Derrick said, "At the age of 29 I was working in Detroit, Michigan, as manager for a 22-year-old boxer. We entered what was called "The Whitehope Tournament," put on by Jack Dempsey. While working with him, he convinced me to sign up for the Marine Corps. The young man failed his eye examination, so I moved on by myself to San Diego, California, for boot camp. After boot, I signed up for the duration of the war. I then underwent an IQ test which placed me in the top ten of my platoon, qualifying me to be a teacher. I was stationed in northern Oklahoma for one year where I taught sailors and Marines a quick, two-week lesson on the use of a 20m cannon and rockets. Moving on to the action, I was sent to Guadalcanal in the South Pacific to relieve Marines who had been there for 25 months. Next, I was sent to a dive bomber squadran in Green Island. I stayed there for seven months. After bombing Rabaul in the South Pacific, I went to New Guinea to regroup for three weeks. From here, I joined a 1,000 ship convoy to regain the Philippines from the Japanese. I stayed in Lingayen Gulf until the war was over. After the surrender, the Japanese turned over the Philippines to the U.S."

Derrick said, "The most interesting event I encountered, was when the Japanese bombed an ammunition dump five miles from my barracks. It was like straight daylight for four days. Then, the Japanese bombed my living

quarters, dropping all three duds. If the bombs were to blow, the concussion would've been the worse. At one time, my platoon could raid three bomb sites a day. With two planes in one raid, my platoon killed 2800 Japanese before daylight."

"One afternoon, Douglas MacArthur's train come through my camp. Some buddies and I made a sign that said: 'MacArthur with a handful of Marines, takes back the Philippines.' "

Doyle was discharged as a Tech Sergeant. His only wound came from a bomb shell fragment, which took a chunk out of his arm. He then farmed for four years before going to work on the Alaskan Pipeline.

# JACK DILLON

By Paul Twombly

Jack Dillon was home working on the farm when he received a notice stating that he had been drafted into the army. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, was where Dillon was inducted in 1942. Camp Roberts in California was where Dillon did his Basic Training, and it lasted about three months. Dillon learned how to be an infantryman there. From Camp Roberts, Dillon was shipped to Hawaii and placed in the 25th Infantry Division. Hawaii was his home for about five or six months, but then he went to the Solomon Islands and to Guadalcanal. He saw intensive front line battle for several months.

The island of Georgia was Dillon's next stop. It was his toughest battle in the war. They had a company of about 200 men and ended up with only one platoon which had about 35-40 men in it. After that battle, Dillon went back to Guadalcanal. Dillon said, "We just fooled around unloading ships when we went back there. I didn't like it one bit."

Dillon didn't wish to talk about the terrible sights of war. Dillon said, "I could tell you some hair-raising stories, but I'm not going to." Dillon received a Purple Heart from wounds received in the war.

Dillon went to New Zealand for about six months. "I remember it was winter back home, but it was summer time there. I got to know some of the local farmers there and helped them put up hay in December. I never thought that I would throw hay in December! I really enjoyed that place."

Dillon was discharged in 1945 on the points system because he had more than enough points to be discharged. "I thought that I would have to work furlough when I got back to Fort Leavenworth because I didn't know the points system had went into effect. I was thankful that it had though."

When he returned home, he started farming again. "Farming was the only thing I knew, so I got into it again." Dillon got married and had a son, Harold, and a daughter, Janet. He has two grandsons and two grand-daughters. Dillon is still doing work on his farm about a mile and a half north of Highland. "I will farm until I can't move around and get things done, but I hope that day will never come."

# KENNETH EDIE

By Brian Edie

Kenneth Edie lived in his hometown of White Cloud, Kansas, prior to World War II. Edie was a volunteer in the United States Navy. He joined the Navy in April, 1944, to fight for the country he loves. As a volunteer, he received basic training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Illinois. After basic training, he went to Camp Shoemaker in California. He was then moved around and was stationed overseas at the end of May for nine months in New Caledonia. "Most of the combat that I saw was mostly kamikaze pilots," Edie commented.

Edie mostly participated in convoy duty during the war. He was aboard the Destroyer Escort *USS Presley*. "We convoyed anything from 15-25 ships a trip. Our duty was to keep the enemy submarines off of the convoy," Edie explained.

Edie stated that he had quite a few personal experiences during this mind straining war. The one that stands out in his mind is the time he was in Iwo Jima for four days, patrolling the island, immediately after the famous flag raising. "I think probably the scariest experience I had was the time we were lured into a Japanese mine field one night by mistake. Radio silence was broken by our orders to help an LSP that had sunk. So we immediately took off, and it was 10 o'clock at night when I went to bring some coffee to the men. Our orders were to help the LSP, so we went where they told us to go. When we got there, we were inside a Japanese mine field. We radioed back and asked how we could get out, and their reply was the very same way you got in.

I don't know how we got in without getting blown up, but we somehow got back out. I think the Lord was our co-pilot that night."

Eddie was a Second Class Cook when he was discharged because the war was over, and he had received all the points he needed. Eddie was discharged in May, 1946. He received the combat medal, the overseas medal, and the Good Conduct Medal, during his time served in the service.

Eddie stated that he doesn't feel the war changed him too much, considering he was barely 18 years of age. "It never affected my physical outlook, but it did change my spiritual outlook on how the Lord works," he commented.

Eddie stated, "I have one brother and two sisters with a lot of grandkids." Eddie is retired nowadays and just plans to take it easy. Eddie commented, "I think war does change a person's life a little bit, to a certain extent, because it makes you feel glad that you served for your country. When you wake three, four, and five times a night when everybody's yelling 'Battle stations! Battle stations! You gotta get to your battle stations!' It makes you glad the next day that you made it through the night."

"It makes me thankful for the American flag. It discourages me the way our flag is treated today," said Eddie.

# NORMAN GAUL

By Kristi Rathmann and Shandala Feedback

When the war started, Norman Gaul was in the service at Hamilton Field, California. Gaul said, "I had enlisted before the war started in what was at that time called the U.S. Army Air Corps, which today is called the U.S. Air Force. I had basic training at Moffett Field, California, and an additional six months of mechanical training in Chanute Field, Illinois. I took my commission training at Miami Beach, Florida. I also served at Salt Lake City, Utah; Blyth, California; Spokane, Washington; and Glasgow, Montana."

"I was sent overseas and spent two years in England where I served until the war ended. My unit was the 385th Bomb Group, and the airplanes were called the Flying Fortresses, which was the B-17 bomber. I spent all of my overseas time, two years, in England. The campaigns were called the ETO which stands for European Theater Operations," Gaul said. "I had many experiences, but the closest I came to being killed was on a night when I was working on an airplane, and a German bomber came over and dropped about ten bombs. My face got splattered with dirt." Gaul attained the rank of Captain before the war ended.

Gaul said, "I have about six ribbons. I left the service, and I returned to this part of the country, where I settled in Kansas City, Missouri. I attended school for a couple of years" He said, "I was recalled to the Air Force because of the Korean War. I decided that I would stay in the Air Force full time so that after twenty years I could get retirement pay." The war didn't change him really. Gaul said, "I got married in 1947, and I have two boys that both gradu -



ated from Highland High School." Today he has retired and is living on his farm west of Highland.

# BILL GIBSON

By Jeff Veach

When World War II began, Bill Gibson was in high school. "I was called to service by a nice little card," said Gibson. He entered the Army at the age of 19. He was in the Infantry in the 99th Division.

Gibson said, "I went to Basic training in Fanning, Texas. I was stationed in the European Theater. I saw four months of front-line combat. I fought in the Battle of the Bulge where the majority of the 99th division was killed. I was a Browning .30-caliber water cooled machine gun operator."

In addition to traveling across a good part of Europe, Gibson spent three months in a hospital in Belgium. He traveled through Germany fighting all the way.

Gibson recalls the K-rations that they had to eat. Once he and his buddies had an opportunity to have fresh meat. They shot two mule deer in a forest in Germany and were going to eat them. Patton interfered with their plans and made them throw the meat away. Patton also made tank operators take sand bags off the sides of tanks. "I remember Patton said, 'if you weren't man enough to go into battle without the sandbags, you're not a soldier.' After that, the tanks went over the next hill, and almost every tank was destroyed," said Gibson.

One of Gibson's most horrific experiences was his close call with trench foot. "My feet were frozen to my boots for three weeks. One of my buddies had to have both of his feet amputated because of this," said Gibson.

