

Vol. 62

OTYC

April 2006

OTYC

No. 2

Army, Navy, Air Corps, Marines

OTYC Veterans Recall Their Service in World War II

This summer the Breeze editors had the pleasure of talking to seven Omena Traverse Yacht Club members who served in World War II. Their stories varied dramatically. None of them knew each other then, and they all insist that they personally didn't do anything special, that they were just doing their duty against a terrible worldwide menace.

They also put their lives on hold for several years of their youth, giving up access to education, careers, hometowns, and most of all, to family. Here, in alphabetical order, are their stories ...

Ping Abbott, who now lives in suburban Washington, D.C., was born Neva Pingley in Elkins, West Virginia. When questioned about the origin of her nickname, she said that everyone acquired nicknames in nursing school, and hers was just a shortened form of her family name.

Asked when she first heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor, Ping replied that she had heard about it on the radio in the afternoon after working the night shift as a registered nurse at a D.C. hospital. She found the news devastating and immediately went to Walter Reed Army Hospital to join up as a 2nd lieutenant Army nurse.

The Army sent her to India, first for 7 months in the desert, and then for 3 years on the Indian/Burmese border caring for the wounded from the battles in Burma. She wore a khaki nurse's uniform and lived and worked in bamboo bashes, which were basically tree houses. Sometimes wild animals came too close to the bashes for comfort.

Working hours lasted 12-14 hours, but "we didn't

mind because we wanted to win the war." One of the things Ping hated about the war was the "kept" geisha girls who were often wards in her hospital.



Ping and Waldo Abbott

Mutual friends arranged a blind date to introduce Ping to her future husband, **Waldo Abbott**, who was a company commander in India and Burma. Soon after they met, Ping had to help during surgery on Waldo for a burst appendix.

Ping's first trip to Omena to meet the Abbott family was solo since Waldo was still on duty in Burma. She flew to Traverse City, called the Omena grocery store because the Abbott cottage had no phone, and the Abbotts then had to drive to Traverse City to get her. They threw a big party to introduce Ping to the Omena Point community.

Ping and Waldo got married in West Virginia after the war and had a wonderful 55-year marriage before Waldo's death 4 years ago. Their daughter, **Brenda Abbott Anderson**, notes that Ping is still considered a hero in West Virginia for her WWII service.

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**The Omena-Traverse
Yacht Club Breeze**

Official organ of the Omena-Traverse Yacht Club, authorized by its Board of Directors in 1948, published twice yearly.

Vol. 1, No. 1 published February, 1949. (Leelanau Yacht Club News, Vol. 1, No. 1 published October, 1947.)

Printed in and mailed from Dayton, OH

Classified Ads.... \$15.00 for 4 column lines (\$5.00 for teenagers).

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Web Site: www.otyc.net

The Breeze.....

All the news that fits, we print.

Commodore's Corner

GREETINGS FROM AUBURN We especially enjoy our view into the American River Canyon this time of the year. The grasses and trees are green, the snow-capped peaks of the Sierras are in the distance and the daffodils are blooming. The 2006 season promises to be active and fun. The following are some updates:

YOUTH I am very pleased to announce that there will be a Youth Program this summer. **Rich Connell**, who has extensive sailing and racing experience, will be the director and **John Varley**, who has graduated from Michigan State University and who participated in the Youth Program in the past, will be the co-director. Thanks **Mike Biskupski**, **Bill Cron**, and **Bill Mason** for locating and interviewing Rich and John.

The Youth Program will begin on Wednesday, July 5th and end on Friday, August 4th. During the last week, the emphasis will be on racing including instruction on race rules and strategies.

Needless to say, we need your support especially in increasing the level of participation this summer. For more information, please read the article in the Breeze.

