



OSS-101 ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

Fall 2009

www.oss-101.com

2009 Reunion Cruise Recap

Fifteen people set sail on October 9, 2009 aboard the Princess Cruise Lines "Emerald Princess". A good time was had by all, which sailed from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida to the ports of: Princess Cays, Bahamas, St. Maarten, St. Thomas and Grand Turk. This was a week of relaxation and good food with physical exertion limited to pulling handles and pushing buttons in the ship's Casino and Bingo theaters and, of course, a great get-together every night before dinner allowed all of us to catch up on our activities since the last cruise. We filled two tables at dinner, close to each other with much visiting between tables. Two wedding anniversaries were celebrated with a special solo by one of our group. We finally got around to having a group picture taken, with everyone dressed in their finery. We had a short business meeting on board. Jay Breen and Brian Ferry were both nominated and approved to serve on the board of Trustees. Additional details will be discussed at our next reunion.

Going from the top down and left to right:
Veronica & Dick Richter, Irene & Allen Richter,
Susan & Jay Breen, John Breen, Dennis Klein,
Virginia & Sam Spector, Jean Breen, Carolyn
Trechter, Dorothy Klein & Lois McKeown,
Colleen Mitchell and Oliver Trechter





**2009 OSS-101 Reunion Cruise
 Departed October 9, 2009
 Princess Cruise Line - Emerald Princess**



From Left to Right and Top to Bottom: Oliver Trechter, Colleen Mitchell & Carolyn Trechter; Irene and Allen Richter; Sam & Virginia Spector; John & Jean Breen

Burma Schools Continue To Provide For Kachins

By Brian Ferry

Members of the OSS-101 Association are friends of the Kachins, and Col. Dan Tarter is a friend to us. Tarter's continued work on behalf of our organization's Myitkyina Schools Project has allowed it to flourish.

Thanks to Tarter's help, conducted through his own not-for-profit organization Big Sky Sun Projects International (BSSPI), there have been improvements in both the school program and in Kachin veteran health care since he last reported to the Association.

Tarter wrote in October to report that the program has been consolidated into three "hard stand" buildings around Myitkyina. In our summer newsletter, it was explained that classroom facilities varied greatly, depending on location and available utilities. Some were basic wood structures that looked more like tool sheds than academic buildings. Tarter said that the three current locations all have working electricity and cost the program a thrifty \$80 per month in rent. Though the schools are confined to fewer classrooms, the facilities are now more conducive to education and they continue to serve the same number of students.

The program provides seven teachers in as many classrooms who work with approximately 260 students between 8 and 18 years of age. The curriculum continues to be beginner and advanced beginner English and, as Tarter explained, our program supplements the education that many of these students are already receiving in their Burmese school studies. The nature of education in the country allows students to attend one four-hour block of classes in either the morning or afternoon. The Myitkyina Schools Project gives our students an additional two to three hours of education per day.

BSSPI's Country Director has been able to restock the schools with new textbooks and has purchased some CD players and teacher support materials, as per the requests of several teachers earlier this year. The CD players, in particular, are helpful, as local teachers make use of children's music as an English teaching aid.

Perhaps best of all, through Tarter and BSSPI, we have been able to arrange for two of the program's teachers to visit Rangoon in October and receive teacher education training sponsored by Educasia, which, according to Tarter, is a UK-based educational non-government organization, or NGO. "Educasia will pick up their travel expenses and pay them a small living stipend while they're in training, so this will be at no cost to your program," he explained.

"After receiving this training, our two teachers will return to Myitkyina and cascade their lessons learned to the other five teachers."

All of this great news is only possible because of the continued efforts of our OSS-101 veterans, visits to Burma by Sam Spector and the late John Dempsey, the efforts of Col. Tarter and BSSPI, and financial contributions by Association members. Tarter raises additional funds through his not-for-profit organization, but each of our members can take solace that portions of their annual dues and additional private contributions are helping educate and improve the lives of nearly 300 children in Myitkyina. Tarter explained that this is happening because our organization has proven to local authorities that the program is not overtly political, it is intended to help the poorest segments of the population, and because we've been able to keep the program clean and uncorrupted, with regular financial audits and honest local staff. Schools are even registered with the local government education ward as "OSS-101 Schools."