Gibson also recalls sleeping in fox holes. "I would be sleeping and then wake suddenly from the noise of a tank driving over my fox hole. I would be

covered with dirt also."

When the Americans into Germany, it was under a white flag. That means that there is to be no fighting. "We were walking down a street in a German town, and out of no where, a thirteen-year-old German boy shoots and kills my commander. I remember capturing the small group of boys, and I got the gun from the boy who shot my commander," said Gibson

Gibson achieved the rank of Sargeant. He received two campaign stars.

After getting out of the service, Gibson returned to Highland and worked on construction to help build Kansas Highway 7. Gibson is a retired Highland police officer/city maintenance chief and is currently the sexton for the Highland Cemetery.

Gibson has a wife Jean and three children, Terry, Kevin, and Chris.

Gibson said, "I wouldn't take a million dollars for the experience, but I wouldn't take a dollar to go back. It had its good and bad sides."

# SIDNEY "SID" HARGIS

By Christi Collins

Sid Hargis said, "I was sitting in the living room playing Monopoly with friends when I heard about the war. I was called to service in 1942 and enlisted in the Army Air Corps."

"I reported to Shepard Field, Texas, for preliminary classification. From there I went to Springfield, Missouri, and then to San Antonio, Texas, where I was preparing and processing classification as a pilot trainee," Hargis said. The total training program was 36 weeks or nine weeks in each location, which included pre-flight, all of which was conducted in the classroom, primary, basic, and advanced flying training. He graduated from Waco, Texas, as a pilot of multi-engine aircraft.

Hargis was then sent to Amarillo, Texas, for further training. "In October, 1944, I was then sent to Tampa, Florida, where my B-17 crew was assembled. We were assigned to the 730th Bomb Squadron of the 452nd Bombardment Group of the 8th Air Force stationed in England," stated Hargis.

Hargis saw combat of the European Theatre of Operations, the bombing missions of the U.S. Army 8th Air Force. "It was March or April, 1945, before combat began with my division. We then flew five missions before the war ended," said Hargis.

"I enjoyed all experiences of the war. The most vivid experience was on V-E Day when I was based in England. My crew made two flights from England to Linz, Austria, bringing home liberated prisoners of war to Belgium and France. One other experience which I remembered was the flight to Holland distributing K-rations to the people who needed food. The supplies were pushed out the bomb bays while flying over an athletic field," Hargis said.

"I achieved the rank of 2nd Lieutenant and was awarded the Air Medal," Hargis said. After leaving the service, he enrolled at Kansas State University. "The experience of the war helped me mature as a person," said Hargis.

Today Hargis is a retired farmer. He lives at his home in Highland with his wife Jean. They have two daughters, Nancy and Mary Lynn, a son Bill, and eight grandsons.

# LAWRENCE LEWIS

By Thad Reist

"When World War II started, I farmed just south of town," said Lawrence Lewis. "I was 26 years old in 1942, I and a group of Doniphan County men were drafted and traveled from Troy, by bus, to Fort Leavenworth, and I was drafted into the United States Army. I went to basic training at Camp Carson, Colorado, and went to advanced training at Camp Hale, Colorado, and attended unit training at Fort Benning, Georgia," said Lewis.

"I went overseas in January of 1945 to Europe by boat - I forget its name - landing in France, and I was in the 609th Field Artillery Battalion (105mm), under the 71st Infantry Division, and on the front lines the last 59 days of the war. I saw combat all right, sixty-seven days in Europe," said Lewis.

Lewis and his division fought two battles with German SS troops. "We marched clear across France, Germany, and ended up in Austria at the end of the war," Lewis said.

Lewis attained the rank of Corporal and received a Good Conduct Medal and two battle stars. One interesting thing he did was actually stand up close to Adolf Hitler's house after the allies took that part of Germany. He said, "It was very interesting to see the foreign countries we went through."

"After the war, I was discharged, and I went back to the farm for about four years, and then I went into construction work." Lewis said, "I'll just say the war was a very good experience." He and his wife, Margaret, have six children, thirteen grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. "I still raise a garden, and take care of my yard, and deliver dinners to the (Highland) Senior Citizen's Center," Lewis said.

# NORRIS LOYD

By Paul Twombly

Norris Loyd was still a young buck in high school when the United States entered World War II. "I volunteered through the draft for the United States Army Air Force and went to Basic Training at Keesly Air Base in Biloxi, Mississippi. It was a cold damp winter, but I enjoyed my training," said Loyd. After Basic Training, he was stationed in Stepgard, Arkansas. He serviced planes and did other odd jobs which were meant to keep him busy until there was an opening in flight training. "I went to the University of Florida while I was in flight training. I was supposed to be there nine months and learn two years of college, but I really don't remember much of the knowledge."

After training, Loyd was sent to Texas and was using the BT-13 airplanes. Alabama was his next stop and there he became familiar with the B-24 airplanes. Then Loyd ended up in the Cadet Center at San Antonio, Texas. After Cadet schooling, he was sent to Amarillo, Texas, with the intention of becoming a flight engineer on the B-29. His most memorable moment was when he saw the first jet-airplanes take off. "That old jet would take off and pull back on the stick and spiral just like a corkscrew into the air. That was totally unheard of at that time," said Loyd. Loyd was discharged from the service in 1945.

When he returned home, he helped a local farmer with the fall harvest. His next job had him driving a Texaco gasoline delivery truck for Tom Neibling. In 1947, Loyd got married and started farming. All three of his daughters attended Highland High School. Now you can find Loyd selling real estate in Hiawatha.

# STANLEY McCAULEY

By Traci McCauley

It was autumn, 1944, the year before the end of World War II. Stanley McCauley was a senior at Highland High School. He and four other guys were going to turn 18 years old and be required to sign up for the draft. "Instead of signing up for the draft, in February, 1945, all four of us decided to join the U.S. Navy," McCauley stated. The principal, Charlie Corbet, had warned them that they couldn't graduate if they joined the Navy, but they did anyway. Toward the spring of 1945, the principal decided to give a test to the four guys, and if they passed this test, they would graduate with the rest of the class. "I studied hard for the test," McCauley said, "and when they gave us the test, some of the questions were like, 'Who was buried in Grant's tomb?'" All four of the men passed the test, and on graduation day, there were four chairs that were empty. Each empty chair had a sailor's hat on it, representing those four men that joined the Navy.

"I was sent to San Diego, California, for my basic training at the U.S. Naval Training Center," McCauley said. "Those of us that did better than others were allowed the opportunity to go on to an additional school. There were a few different choices, but I chose Yoeman's School."

He was stationed state-side, which meant that he didn't go out of the United States. "After we graduated from Yoeman's School, the war was over. The Navy realized that it was going to take lots and lots of people to discharge all those people fighting in the war," McCauley stated. "Our whole unit was then sent from San Diego, California, to the Great Lakes Naval Training Center

in Chicago, Illinois, to learn how to discharge or separate the war veterans from the service." This training was a six-week training course. "After we completed the six week training, we were transferred to the U.S. Naval Separation Center in Bremerton, Washington. We were stationed there for a period of time, and then transferred to Swan Island Naval Barracks in Portland, Oregon," stated McCauley. He stayed there until he was discharged in 1946, and their group was just about the last group to be discharged from the service. He and his group had the honors of discharging all the other war veterans that had fought in the war.

The only "combat" he saw was between the USO's, which stands for United Service Organization. This was a group of high school or college age volunteers that set up service organizations around every base to entertain the soldiers and give them refreshments.

"I really have no personal experiences other than meeting a lot of different people and spending time with the USO's," said McCauley. He was discharged as a Yeoman Second Class (Y-2C). When he was discharged, he owned only one medal, the "good conduct" medal. "It was better than being kicked out, wasn't it?" McCauley commented. He was only in the service for 18 months, from February, 1945 to August, 1946. McCauley said, "I learned there were many more things out in this big world than a little town in Kansas thought ever existed. Everyone in the service grew up a lot faster than they would've if the war hadn't began."

In 1946, when he returned home from the service, he attended Highland Community College for two years and then began farming. He was married to Ruth Ann Jeffers in 1948. Today, they live in the town of Highland, and they are both retired.