FINANCIAL As a result of a great deal of work by Treasurer **Judy Balas**, Membership chairman, **Kanda McKee C.P.A.**, and **Judy Knorp**, all the bookkeeping functions have been transferred to the club's QuickBooks program. This has enabled the Board to have information for planning at our fingertips. Assistant Treasurer **Bob Lewis** processed all the dues checks and performed other bookkeeping duties during the winter months. We are very fortunate to have these hard working and talented people managing the financial aspects of our club.

The Board created an OTYC Preservation Fund in lieu of the Building Preservation and other similar funds previously established. At year's end, there was over \$15,000 in this fund and this was after paying \$7,548 for the new deck. Our goal is to increase this fund to \$30,000 and eliminate having future assessments.

ACTIVITIES Social Chairman **Melissa Chenault** is putting the final touches on the 2006 season from the Memorial Day cocktail party to the Labor Day weekend picnic. The Interlochen Ensemble, Traverse City Celtic Band and Dave Greer and the Classic Jazz Stompers will be performing at the club. On Friday, July 21st there will be an ice cream social at 7:30 followed by Bingo.

SURVEY Thanks to all of you who completed the membership survey. Your input and ideas have been very helpful in planning for the future.

BY-LAW CHANGES With our area's actual and planned growth, the Board recommends adoption of the proposed by-law changes and seeks your proxy if you are not planning to attend the annual meeting on July 15th. Your signing and mailing the proxy to P. O. Box 103, Omena as soon as possible will be appreciated.

Judy and I are counting the days until we return to Omena and we are looking forward to seeing everyone this summer.

Omenally Yours..... **Bill**

Send in Early Photos Opening Day Dinner June 24

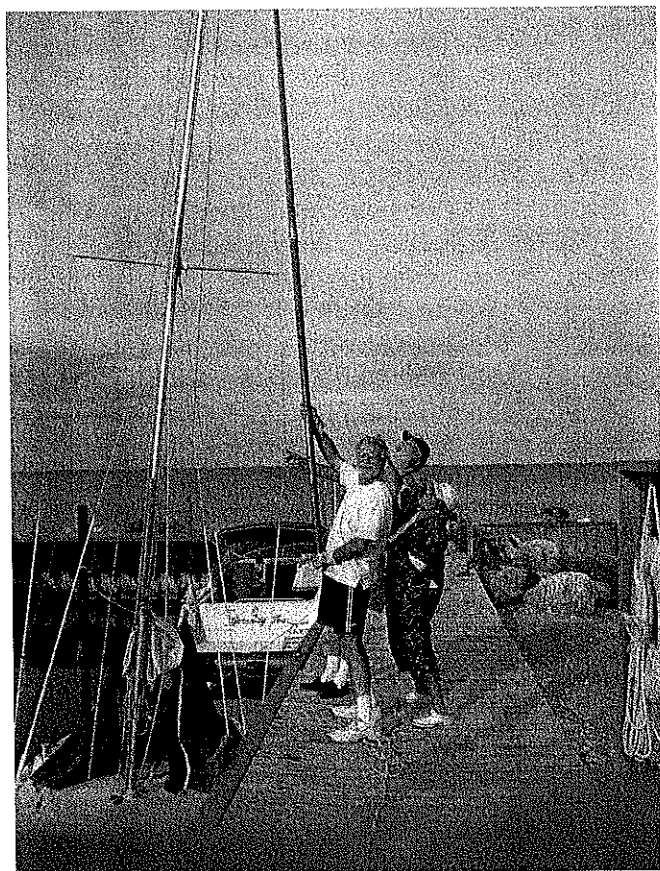
Another year, but let's remember our beginnings. The Opening Day Dinner of the OTYC will honor our club by offering up some nostalgia from years gone by.