"This is the kind of US power that the world wants and needs to see more of," Tarter said, adding later, "Ours kids are excelling in their government school classes and exams largely as a result of what you are providing."

In addition to the program's English education arm, money has been set aside to provide a regular nursing service to both the students and to Kachin Ranger veterans. A full-time trained nurse with proper supplies visits our three classrooms during the week to offer medical assistance to children who, for many, do not have any other non-emergency contact with doctors. On the weekend, our nurse provides to Kachin Ranger veterans the Burmese equivalent of American in-home care – a tremendous benefit that few, if any, would ordinarily qualify for or receive. The veterans are "uniformly delighted" Tarter explained, as many previously complained that area clinics were either understaffed, totally unstaffed, or sometimes lacked proper stock of medications.

In spite of all of these wonderful developments, the program will always be operating with a small degree of uncertainty. Tarter recently moved to Hawaii to pursue work, but said he will have no problem remaining committed to the Myitkyina Schools Program or his other charitable endeavors through BSSPI. Additionally, BSSPI's Vice President Gordon "Mack" Hembree, who also serves out of Rangoon as a local Chief Financial Officer of sorts to our program, will see his Army tour in the Far East expire in July 2010. Still, Tarter is most confident that our program will continue to thrive.

One of the few ways we can supplement this uncertainty

is by contributing additional donations. They are most appreciated by everyone involved, as the cost of running the program continues to change with the undulating global economy, local exchange rates, and the general cost of services. Financial contributions can be sent to Dennis Klein. As always, both Dennis and Col. Tarter are open to listening to fundraising ideas that Association members propose.

“Your ongoing support to the schools program remains crucial to keeping this going,” said Tarter.

OSS-101 in Fiction and Non-Fiction, In Print and On the Internet

By Brian Ferry

When one considers how secretive work in the Office of Strategic Services was – and it could have rivaled work in submarines for the title of the “silent service” – it may come as a surprise to some that information on the OSS, Detachment 101, and the China, Burma India Theater as a whole, can be readily found in print and online.

As our own Sam Spector reports, a new fiction book is set in exactly this time, with references to our beloved unit, and examines the human impact of war experiences:

Kat MacVeagh's just-published book *The Coat In The Woods* (Orlebar Point Publishing, 282 pages), although a novel, is a story based on the tragedies of wars which affect present day living. With references to World War II (Burma, OSS, and Detachment 101), Korea and Vietnam as background events, the story is one of a family disturbed and separated by reactions to attempts to adjust to post war consequences. With occasional

references to war time activities, the story is one of family members, working together to attempt to solve the mystery and problems that impacted all members in various ways. The story takes place in Minnesota but relates to Veterans

Administration care generally, mental and physical stress, marital relationships, and adjustments thereto.

The author does an excellent job in researching for her references to the war time guerilla activities of the OSS Detachment 101 as well as presenting the sympathetic activities of the Veterans Administration hospital working with veterans who have mental and physical problems. The book is an excellent novel and is informative in its basic data and as a presentation of people's problems. A good read for one and all, but especially for those with family members who served in the Armed Forces.

The book's suggested retail price is \$14.95 and can be ordered at <http://www.thecoatinthewoods.com> or from Orlebar Point Publishing: 182 Decourcy Drive, VOR 1X1, Gabriola Island, BC Canada.

In addition to a wealth of books that have been published on the war, both by novelists and by veterans detailing their personal accounts, those with an internet connection and some time on their hands can find a wealth of media on the internet.