# MILLIE MYERS

By Merideth Q. Harness

Mildred "Millie" Myers was sworn into the Navy on October 28, 1943 in Kansas City, Missouri. She left for Hunter College in New York on November 16 for basic training. Myers met a group of 47 girls with whom she was to travel. They were given a grand send off. A band played, and they were given the last corsage that they were allowed to wear for the duration of the war.

They began traveling to New York in a Pullman car. Along the way more Pullman cars full of newly inducted Navy WAVES (Womens Auxillary Volunteers for Emergency Service) were added too the train. Once there, Myers was assigned to an apartment with eleven other women. The apartment was on the seventh floor, and the WAVES were not allowed to use the elevators.

After spending six weeks in New York, Myers was sent by train to Stillwater, Oklahoma. There she took Yeoman (clerk) training.

"We left New York by train, and we traveled all night long. Come to find out the next day we'd gone north to Niagra Falls and across Canada. They never publicized troop training movements. They didn't even tell us [where we were going] because they were afraid we would get to a phone and call someone or drop a note alongside the road," said Myers.

Myers was assigned to the U.S. Naval Barracks in Washington, D.C. Before being allowed to work there, she had to pass a security check by the FBI and two other investigating organizations. While the security check was occurring, Myers worked for a month in the Public Health Building. Myers was then transferred to her job in the Joint Communications Board located in the

Munitions Building where she worked as a secretary for the transportation department.

"Just being assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff was an honor to begin with," Myers said. "I spent some time in the janitor's room until my security check was cleared because I wasn't allowed to go anywhere else."

Myers was allowed to live in a regular apartment with three other women, who were also in the armed services, while working for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Myers achieved the rank of Yeoman Second Class.

Because of working for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, there was high security. Myers always had to have at least one escort while delivering important documents even though she was in the service.

"I did get to go out to the Pentagon one time to take some papers. Women didn't get to do things like that very often. I thought it was pretty great," said Myers.

"I would run into military people all the time in the halls whenever I was in the Joint Chiefs of Staff Building. I would sometimes see people like General Marshall and Admiral Nimitz," said Myers.

Myers spent the remaining part of the war in Washington D.C. "The Navy did not allow women to go overseas. The only women that got to go overseas were nurses," Myers said.

After the war was over, Myers went to Denver, Colorado, where she tried to find work as a medical secretary, which was the job she had been trained for in college. She ended up finding work for a title company where she was employed for seven years. Myers then went to work for an oil company. She retired to Highland where she became involved in PRIDE and college alumni activities. Myers has one brother who lives near the Midway school and four nieces and nephews.

# CHARLES NEIBLING

By Robert Powell

"I enlisted into the United States Army Air Force in 1942 and went through basic training in Boumenfield, Kentucky," Charles Neibling said. He was later stationed in South Carolina because he and his group were waiting on an opening in the Air Mechanics course at Semore Johnson Field where he was stationed for six to seven months. After the six-month stay at Johnson Field, Neibling moved down to aerial gunnery school at Fort Myers, Florida. Neibling's group started forming after he was shipped to Salt Lake City, Utah and then on to New Mexico where he took a crash course in B-24 operation and became the first flight engineer of the crew. Although Neibling went through all of this before going overseas, he still hadn't gone through the real training yet and that was to happen in a place down south called Chatter Field, Georgia. "While in Georgia I got together with the crew that I was going to be flying missions with. For training we flew to Cuba and back to get a real feel for the controls, being over water and getting to know and trust one another," Neibling said. "After the training in Georgia, we were shipped to Mitchell Field, New York and picked up the plane in which we would be flying once overseas," Neibling stated.

Neibling was scheduled to leave on February 1, 1944, but an engine problem delayed him and his crew for a couple more days. Neibling exclaims, "I got a funny feeling when finally leaving for overseas because I had no idea where I was headed until I was two hours flying time away from the North America continent so that we had no way of backing out of the orders and

returning home!" Neibling's orders were to first land at Trinidad, from there he was to make a stop just across the Amazon River at a place called Natal, Brazil. Neibling remembers that crossing the Amazon seemed to take hours. "There was all those trees and water that seemed to stretch on forever," said Neibling. After Brazil, Neibling and his crew took the eleven-hour flight to Africa which in Neibling's words, "It seemed like a vast desert, lots of rock and sand and that's about all there was there." Several stops were made at Tunis, Africa, where the Army Air Force was gathering a group to move on to Europe. Spanazolia, Italy was the destination in which the "*Shady Lady*," the nickname of Neibling's plane, was headed for, but due to low clouds his crew had to turn around and return to Sicily. Neibling said, "I give a lot of credit to our pilot for the great way he handled the situation because I couldn't see very far ahead of us. The navigator also did a heck of a job to keep us from crashing into a mountain peak."

They had landed in a overcast, so when Neibling woke up the next morning, he was suprised because out the window was Mount Etna. On top of this mountian was a little fighter field with great piles of wrecked planes. This is when Neibling realized how close to war he was and how much destruction it can cause. From there the "*Shady Lady*" moved on to Bari, Italy, which wasn't quite their destination, and the crew discovered a leak in the fuel line so there was a short layover.

On March 19, 1944, Neibling flew in his first combat mission. It was to be the first of fifty missions that Neibling would fly in over the next several months. Neibling remembers that the first few missions weren't too bad, but as they went on, they got harder every time he went up. Neibling vividly recalls that once on a mission, a waist gunner that was standing back to back with him was hit in the arm and an artery was ripped open, spraying blood all

over the side of the plane. With first aid applied, the man survived the incident.

As the missions went on, Neibling realized why the goverment had so much physical training. By the time he got his longjohns, heated suit, flying suit, parachute harness, and twenty-one pounds of flack suit on, he was weighted down pretty heavily. Then a person had to hold all that up for six to eight hours during the mission.

Neibling flew his last mission on July 5, 1944, and was discharged as a Tech Sergeant, receiving Air Medals and clusters in addition to the normal set of ribbons received by all World War II servicemen serving in the European Theater.

Neibling now lives sevral miles north of Highland, where he farms with his son Raymond.

# WILLIAM NOLL

By Holly Lucas and Kristi Rathman

When World War II started, William (Bill) Noll was 20 years old and in college. Upon graduating from Highland Junior College, Noll had decided he wanted to enter the military. Like anyone else entering the military, Noll had hopes of achieving high rank and of serving his country. Noll wanted to attend the United States Military Academy (West Point), but there were no openings, so Noll then entered the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, in June of 1941. "When the war started against Japan and they bombed Pearl Harbor, I was at the Naval Academy in the hospital because I was sick," said Noll. Noll did all of his training at the Academy, where he was for 3 years. "After I graduated, I was stationed on the *U.S.S. Intrepid* (CV-11), which was a CV or an aircraft carrier. We went from Annapolis to San Diego, where we caught a merchant ship and they took us to Australia. Then we started back up, and we would catch anything we could and finally we caught the ship," said Noll. Noll was stationed there 15 months, where he was a lieutenant in the gunnery department and helped to stand watch on the bridge.

Noll saw combat in the First and Second battles of the Philippines and at Okinawa. "At this time the war was kinda of winding down, and we were actually chasing the Japanese force and sinking them as fast as we could. Our dive bomber pilots helped to sink the largest battleship in the world, a Japanese ship called the (Imperial Japanese Navy Ship) *Yamato*. After the first battle of the Philippines, we had knocked out most of their carriers, but they still had some big battleships left. And they also had some other large ships

like cruisers, and a few aircraft carriers left, but nothing like what they had when they attacked Pearl Harbor. They had started to use desperate measures like the kamikaze pilot, a young man that they had taught how to take off in an airplane, but they had not taught how to land," said Noll. The *USS Intrepid* was hit off the Philippines by a kamikaze pilot in November, 1944 and again in July, 1945, off Okinawa by another one, causing a lot of young deaths, including Noll's best friend. The *USS Intrepid* lost a lot of young men when the kamikaze pilots would crash not only through the top deck, but also through a steel floor above the hanger deck. "We kept the planes gassed up and when the kamikaze plane would crash through, the planes would explode catching the deck on fire and killing or injuring anyone who was nearby," Noll said.

"I think the most interesting thing I did was seeing other sailors from the Highland area and finding out which ships they were on and going to visit them," Noll said. Noll said the worst thing he remembers is all the funerals for the kids that got killed. "What they did is they sewed these kids up in canvas and put them under a flag and pushed them off in the sea," Noll said.