If you have any early photos that you would like to see displayed that night, June 24th, please mail copies to:

Kathy Miller
PO Box 244
Omena, MI 49674

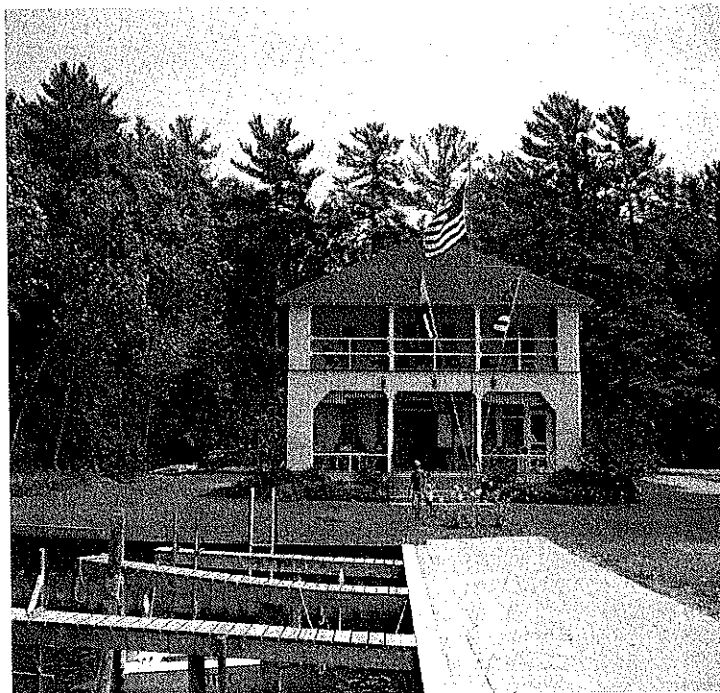
Be sure to write your name, address, and phone number on the back of each, if you'd like them returned, or pick them up at the end of the evening.

Thanks. It will be fun.



WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

Can you guess what **George and Annette Husted** are doing with **Dennis Turner's** windsurfer mast? Is it some kind of dance or pagan rite?



A view we all love

Committee Announces OTYC Slate

The Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors is pleased to announce its slate of candidates for the OTYC Board of Directors for 2006. **Dr. Bill Mason** has agreed to continue to serve for a second term, and **Karen Edgely** and **Caroline Oberndorf** have also agreed to stand for election.

Accordingly, the Nominating Committee will submit the following resolution for adoption by members at the Annual Meeting in 2006:

Be It Resolved, that Doctor William Mason, Caroline Oberndorf and Karen Edgely be and hereby are nominated to serve as members of the Board of Directors of the Omena Traverse Yacht Club, with three year terms commencing in September 2006 and expiring August 2009.

The Board of Directors endorses and highly recommends to the members the election of such persons as directors at the annual meeting. The purpose of the Nominating Committee of the Board is to seek, screen and recommend qualified candidates to serve the club as board members.

All members of the club are eligible to serve as directors. Those interested in qualifying should contact the committee Chairman.

For the Committee, **Tom Buehler**, chairman, **Judy Pohlod**, **Barb Harris**. Report dated March 15, 2006.

OTYC Youth Program Report

Based on the membership survey's overwhelming support to continue to have the Youth Program in 2006, **Mike Biskupski**, **Bill Cron**, and **Bill Mason** spent a considerable amount of time searching for a new director. **Rich Connell** has agreed to be this year's director and **John Varley** the co-director.

Rich brings a wealth of sailing experience to the program, having sailed Lightnings and Snipes while attending Interlochen in the late 1960s. He has sailed Hobie and Prindle Cats in Florida and presently owns a Rhodes 19, which is sailed out of Northport.

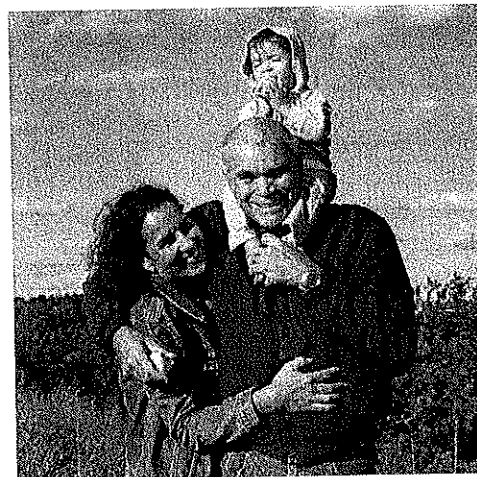
He is dedicated to bringing some structure to the program by utilizing some proven sailing techniques encompassed in U. S. Sailing's Smart Course. His background includes 28 years with the Ocean Rescue Division of the City of Delray Beach (Fl). He was promoted to Assistant Director and retired in 2005. He has a litany of water safety certificates, including being a