Your first stop should be the Real Military Flix, a division of the Real Military Network (<http://www.realmilitaryflix.com>). Referred to the Association by Michael Bilton, author of the book *Four Hours in Mai Lai* and guest of our 2005 reunion, Real Military Flix is a collection of

declassified, newsreel, and propaganda films relating to the US Armed Forces. All branches and all conflicts are represented here. There is a mix of color and black and white footage, as well as films with and without sound. The only issue I had was finding OSS-related videos through their search feature. The words I searched for frequently came back with no results. So, if you wish to see some very interesting and exciting footage about CBI and the OSS, I recommend you simply browse the videos.

One in particular that I

enjoyed was titled *OSS Report – China, Burma, India* and can be found here (<http://www.realmilitaryflix.com/public/691.cfm>). At just over eight minutes in length, it contains footage of action behind enemy lines, OSS Director

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Search millions of photographs from the LIFE photo archive, stretching from the 1750s to today. Most were never published and are now available for the first time through the joint work of LIFE and Google.

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Search tip
 Add "source:life" to any Google image search and search only the LIFE photo archive. For example: [computer source:life](#)

Those with a little time on their hands can search the millions of iconic images of the Life magazine archives through Google, as well as scores of videos, books, and texts through government trusted independent websites.

William Donovan, the capture of Japanese prisoners, and of Kachin “warriors.” There is also a large number of captured German World War II footage, for those who are interested.

For a site that involves more reading, but an equally interesting perspective, visit the National Parks Service website at <http://www.nps.gov>. The search feature works here, and you will find many results by simply searching OSS. There are focused pages about the role of particular parks in the training of the OSS and other World War II outfits, such as the training conducted at Prince William Forest Park, some 35 miles south of Washington, D.C. The nice thing about the National Parks Service pages is how they’re comprehensive, pairing the text with links to photographs and even training videos from the National Archives so those who are interested do not have to search separately for those things. Included in my search results of the OSS is a complete online book titled *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*. Written by John Whiteclay Chambers II in 2008, it appears to be a work commissioned by the National Parks Service. The full 11 chapters and all associated references, illustrations, and such are available for download as individual PDF files, which can be read or printed from any computer.

Finally, for those unaware, the tremendous internet property Google, which has been one of the leading web-based companies for the digitization of print records, paired with Life magazine a few years ago to host the publication’s complete photo archive online. By visiting <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/>, you can browse millions of Life photographs shot by their photographers or purchased for their archives dating all the way back to the 1750s. Searching for specific people, places, or events is key: a search for CBI resulted in no documents, while searches for William Donovan, Joseph Stilwell, or Merrill’s Marauders yielded many results. Here are some of the 20th Century’s most iconic photographs – including those shot by Alfred Eisenstaedt, Robert Capa, Walker Evans, Henri Huet, Lee Miller, and Edward Steichen – all in one easy location.

The world is at your fingertips on the internet, and when you use it for educational purposes, it can provide hours and days of personal enrichment about the OSS and Detachment 101. The only precaution to take is to keep your searches to what editors like to call “primary source material.” You cannot verify, or expect individuals to independently verify, facts or allegations found on some personal websites or topical “fan” sites. For scholastic and informational data, your best bet is to keep searches restricted to government sites, university websites, well-balanced media outlets, or accomplished internet sources.

Spielberg, Hanks Fight Japanese in The Pacific

By Brian Ferry

Executive producers Steven Spielberg, Tom Hanks, and Gary Goetzman have teamed up again to present a new perspective of World War II to the American public in the new HBO miniseries, *The Pacific*. The 10-part series is set to debut on cable in March 2010.

Spielberg and Hanks first worked together in an executive production role for HBO’s 2001 epic miniseries *Band of Brothers*, also a 10-part series based on a book of the same name by Stephen Ambrose that detailed the experience of Easy Company, 506th PIR, 101st Airborne, in the European Theater of operations. Goetzman produced two *Band of Brothers* episodes.