Lieutenant, Junior Grade( LTJG) Noll was recommended for the Silver Star because of his valor during the kamikaze attacks on the *USS Intrepid*, and he received a ribbon for being in the service before the war. He also received the Atlantic, Pacific, and Philippine campaign medals.

After the war ended, Noll came back to Corpus Christi, Texas, and went through a flight training program. After completing that program, Noll went back out to sea, primarily on destroyers. Noll continued in the service for another 12 years, during which he served in several different billets, one of which was an Admiral's Aide. From 1953 until he retired in 1957, Noll served at Supreme Allied Command Atlantic (SACLANT) -- a major NATO headquar-

ters located at Norfolk, Virginia.

Noll and an old family friend, Ann Lee Nelson, used to celebrate their birthdays together when they were younger because they were on the same day. Friendship blossomed into romance, and when Noll came home on leave in June of 1945, they got married. They had three children: Mari Ann (Parker), William (Bill), and Nancy (Jackson). Upon returning to Highland after retiring from the service, Noll joined his father Roy in the operation of Noll Insurance Agency, which he ran until he retired in 1985. Today, Noll spends most of his time being the unpaid musical editor at Highland Community College, and he also plays in their band.

Noll said, "I don't think that people who went through World War II have the same feeling towards combat as those that went through the Vietnam Campaign do, because when we came home, the government went all out to send the kids to school, to get them jobs, and the people at home treated them royally. Where as in the Vietnam campaign, they were treated terrible, even by the government." Noll went on to say, "It's hard to say whether the war changed me or not. I suppose it gave me a feeling of being lucky, and I appreciate that. I suppose that because of this I appreciate people more and try to help people more."

Noll said, "The thing that surprises me more than anything is that I never forgot Highland, and I always wanted to come back here, and I'm glad I did."



# GERALD RAWLES

By Scott Jeschke

Gerald Rawles lived in Buchanan County, Missouri, prior to World War II. "My number was drawn from the fish bowl in 1940, and I became the 13th man from Buchanan County. I was called up to service on Jan. 6, 1941, and joined the Missouri National Guard, the 203rd Coastal Artillery Anti-Aircraft, and went to Camp Hulen, Texas, for training--consisting of basic and advanced training there. When we learned that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, we were alerted to Los Angeles. We arrived in Los Angeles and took up our advanced positions to defend the city from Anti-Aircraft on Dec. 18, 1941. I stayed in Los Angeles until August of 1942 and was sent to Officers Candidate School. I graduated on December 5, 1942," Rawles stated.

"Then, I proceeded to El Paso, Texas, and formed a new unit--the 480th Coastal Artillery Anti-Aircraft Battalion (40 mm). Next, I went to Louisiana and trained for summer maneuvers. I then proceeded to go back to Camp Hulen, Texas, where I received more training, which caused us to receive an assignment in London to protect Dwight D. Eisenhower's Headquarters. We, the 480th, were shipped out of New York to Glasgow, Scotland, and then went to England. Aboard the ship, *Queen Mary*, coming from New York, I was in charge of rations for 16,000 troops," said Rawles.

"We were alerted to go to France. We got to France about three weeks after D-Day, and I went to the Battle of the Bulge," said Rawles. The four campaigns that he was in were the Rhineland, Normandy, Northern France, and Ground Combat, EAME (European, Atlantic, Mediterranean) Theater.

"We were alerted to come home in 1945, after the war was over. But, I decided to stay over there with 95 points on the point system. I then went to the 231st AAA Searchlight Battalion, where I was a senior officer and battalion commander from September of 1945 until Christmas of the same year. I attained the rank of Major," he said. Major was the highest rank that Rawles attained.

Rawles recalled an experience of coming back from Europe between Christmas of 1945 and New Year's Day. "We were on the victory ship, the (USS) *Essex*. About half-way back, a storm hit. It was such a fierce storm, and the waves were so high that we averaged only 98 land miles a day. On a normal day, we would average 350 miles. The storm caused the flight deck of the *Essex* to be torn off. The captain ordered that the ship be turned around, so we returned to England. We went back again, and this time we made it, only to find that all of the harbor help was on strike. So they swung the ship around and landed at New Jersey. A Christmas dinner was waiting for us when we arrived," stated Rawles. Rawles had 1,150 men under his command aboard that ship.

The ribbons and medals that he received are as follows: European Theater of Operations (ETO) Theater Ribbon with four bronze stars, American Theater Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, and Victory Medal. The war taught him that if you want to do something, then go ahead and do it.

"My biggest honor was when I was at a reunion, and a wife of one of the soldiers came up to me and said, 'I want to thank you for returning my husband in the same condition that I loaned him to you,'" said Rawles.

"I came back and got married in 1950, had two daughters, Marilyn and Jean. My wife, Lorraine, was killed in April of 1973 by a drunk driver, and I have lived on the farm ever since," said Rawles.

# MELVIN ROSENBERGER

By Shandala Feedback

The war had been going on for about a year, and Melvin Rosenberger was nineteen. Rosenberger said, "I was working near White Cloud, Kansas, and decided that I didn't want to go into the Army, so I went into the Navy. I took my training in the 'boot' camp at Great Lakes (Naval Training Center) in Michigan. When my training was over, I was stationed in Brooklyn, New York, which was my home base. My first ship was an oil tanker that traveled from New York to St. Thomas, carrying crude oil to New Jersey for about a year. The German U-Boats were pretty much destroyed by this time."

"They took us off the merchant ship and placed us on a Landing Ship Tank (LST)," Rosenberger said. I went from New York to New Orleans where I got on my LST. There were two sister ships that started up the East Coast. They got to the Bay (Chesapeake) of Norfolk where we got into intense fog, and the captain of the ship saw another ship on the radar that was heading right toward us. The other ship got so close that the captain couldn't see the other ship on the radar any more. The ship rammed us and nearly split us in two. The sister ship went on over to England. When they got our ship repaired, we took off for England. Before we reached England, the sister ship had been sunk in the English Channel by the Germans. Then we shuttled back and forth to England for the Normandy Invasion for a month."

Rosenberger got a chance to come home on leave. During this leave, Rosenberger got married, but was only home for about a month. Rosenberger said, "I got sent to the Pacific Ocean and was on my way to Guam when the Japanese gave up." He spent about two months on Guam and was then sent back to the United States for discharge from the Navy.

"After my service with the Navy, I started farming with my dad. After a year of farming with my dad, I went out on my own. The experience during the war made me believe in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Rosenberger said, "I have three children, two girls and one boy. I also have five wonderful grandchildren and three wonderful great grandchildren." Rosenberger is still farming today and is living a successful life on his farm near White Cloud, Kansas.

# PAUL ROWE

By Brad Haynes

Paul Rowe entered the United States Navy December 7, 1942. He took training at Rhode Island and then went to California. After he was in California, he went to Pearl Harbor and worked at a Submarine base in 1944. He and his group (U.S. Navy Seabees) joined with the Marines and went to the islands of Maui and Hawaii to take more training. They were shipped out to go to Iwo Jima on Christmas day of 1944.

He said, "The trip to Iwo Jima took 63 days, and the job only took about 12 days to be completed."

There was a drawing of 200 names, and he was one of the lucky ones to come home on the West Coast for 30 days and 30 days back home. He said, "I didn't do too much fighting on the island of Iwo Jima. The Marines and the Army handled most of the fighting."

Rowe said, "When we were digging trenches, we would dig into a cave that was either a man made or a naturally made cave that the Japanese would use as cover from the American troops. The only thing that you could do was grab a hand grenade, pull the pin, and throw it into the cave."

Rowe and his batallion mainly rebuilt the island so that the United States could use it as an air base. One of the jobs that they completed was the three air strips for the United States Army Air Force. Another of the jobs that they completed was the taking down of huge diesel tanks, sandblasting them, painting them, and then putting them back up so that the U.S. Army Air Force could use them for the storage of airplane fuel.

After their job was completed, they left and came back to the U.S. and then headed for Guam. He said, "The batallion just waited around to go back home to the United States."

While he was in Guam, Harry Truman ordered the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

When the war was over, he came back to White Cloud, Kansas. Rowe is married to Doris Rowe, and they have one child, Jim Rowe. Jim is married and has one child, Tammy Rowe, who is around the age of sixteen. Paul and Doris are both retired now and are still living in White Cloud, Kansas, behind the American Legion Hall.