Lifeguard Safety Instructor. Rich has family in Northport and plans to spend summers here. Wife **Hannah** ran Camp Carlourel in Clearwater, Fl. "Whatever ideas I lack, she will be happy to contribute," he said.

Most of us have seen John Varley grow up in Omena. He has participated in the OTYC Camp and worked at Shady Trails camp for eight years. He graduated from Michigan State University and is working with the Northport School in a mentoring program as an AmeriCorps Member.

In May, John plans to take the sailing instructor's course being given at the Grand Traverse Yacht Club. He is an accomplished tennis player.

The program will start on Wednesday, July 5th, and continue for the next four weeks through Friday, August 4th. During the last week, the emphasis will be on racing, including instruction on race rules and strategies.



Rich, Hannah & Carrie Connell

The times will continue to be 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Other details are being worked out and will be communicated through email newsletters.

Those who have been working on this project are very excited about the 2006 Youth Program. We look forward to your support and count on your enrolling campers and volunteering to help with some aspects of the camp.

For more information, contact **Tish Renz**, Board/Youth Program Coordinator or **Bill Knorp**.

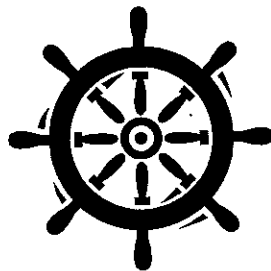
Winter Renovations Completed By Tom Buehler

Winter renovations and maintenance are completed at the OTYC.

These included a significant number of minor electrical upgrades such as replacement of bad switches and plugs, installation of a Victorian style light fixture at the front steps, replacement of the old farm style parking lot light with a modern 'night sky' fixture and location of a few new switches so that all can be turned off on the way out.

Additionally, the ship's wheel main fixture was removed for total refurbishing including stain, ship's varnish, and professional rewiring.

The front porch deck was removed and totally replaced with tongue and groove Douglass fir, stained gray. We



anticipate a twenty year life span.

Finally, a couple of the front porch electrical boxes have been slightly relocated to allow installation of two roman type sunshades. These are designed to fold out of the way and will require virtually no maintenance.

We look forward to using them all sunny summer long in '06. As to budget — good news — all the above were at, or below, the anticipated costs.

In Memorium

Holly Renz Smith died Feb. 2, 2006.

From the *Leelanau Enterprise*, February 9, 2006: "She was born in Cincinnati on Dec. 27, 1937, the daughter of Dr. Andrew and Marjorie (Putt) Renz. Her husband, Conway, survives.

She was a 1956 graduate of Wyoming High School in Cincinnati, attended the University of Alabama and Northwestern University and graduated from the University of Michigan in 1977. She moved with her military family all over the world; however, she always maintained Omena as her lifelong residence. She was a member of the 99's Women's Pilots Association, was an avid small boat sailor, worked with the original founders of Borders Books, and operated her own book service in Ann Arbor.

Also surviving are her daughter, Marjorie S. Smith, two sons, Preston C. and Timothy G. Smith; her first husband, Craig D. Smith; a brother, William S. Renz; and five grandchildren.

A spring burial will be held in East Leland Cemetery. Memorials may be directed to Camp Mak-A-Dream, P.O. Box 1450, Missoula, MO, or by calling (406)549-5987."

Our sympathies to the Smith and Renz families.

Landon G. Robinson died March 1, 2006.