The Pacific will focus on what many refer to as the “island-hopping campaign” and will be told largely through the experiences of three Marine Corps veterans: Eugene Sledge, Robert Leckie, and John Basilone. Sledge boldly recounted his experiences on Peleliu and Okinawa in his memoir *With the Old Breed* and Leckie detailed the horrors of war on Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester, and Peleliu in his book *Helmet for My Pillow*. Both books, along with Sledge’s postwar memoir *China Marine* and Chuck Tatum’s *Red Blood, Black Sand*, are included in the writing credits for *The Pacific*. Though not included in the credits on the Internet Movie Database, Jim Proser and Jerry Cutter’s biography of “Manila” John Basilone, *I’m Staying With My Boys ...*, was also said to have been consulted before *The Pacific* was written. Basilone served in the battles of Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima.

Spielberg has his own ties to the China, Burma, India Theater. Arnold Spielberg, the Hollywood star’s father, served as a communications chief with the 341st Bomb Group, 10th Air Force, in India. While his father’s wartime stories inspired some of the younger Spielberg’s first movies as a youth growing up in New Jersey and Arizona, the CBI Theater doesn’t appear to play any significant role in *The Pacific*. Still, if *The Pacific* does follow closely with the authors’ descriptions of combat against a determined Japanese enemy, it will shed much-needed light on the efforts of Detachment 101 and other Pacific Theater veterans. While speaking of *The Pacific* in April 2009, Hanks was quoted by the UK’s Empire Magazine, “We are able to visit the home front on this one and we’re able to show the guys before the war and after. We show some of the most vicious stuff I’ve ever seen on film – because it has to be.”

Spielberg and Hanks received critical acclaim for *Band*



of *Brothers*, which was the recipient of over 22 awards for filmmaking. Hanks' first foray into a World War II-related role was in 1998's Spielberg-directed film *Saving Private Ryan*, which has gained the respect of countless veterans for its intense and uncensored opening scene that depicted the D-Day landing on Omaha Beach. Hanks' resume also includes his role as National Spokesman for the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., including a speech during the Memorial's dedication on May 29, 2004, and as a fundraiser for the National World War II Museum (formerly the National D-Day Museum) in New Orleans, LA. Spielberg's role as director, producer, or consultant on World War II-related films goes back decades and includes *Letters from Iwo Jima*, *Flags of Our Fathers*, *Schindler's List*, and *Empire of the Sun*.

For more information on *The Pacific*, see HBO's video previews and slideshow gallery at www.hbo.com/events/pacific/. You can also visit a very thorough fan site that has been publishing updates about the series since it was in pre-production at www.pacificfans.com.

2010 OSS-101 ASSOC. REUNION WASHINGTON, D.C.

**October 13th–17th, 2010
Wednesday–Sunday**

*(Wednesday night is our check-in night.
Events will begin on Thursday)*

Holiday Inn National Airport
2650 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA 22202
(703) 684-7200

**DONATIONS for Burma School Project:
\$100 from Troy Sacquety**

Save The Date: Reunion 2010 Set For October In Washington, D.C.

With the dawn of a new year comes some great news for our Association members. We've already begun planning the 2010 OSS-101 Association reunion!

This year's reunion will again take place in the Nation's Capital, Washington D.C. We are currently discussing ideas and vetting areas for events during this October's reunion. If anyone reading this has a suggestion of a place they think we should go, please send that suggestion my way. Additionally, if there is anything the Association did or didn't do during the last D.C. reunion in 2005, something you really want to do or really don't want to do again, please pass that information along to me.

In the meantime, all those who wish to attend can put their best foot forward by booking their hotel room at the Holiday Inn National Airport, just one mile from Ronald Reagan National Airport in Arlington, VA. We have a group of rooms set aside for the reunion, including a small number of smoking rooms. Representatives at Holiday Inn National Airport have been extremely kind and accommodating. We will have the traditional hospitality room for the duration of our stay and our traditional Saturday night formal dinner will be held in one of the hotel's ballrooms. Additionally, there is a free shuttle bus that runs between Reagan National Airport and the hotel. The bus runs every 15 minutes with pick-up stops at Doors 5 & 9, but reunion attendees can also call the hotel's front desk and request pickup upon their arrival.