# ROBERT L. SIMMONS

By Kim Streib and Mary Weis

"Before I left for the service, I worked on a farm in Leona, Kansas," said Robert Simmons. "I was eighteen years old when I got drafted to the service. I was in the Army, and I was in basic training in Camp Roberts, Texas. I was stationed there from November 18, 1944 to April 7, which was for one year, eight months, and twenty-nine days. I can't remember my units or ships," said Simmons.

"I didn't see any combat; I just missed it. My job was to check the chemicals in the poisonous gas bombs. Later, I got tired of checking the gas bombs for leaks, so I volunteered to be a cook. I became a Staff Sergeant," said Simmons.

"I earned the Army Occupation Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Victory Medal, European, African Medal, the Eastern Theater Ribbon, and two Overseas Service stripes," said Simmons.

"I don't think it had any affect on me. My most interesting personal experience was to see the countries, like Germany, France, Austria, and all those countries," said Simmons.

"I had no family at the time I left for the service. I wasn't married or had any children. After I left the service, I came back and worked on a farm about two miles east of Highland. Today, I am retired from the Highland Grade School, USD 425. I retired from being a custodian," said Simmons.

# ORVILLE JAMES SUTHERLAND

By Cory Sutherland

When World War II began, "I was in Highland," said Orville Sutherland. Sutherland was told by the draft board agent, Bill Peabody, that he should pick his service if he didn't want to be drafted. "I joined the Navy," said Sutherland. It was August 4, 1942.

"I had basic training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Illinois and advanced training and sonar at Key West, Florida, training school. I had another eight weeks of material, where we built radios and learned skills and techniques with a soldering iron and vacuum tubes. From Key West, I had a couple of days at Norfolk, Virginia; then I was transferred up to Pier 92, in New York City. I was there for about two weeks; then winter came on. It was early February—cold and nasty. I was sent down to Norfolk again for an overnight stay; before going aboard the *USS Mayrant* (DD 402)," said Sutherland.

"The ship turned right around and went up to Brooklyn Naval Yard and went in dry dock for two weeks. They granted port and starboard liberty. I had the first week, and a friend of mine had the second week. He said, 'I can't go home to Florida in a week,' and I couldn't go to Kansas in a week. So I gave him \$75 for his week and went home to Kansas for a few days," said Sutherland.

Sutherland's ship was assigned to Fleet Squadron #8 which had six or eight destroyers in it. The ship was assigned to escort duty for convoys going to North Africa. "On the way to North Africa we dropped depth charges on



what we thought was a submarine. We didn't get any credit for that; we brought a little debris up, but that was the trick of the submarines. They would turn loose grease and oil and maybe send a kitchen table up or something to make us think we had a hit," said Sutherland.

Aboard the *Mayrant* Sutherland made 2nd Class Sonarman. "The ship was bombed, at Palermo, and we came back to Charleston, South Carolina. I was transferred to the *USS Thrush* (AVP 3)," said Sutherland. From the *Thrush* he transferred to Officer Candidate School (OCS) attaining the rank of Ensign.

Sutherland received campaign ribbons for the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean (at Sicily) campaigns. "The total time that I was in, the American and Pacific theater, was three years and three months," said Sutherland.

After being commissioned, Sutherland went to Hawaii and was assigned to another ship to return home.

"After the service I came home, and June (Sutherland's wife) and I bought the *Everest Enterprise* which we operated together for thirteen years. Then we bought the *Highland Vidette* which I had worked on before I went in service. We owned and operated it together for 27 years," said Sutherland.

After the war, "I joined the Naval Reserve in 1952; I stayed in the reserve until I had 27 years of accumulated time; and then I retired as a Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)," said Sutherland.

Sutherland said, "I have six children; today they're all grown and doing well." Sutherland is now retired and lives in Highland.

# JIM THOMPSON

By Steven Lackey

When the Second World War started in Europe, Jim Thompson was attending Fall City High School in Nebraska. After graduating from high school in 1940, he went to the National School of Aeronautics, a vocational school in Kansas City, where he learned the skills of an airplane mechanic. After vocational school, Thompson worked for Cessna, an airplane manufacturer in Wichita, Kansas.

While working for Cessna, Pearl Harbor was bombed. He then quit his job at Cessna and joined the Army Air Corps. He said, "I knew I was going to get drafted so I quit my job and enlisted into the Army Air Corps, because if you got drafted you might have to be in the infantry, and I would rather fly around in a plane." He then received basic training at Biloxi, Mississippi. After that he was trained as a navigator at Monroe, Louisiana, and he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in 1943.

When his navigation training was finished, he was transported to Sacramento, California, where he flew over the Pacific as a navigator in a C-49. This large airplane was designated as a troop carrier in the 8th Air Force. Like all WWII veterans, the part he played in the war was essential. He spent some time in New Guinea and then went to the Philippines. In the Philippines he was involved with many missions. He said, "These missions consisted of transporting equipment, mail, and personnel." Thompson visited many islands in the Pacific Ocean, but he said, "Japan was the most memorable of all of the places that I was stationed." He also said, "I was amazed at how a

country so small could do so much. The people are so civilized and are hard workers."

The medals he received included a Good Conduct Medal, an Occupation of Japan Medal, and several mission medals. These mission medals were received for flying missions into certain combat areas.

After leaving the service in 1945, he came back home to Nebraska. He said, "After spending a certain amount of time in the service, they let you go, and that is my reason for leaving." In Nebraska, near Falls City, he started farming. He farmed for eight years. While a farmer in Nebraska, he was married to Mary Weber and had four boys: Frank, Dave, Ross, and Clark. At the age of 37, he went to college, and then got a Bachelor's degree in teaching at the teacher's college in Peru, Nebraska. He then taught for four years at Humbolt High School in Nebraska. While teaching at Humbolt, his summers were taken up with summer school at Missouri State College in Columbia where he got his Master's degree. He then came to Highland in 1966. Thompson said, "I came to Highland because I was offered a job at the college in Highland." In Highland he taught 22 years at Highland Community College. He taught many related subjects. He said, "I mostly taught physics, chemistry, and science, but I taught some courses in engineering, organic chemistry, astronomy, and a course in trigonometry."

Thompson has been retired for five years and enjoys reading nonfiction and history books.

# C.B. "NEAL" UKENA

By Traci McCauley and Holly Lucas

It was the spring of 1941, and Cornelius (Neal) Boone Ukena was a senior at Kansas University. The war had begun that year, and the day after the war started, Ukena registered for the draft. "Luckily, my number for the draft was a ways down the line, so I didn't go immediately," Ukena said. It was July of 1942, and Ukena's number had not yet come up, so he decided to enlist in the United States Navy Air Corps. Because of so many recruits, Ukena didn't go on active duty until the fall of 1942. After receiving Navy Civilian Pilot training in Kansas City, Kansas, he then went on to Liberty, Missouri, for one month of pre-pre-flight school. "The group I was in was then shipped to the east coast for a pre-flight school in Del Monte, Florida," stated Ukena. He completed his training in June of 1943 and was then sent to Norman, Oklahoma, for a primary flight training program. "While I was there, I was told that I wasn't going to be a good pilot. Primarily, I had a problem with depth perception and couldn't land a plane correctly," Ukena said. He was then transferred to Great Lakes, Illinois, where he was placed in a waiting pool. While he was there, he applied for commission in the Naval Reserves, which he eventually received.

In October of 1943, he was sent, as an Ensign, to Princeton University for two months of indoctrination training. "I completed that course without any trouble, and from there I received orders to go to Washington, D.C. I was stationed aboard the *USS Dauntless*, which was a former Dutch family yacht that the Navy had taken over from the start of World War II," Ukena stated.

He was on the same ship as Admiral King, who was Chief of Navy Operations and top Navy officer. "I was assigned to that rather small ship and went aboard it every day. I was there for about seven months. There was a standing rule for the young officers--young Ensigns would not be held more than six to eight months aboard the ship because it was a complimentary assignment, and they would be re-assigned. I got to see all the top commanders of the Navy, Army, and (Army) Air Force, along with some British commanders. I also got to see Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, whose scout (yacht) was right next to ours," Ukena said. He was supposed to be re-assigned by his commander, but the commander called him into his cabin and said, "Ukena, your time is about up. What would you like to do?" Ukena replied, "Captain, I would really like to go to submarine service. I already tried the Navy Air Corps, and I wasn't successful with that. I would like to try submarine school."