From Cincinnati.com: "Landon G. Robinson, beloved husband of Alis Rule Robinson, loving father of Logan (Edrie) Robinson of Bloomfield Hill, MI, Lee (Ann) Robinson of Hyde Park and Luke (Mary Rachael) Robinson of Mt. Adams, grandfather of Leyland, Landon, Lane, Louie, Larson, Lela, and Lorelei Robinson. ...A private memorial service for the family will follow at a later date. Memorials may be directed to Walnut Hills High School Alumni Foundation, 3520 Victory Pkwy., Cincinnati, OH 45206."

Our sympathies to the Robinson and Rule families.

Helen Rupert Jones died Feb. 4, 2006.

From Helen's daughter, Suzie Mulligan: Helen died peacefully just a few days after celebrating her 101st birthday. She will be interred beside her husband, Blythe, in Acacia Park Cemetery, Oakland County, Michigan.

Helen was born in Brazil, Indiana, on January 24, 1905. After graduating from Brazil High School, she went on to Indiana University. After graduation from I.U., she taught in a one-room country school until she married her long-time sweetheart, Blythe.

Throughout her life she took an active role in community affairs and state and national politics. Helen learned to shoot a rifle as a small child, got her first rifle at the age of 8, and excelled on the I.U. rifle team. She learned to drive at 11, first rode in an airplane in 1917, and loved the Roaring 20's. She drank bathtub gin, and smoked, using a long cigarette holder. Hoagy Carmichael was a schoolmate who was romancing Helen's cousin, and they sometimes double-dated.

A few years ago, on the porch at OTYC, someone asked her, "To what do you attribute your wonderful, long life, Helen?" Her reply: "Plenty of red meat, plenty of peanut butter, and a Manhattan every day." She is survived by her three children, Austin Jones (Marion Kirk), Suzanne (Mrs. John) Mulligan, and Sylvia (Mrs. James) Hatton; seven grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Our sympathies to the Mulligan and Jones families.

"If you said you weren't

Sam Cone, born in 1923, heard about Pearl Harbor in the barracks of his military high school in Tennessee.

"The news hadn't sunk in, I never gave it a thought about how it would impact us." After a year at the University of Cincinnati as a mechanical engineering student, Sam joined the Marine Corps, spent boot camp at Paris Island, and then used his two-weeks leave at home to convince **Mary** to break a date with another guy.

(Mary: "I broke the date. I was just crazy about Sam.")

Then more training followed for amphibious landings. Sam can list all the places in the South Pacific where they landed and saw combat. "If you said you weren't scared, you were lying."

Sam insists that being in the first wave of Marines to hit the beach was actually an advantage.

"The first wave was not as rugged as the second wave because the Japanese were up out of the hiding places and firing away when the second wave came ashore."

They were given a shot of whiskey before embarkation. Sam: "It could have been a fifth and we still wouldn't have felt it." He remembers the atolls as beautiful, despite having to rid them of the enemy.

His best memory? On Saipan, when the war was declared over as they were preparing for the much-dreaded invasion of Japan. His worst memory? During the invasion of Guam, he got caught in a

trench between the lines and had to dig in to spend the night with shells going over his head. Crawling along the trench in the morning, he luckily ran into some U.S. Marines.

Sam says that in a conversation with **Dr. Vin Moore** many years later, Vin told him he had been on a hospital ship just off that Guam coast. Sam served a total of two years overseas, and still has his military blouse with its 3 battle stars and its campaign ribbons.

He has been to only one reunion, but has kept in touch with one Ohio buddy. "We were known as Fat Sam and Thin Sam." When he returned home, Sam used the GI Bill to finish his degree at the University of Cincinnati, this time in business administration. And he married Mary.