When you call to reserve your room, mention that you're part of the OSS-101 Association reunion and mention the dates of our reunion so you can receive a special group rate of \$119 per night. If you require a smoking room, which will be located on the hotel's dedicated 3rd Floor, please mention this when you book your reservation. Those who wish to book online, please e-mail me at bferry@gmail.com. Shortly after I write this, the hotel will be sending me a special link for our organization that, when a member books through it, will automatically receive the discounted rate for their room.

Please contact me with any questions or suggestions:

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Taps

Julian M. Niemczyk Ambassador, Air Force Colonel

Julian Martin Niemczyk, 89, a retired Air Force colonel who was the U.S. ambassador to Czechoslovakia from 1986 to 1989, died Sept. 16 at Inova Fairfax Hospital of cardiac arrest. He was a resident of Annandale.

Col. Niemczyk, who was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to serve as ambassador, started his political career in the early 1970s with the Republican National Committee. From 1973 to 1980, he was executive director of the heritage groups division.

In 1980, he was director of the nationalities division for the Reagan-Bush presidential campaign committee. From 1983 to 1986, he was chief executive of People to People International, an educational exchange program founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Julian Martin Niemczyk, a native of Fort Sill, Okla., received a bachelor's degree from the University of the Philippines in 1955.

He was an Army Air Forces veteran of World War II and an Air Force veteran of the Korean War. During World War II, he had assignments with the Office of Strategic Services in Burma and China and later was stationed in Manila, Warsaw and Prague. During his military career, he also had assignments with the National Security Agency and the CIA. He retired from the Air Force in 1971.

His military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and Defence Commendation Medal.

His memberships included the Council of American Ambassadors, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Knights of Columbus and the Army-Navy Club.

Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Margaret McCann Niemczyk of Annandale.

Jack Knoll, PhD.

Jack was born in Ashland, WI, on February 17, 1924. He died in Washburn, WI at Northern Lights Health Care Center on October 21, 2009. Jack enlisted in the Army and served with the OSS in China, receiving several decorations including the Bronze Star. Jack taught physiology at the University of Nevada, Reno. Several Reno area physicians and dentists were students in Jack's physiology classes. He retired to Delta Township, WI.

Jack is survived by his wife, Ella; son, Bob (Connie); three grandchildren, Jennifer, Andrew, and Daniel and two

great-grandchildren, Chloe and Quinn. Per his wishes, there will be no funeral or memorial.

John B. Sharp

John Berry Sharp died December 28, 2009 at Inland Valley Rehab Center in Pomona as a result of a brain tumor.

Born May 18, 1925, in Pittsburgh, PA, he was a resident of Calimesa for 12 years.

He served his country in the U.S. Army during World War II, entering at age 17 and serving in China, Burma and India. After the war, he finished high school and went to work for the Gulf Oil Co. He also was employed by the Food Machinery and Chemical Co. for 13 years. He was a reserve deputy for both the San Bernardino and Riverside County Sheriff's Departments as well as a member of the sheriff's posse. He was retired after 26 years in architecture at Norton Air Force Base.

He was a member of the Yucaipa American Legion, Yucaipa Veterans of Foreign Wars, Office of Strategic Services Society, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, OSS Det. 101 Association and a beloved volunteer at the Yucaipa Valley Chamber of Commerce.

He is survived by his step-daughter Sonja Steinbeck of Los Angeles; step-son Arlen Torgerson, two step-grandchildren and one step-great-grandchild.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 45 years, Helga "Scottie" Halvig Sharp.

Memorial services were held Sunday, January 10, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

New Notification Service

In order to provide our members with the most up to date information as soon as possible, it was suggested at the Board meeting that Dennis Klein let our members know of a new notification service. This service is to provide members with; obituaries, current OSS-101 projects and anything else that our members feel is appropriate. Please let Dennis know if you are interested in adding your name to his list by emailing him at: Dennis@OSS-101.com. Should you not have email, please ask a sibling or close friend to join on your behalf.

OSS-101 Association

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OSS Det. 101 WEB SITE

Check out the OSS Det. 101 website at:

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