"Within two or three weeks, I had orders to go to a submarine base in Connecticut (New London). I was aboard many World War I submarines for preliminary training," Ukena said. In 1944, he completed the submarine course and was sent to the West Coast. "While on the West Coast, I was assigned to an advanced training and relief crew at Midway Island in the Pacific Ocean. Our crew would take submarines that were coming off patrol and clean them up, while the sailors of the submarine were on their Rest and Rehabilitation time," Ukena stated. After two weeks, the sailors of the submarine would move on, and the cleaning crew would move on to clean and fix another submarine. He did these assignments for two and one-half months, and then he was assigned to the *USS Guardfish*. At this stage, the war was drawing to a close. He and the rest of the submarine crew went on patrol in the western Pacific, generally where the Japanese were operating. "Our pri-

mary goal was to sink enemy shipping. There weren't a whole lot of Japanese ships to shoot at. Part of the work the submarine was assigned to do was called lifeguard duty. In this duty, we went on the track of B-29 planes as they were flying through Tokyo and other bombing sites in Japan. We were there to pick up survivors of planes that might have been shot down. We were on that assignment for several days, and Tokyo Bay was a rather hairy experience because we were there where they were," Ukena said. "We had to be on the surface during the day to keep contacts with the planes as they flew over. The submarine I was on didn't pick up any survivors," Ukena added. He then went back on patrol up the coast of Japan. "While we were patrolling the coast, we encountered some small Japanese ships that were on our radar. We shot at them and sank them. We picked up the Japanese survivors and took them back to Midway Island. We were on patrol 56 total days," Ukena stated. He was considered to be a part of the tail end of the Okinawa and Iwo Jima campaigns, but the major combat of the war was over.

After the war was over, he came back to Pearl Harbor for his Rest and Rehabilitation time. He stayed at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, which was, and still is, the most elegant hotel in Hawaii. "While we were there, the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which ended World War II," Ukena said. Eventually, he left Hawaii. He went through the Panama Canal and on up to New Orleans, Louisiana. He was in New Orleans for the annual Navy Day, and he got to march in the parade. After leaving New Orleans, he was ordered to go up to the Florida Keys, and up the east coast to put the submarine *USS Guardfish* out of commission.

"During the war, you got 10 points for being married, which helped you get discharged faster. I wasn't married, so I had some time to spend," Ukena said. He was sent to San Diego, California, and assigned to the *USS President*

*Adams*. While he was there, he and the crew loaded about 2,000 replacement Marines to take to China and bring the war veterans home. He went from San Diego, California, all the way to China. Before leaving China, he visited Beijing and then flew over the Great Wall of China. When he came back to the United States, he went to Illinois, where he was discharged. After being discharged, he came back to Highland, to open a hardware store, the former Ukena's Hardware, with his father.

He remained in the Naval Reserve after the war ended. In 1955, he went to the Reserves active drilling status in St. Joseph, Missouri. When he was discharged from the Naval Reserves, he was a Commander. He received a few ribbons, and some campaign medals, but he didn't receive any medals for valor.

In 1950, he was married to JoAnn Flynn of Topeka and they are now living in Highland. They have four children, Anne, Mary Pat, Sally, and David, between the ages of 30 and 40. Today, Neal Ukena is retired, and he is passing the requirements that his wife has set for him.

"The most interesting personal experience I had was the wide area of coverage we got to see. We were everywhere. I encountered many different things, but nothing too severe," Ukena said. He got to see China, the Japanese Mountains, and the Panama Canal. "The war gave me a broader understanding of the world, and we learned a lot of different attitudes others had, that we didn't have," Ukena concluded.

# MAX WAGGONER

By Merideth Q. Harness

Wilton "Max" Waggoner entered the Army on September 29, 1942, at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas to become part of the 95th Infantry division. He went to Carthage (Camp Crowder), Missouri, for three months of basic training. In 1943, he was transferred to Templecain, Mississippi, where he stayed for six months. He then went to Leavenworth, Tennessee, for two months and then back to Mississippi and then to New Jersey. Waggoner sailed out of New York Harbor on January 27, 1944 for Europe.

Waggoner crossed the English Channel and marched through France, Germany, Belgium, and The Netherlands. He was in many different battles including Normandy, Northern France, the Rhineland, the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), and Central Europe. "I was wounded on the third of April of '45," said Waggoner.

"I was in the Battle of the Bulge, it was cold up there. Ice was froze all around, and them tanks would slide around. There was about three foot of snow, the trees had about two foot of snow on 'em. Them Germans would fire into the trees with that artillery. Snow and shrapnel would go ever'where."

"One night me and a buddy got away from our outfit, so we crawled in a hole in the ground to stay for the night. The next morning, of course, we had long whiskers, I looked over at him, and his whiskers was plum white because frost was froze on them. We 'bout froze to death," said Waggoner about the Battle of the Bulge.

"When we was at the Bulge we ran out of rations. There were a lot of



old cows. We shot them and ate them, goats too, almost anything we could get our hands on."

"I worried more about the guy next to me than myself," said Waggoner. "The last time we went up there [to fight] we were on the front lines for 120 days without relief. We had them Germans on the run towards the last of the war, so we just kept moving."

The longest march Waggoner took part in was a 600-mile trek across Europe that lasted thirty days. It was one of the fastest sustained marches in history.

Waggoner received medals for many different honors. He received five bronze battle stars -- one for each of the battles he fought in. He received a Bronze Star for bravery beyond the call of duty, a Purple Heart, a Combat Infantry Badge. Forty-five years after the war ended Waggoner received two French medals for fighting in France. Waggoner also had two World War I medals that he took off of a dead German soldier.

"We went into towns and did a lot of hand-to-hand combat. We had to clean them [the Germans] out of the houses," said Waggoner.

"I seen ol' Patton over there a lot of times. In fact, I was on guard on a bridge down there one night, and he come down there in the pouring down rain. I stopped a jeep and asked what the password was. He didn't give me no counter sign, so I just took that ol' M1 rifle and put it under his chin. He turned around, and I seen all them stars. He yelled, 'Get that rifle out from under my chin, Private,'" said Waggoner.

Waggoner remembers his most horrific experience as the taking over of the Buchenwald concentration camp. He was appalled at the things the Germans had done to the people, for example making lamp shades out of human skin.

Returning home to White Cloud, Kansas, after the war was over, Waggoner went to work. "I stayed on the farm for a little while and then went to work for a contractor," said Waggoner.

"I have seven children and a slug of grandchildren," said Waggoner about his family. Waggoner currently resides in White Cloud, Kansas.

# **BUD WATTS**

By Mary Weis

In 1940-1941 before the war started, "I was in Denver, Colorado, working in a Nile Grand Machine shop railroad," said Bud Watts. "I was 'greeted' by President Roosevelt, when I was drafted to service. I served in the Navy, in a Seabee Construction Battalion. I trained at San Diego Naval Base, San Diego, California. I was stationed at Kelso, Washington, up on the Columbia River, for one year. My unit was the Eighth Specialist Construction Battalion, and we loaded ammunition on ships going to the war zone, which came up the Columbia River," said Watts.

Watts said, "I didn't see any combat. My most interesting personal experience was leaving my family. My rank was the Seamen First Class. I didn't receive any medals except the Regular State Side set because I didn't go overseas; I just stayed in Oregon. After I left the service, I started construction work. I don't think the war really had any effect on me. It affected my family some. It was quite an ordeal to be away from my family, which was my two small children and my wife."

"Today I am not doing nothing; I've been retired since 1983," said Watts. Watts lives in White Cloud, Kansas, with his wife Dorothy. He also has four children, Sharon Collins, Highland; Linda Maris, White Cloud, Kansas; James Watts, Highland; George Watts, St. Joseph, Missouri.

# CLOYSE WINCHESTER

By Kim Streib

"Before I went into the war, I lived at home in Leona, Kansas," said Cloyse Winchester. "I was twenty-one when I left for the war. I was married when I left for the service to my wife, Ellen. We had no kids at the time I left," said Winchester.