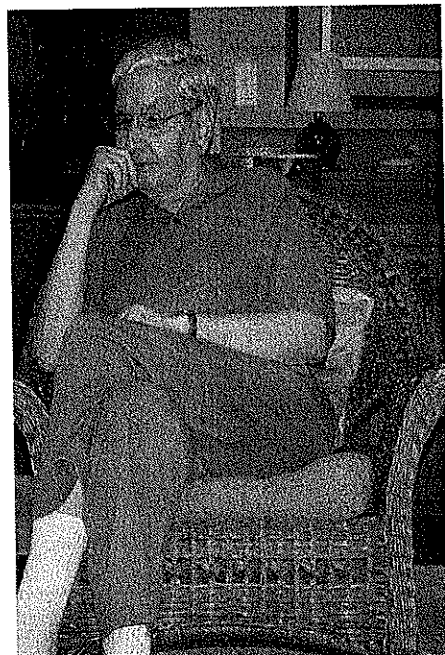
Gil Deibel, born in 1922, was part way through the University of Michigan in 1942. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps, went to boot camp, and had several levels of flight training, ending with advanced training at Ft. Sumner, MN, with twin engine planes.

Lots of candidates were eliminated, and there were some accidental deaths. He graduated as a 2nd lieutenant. Demand for pilots and bombardiers was great. He flew B24's, heavy bombers, in the Pacific against the Japanese.

Gil notes that the great maintenance and re-supply people kept them safe. Planes flew in 3,6,9 formations for saturation bombing. Pilots needed to keep the plane really flat and level for the last 45 seconds before bomb release and often drew intense Japanese anti-aircraft fire.

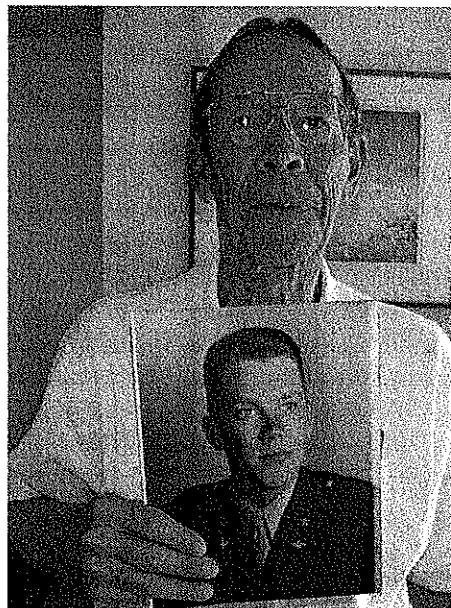
"We were a real fat target. It was a long 45 seconds." The bombing, done at less than 85 miles per hour, felt like stalling, and they just flew by their instruments to "grease it in." Gil describes using Norden bombsights to train on the target. Updrafts were a big problem for bombing accuracy.

Was he scared? "Oh, yes. That's why they had bucket seats." Gil's worst memory was of getting caught in a huge hail storm that punctured the fabric on the planes. Sent back, and perilously



Sam Cone

scared, you were lying"



Gil Deibel

close to other planes, they all got caught in updrafts and downdrafts in thunderheads. "I don't know what held the wings on."

Altogether he flew 16 combat missions with over 1200 hours of training and combat.

Returning home, he decided that "airplanes were

a fallible instrument, and I didn't like the risk," so he went to law school. Waiting for him at home during the war was **Annette** whose family had had the adjoining cottage to the Deibel's on Saginaw Bay.

During the war when Annette wrote letters to Gil, he corrected the spelling and sent them back to her. She married him anyway.

Bill Emmert turned 18 in 1942. His clever high school principal had started the semester early so the boys in Bill's class could graduate before the Draft Board called. Bill's dad had been an Army dentist in WWI and was hoping Bill would go Army.

Already a sailing enthusiast, Bill's first choice was the Coast Guard, then the Navy. The Navy won him, and he trained at the Great Lakes Center near Cleveland. Color-blindness kept him out of air corps training, so with true military logic, they sent him to signal school.