"I volunteered and joined the Navy," said Winchester. "I didn't go into basic training because there was no place to train us, so we went straight to the sea. I was stationed on the *USS Enterprise* for four years and eighteen days. The *Enterprise*, which was an aircraft carrier and eventually had planes that bombed Tokyo. I was a Barber, 3rd Class. I received a medal for each battle I was in, which one of them was the President's Unit Citation. The most scared I ever was in the war was when I was forty foot away from a bomb when the Japanese bombed our carrier. In the Battle of Midway, we carried bombers and fighter planes both. During the war, I witnessed the Battle of Coral Sea, the Battle of Okinawa, and the sinking of the *USS Yorktown*, which was the carrier the Japanese sank. After the war, I became even more jumpy than I ever was before," said Winchester.

"After leaving the war, my wife and I attended beauty college in Chicago, Illinois," said Winchester. "We then moved to Highland and opened up a beauty shop. Today, I am living with my wife as a retired man. In my spare time, I collect walnuts, crack them, and sell the walnuts to make some extra money," said Winchester.

# **DANA WINDMEYER**

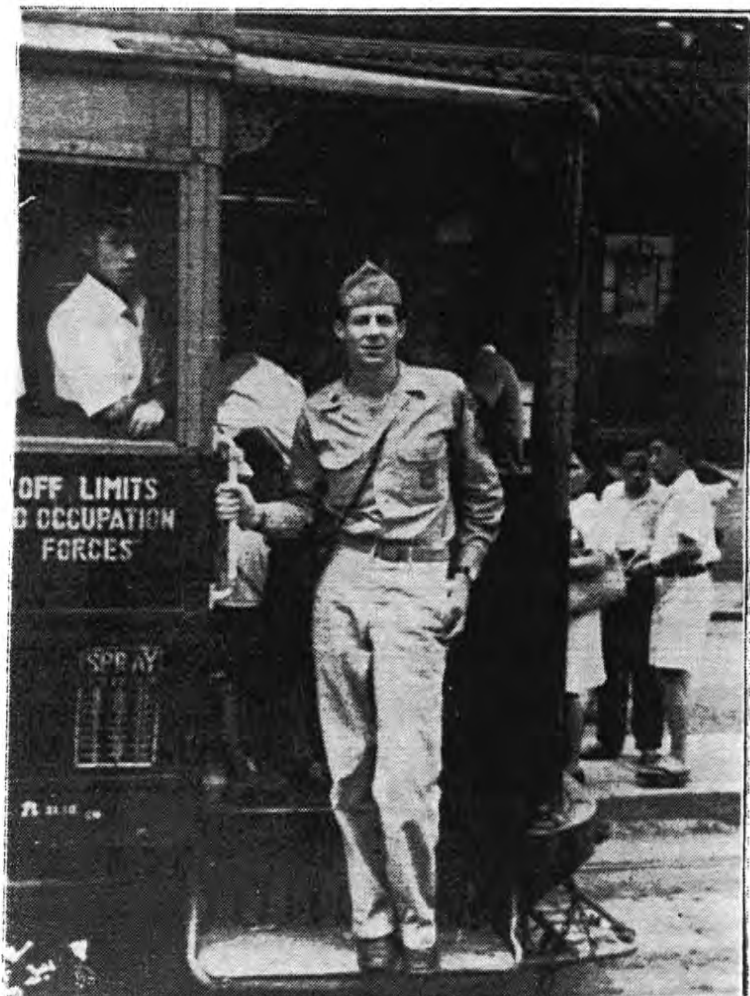
By Craig Windmeyer

When the war started, Dana Windmeyer had just graduated from high school and had worked a couple of years at the North Atlantic Air Plane factory. Windmeyer was called to service by the draft and was assigned to the Air Force. While in the service, Windmeyer's basic training was at Sheperd Field, Texas. For other training Windmeyer went to Carlsbad, New Mexico, and then Windmeyer was sent overseas.

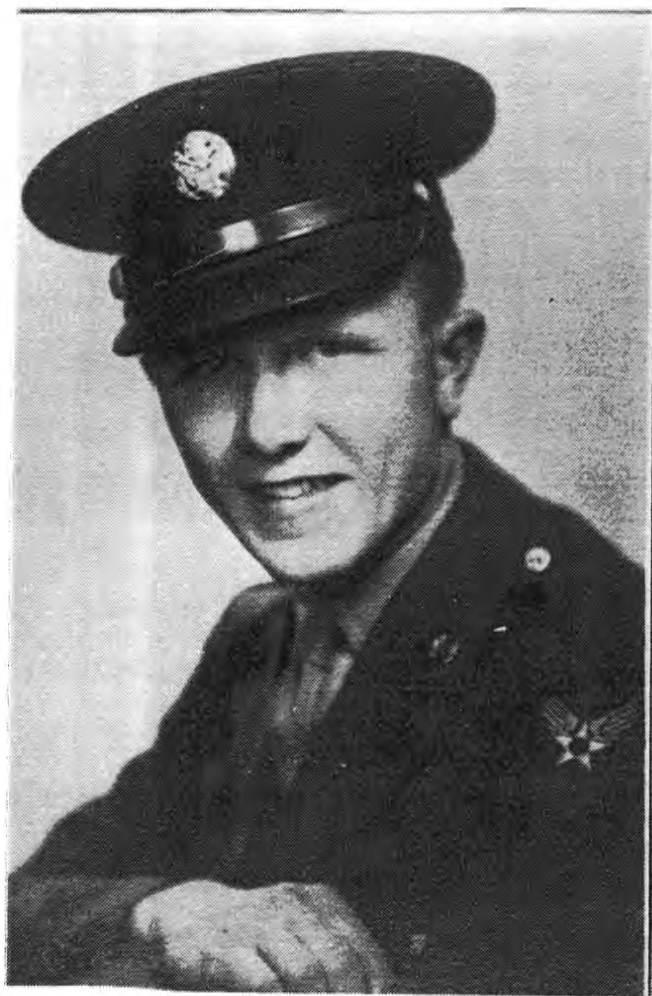
He saw combat in the South Pacific and then went to New Guinea, Guadalacanal, Philippine Islands, and Japan. "The only thing I had was hittin' fox holes. During the night, Japanese planes would come over, and I could see our night fighters fightin' and shooting them down," said Windmeyer. During the service he attained the rank of Sargeant. While in the service Windmeyer said, "I got the Good Conduct Medal and all of the South Pacific Medals that they gave."

After the service, Windmeyer started a farm southwest of White Cloud, Kansas. After the war he felt that he had no change or affect from the war. As Windmeyer said, "At the time I couldn't see that I had any change at all." After the war Windmeyer didn't have any family of his own. Today Windmeyer is a retired farmer who lives in Missouri in the Ozarks. He comes back home two weekends a year to work at the annual flea market.

PHOTOS  
OF THE  
WORLD WAR II  
VETERANS



**JOHN BATCHELDER (USA)**



**BILL CRABTREE (USA)**

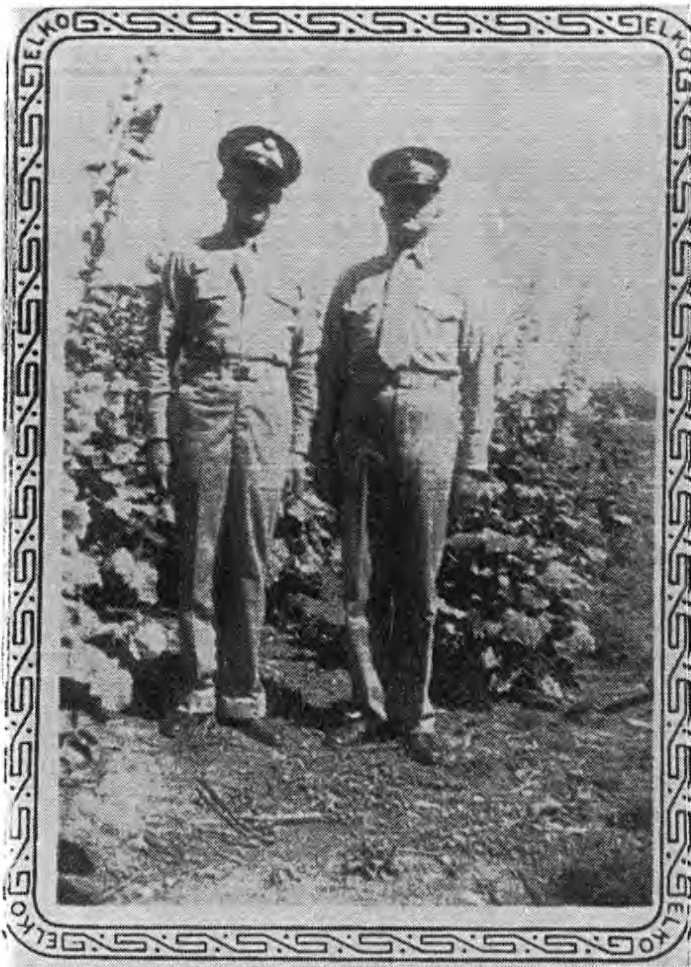


**VIRGIL BAUER (USN & USA)**



**JACK DILLON (USA)**





**DOYLE DERRICK (USMC)**  
(ON THE LEFT)



**ED DELK (USA)**



**KEN EDIE (USN)**



**CHARLES NEIBLING (USAAF)**



**GERALD RAWLES (USA)**



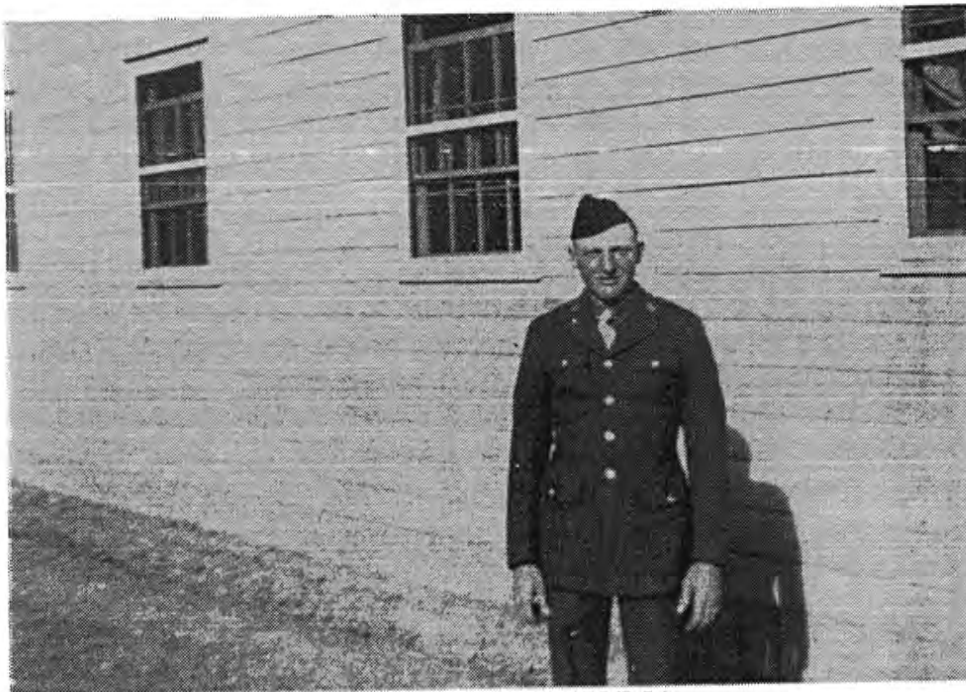
**ROBERT SIMONS (USA)**



**SID HARGIS (USAAF)**



**NORMAN GAUL (USAAF)**



**LAWRENCE LEWIS (USA)**



**STANLEY McCauley (USN)**



**MILLIE MYERS (USN)**



**WILLIAM T. NOLL (USN)**



**MELVIN ROSENBERGER (USN)**



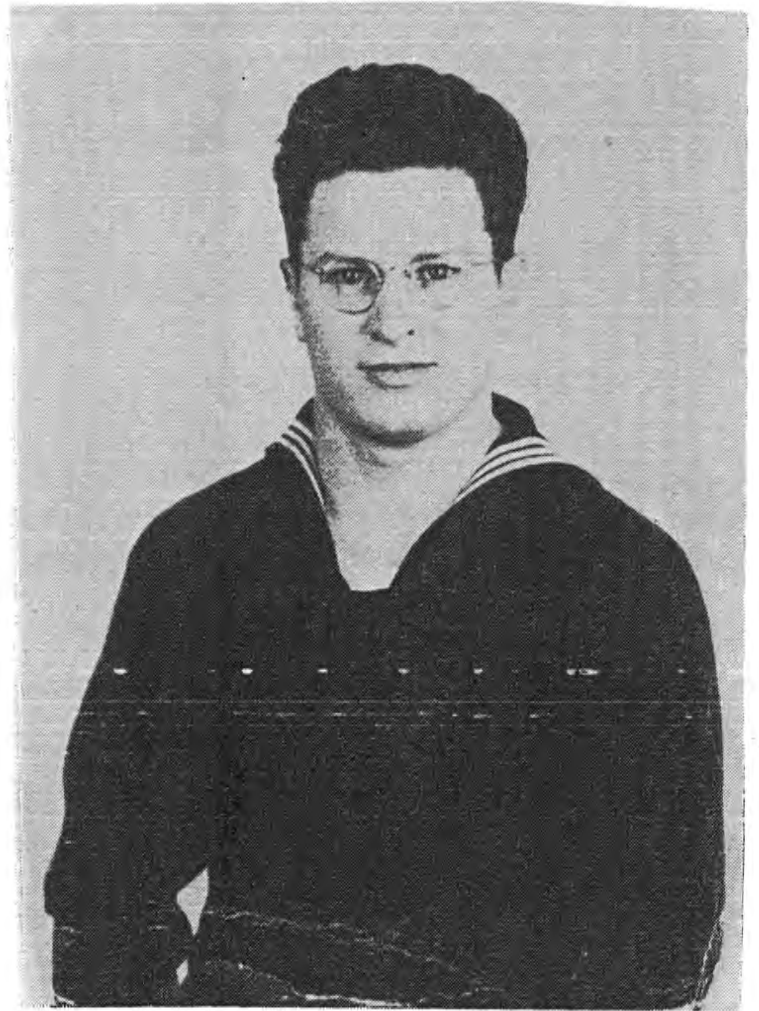
**NEAL UKENA (USN)**



**PAUL ROWE (USN)**



**WARREN DENTON (USA)**



**CLOYCE WINCHESTER (USN)**

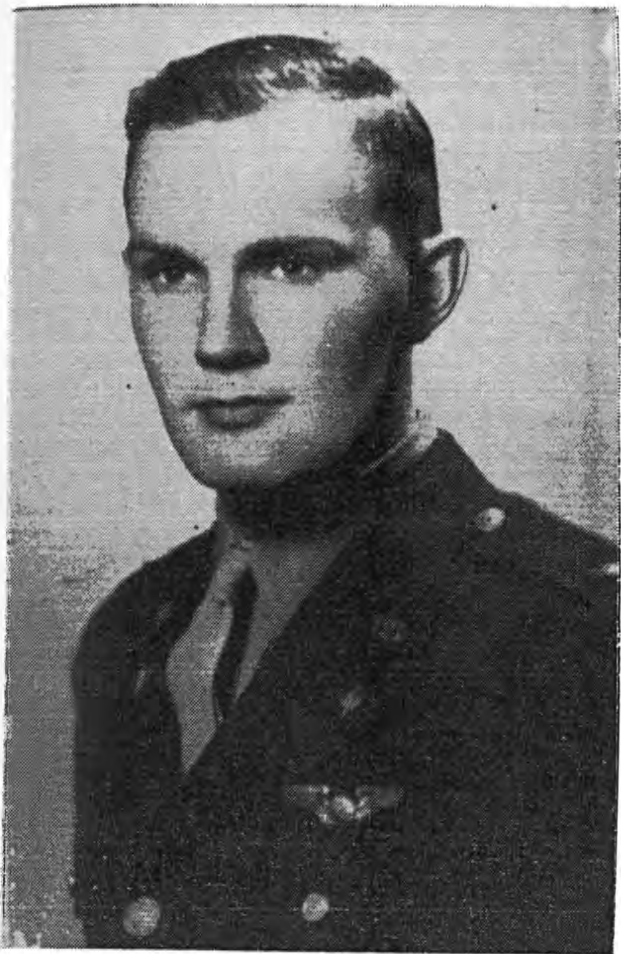




**DANA WINDMEYER (USAAF)**



**ORVILLE J. SUTHERLAND (USN)**



**JIM THOMPSON (USAAF)**



**BUD WATTS (USN)**



**MAX WAGGONER (USA)**

**NORRIS LOYD (USAAF)**  
(NOT PICTURED)



**BILL GIBSON (USA)**