Nicknamed "Flags" and "Scivvy Wavers," signalers used flags and light signals to communicate. Bill served on the new "liberty ships" in the South Pacific near Calcutta, Sri Lanka, New Guinea, Australia, the Admiral Islands, the Philippines, and Guam.

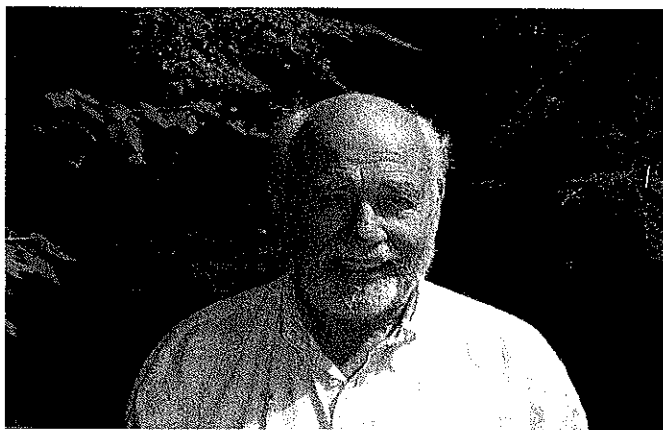
Liberty ships had a reputation for breaking in two,

so they were reinforced with steel straps. Bill describes the troops' area as smelly, with soldiers sleeping in bunks stacked four high or in swaying hammocks, and having to stand to eat.

In contrast, his own quarters had good beds and some comfort. Adapting to war at sea was a challenge with worries about sub attacks, and learning to send Morse Code via the light signal shutters. His Morse Code training on land had all been on keys. Bill says it wasn't until he was on his second ship that someone taught him to do the light signals correctly.

His best memory? The beauty of the Great Barrier Reefs. His worst? A U.S. ship mistakenly firing at them because, they said, "we thought we saw a sub between you and us."

By 1944 most of the Japanese attacks in the Pacific had stopped, so Bill overcame boredom by doing a lot of reading, which helped to overcome his childhood problems with dyslexia. He insists that he had never even learned the alphabet in school and that the military service "was a godsend for me." After his discharge, he used the GI Bill to attend



Bill Emmert

Bowling Green and the University of Michigan to become a mechanical engineer. Years later in San Francisco, he visited one of the two surviving Liberty ships. Bill recalled, "They were just kind of tubs. They would shake at the top of a wave."

And was **Lynn** waiting for him during the war? "No, she wasn't even born yet." But their first date was to go sailing. At midnight.

Continued on Page 10

"We counted our blessings"

Jack Fromann, when asked what he remembered hearing about Pearl Harbor, answered that he couldn't possibly forget because he had just met

Bercie at a party in Cincinnati the night before.

He heard the news while he was being tutored in

calculus at a University of Cincinnati fraternity house. Jack entered the service in April 1943 and trained as a flight officer in the Army Air Corps. A bad back ended that training, but the Army next sent him to aerial gunnery school in Texas. Again, he was grounded by the back problems.

His next assignment, Tonapa, Nevada, was such a miserable place that soldiers wanted to go back overseas. His jobs there were to issue equipment to air crews on training missions and to train bombardiers in dead reckoning on land-based machines.

He and Bercie were married in Cincinnati on a leave in August 1944, and they drove their "new" 1932 Chevrolet west. The car died in Peoria. The USO kindly shipped their belongings back to Ohio, and the Fromanns finally managed to catch a train to Los Angeles, having to ride backwards the whole way. Jack hitchhiked back to base.

He says people were generous, but there were few cars, and sometimes a car owner would have to join the hitchhikers after he ran out of gas himself.

Back in Tonapa, Jack looked for housing suitable for a new bride, mainly quarters with an outhouse. A kind private first-class sublet them a room with running water. "We counted our blessings." They found that Nevada was already a gambling capital where many GI's lost all their money. Even the

laundry in their little town had slot machines. Bercie found jobs as a soda jerk, at the PX, and then at the Officers' Club.

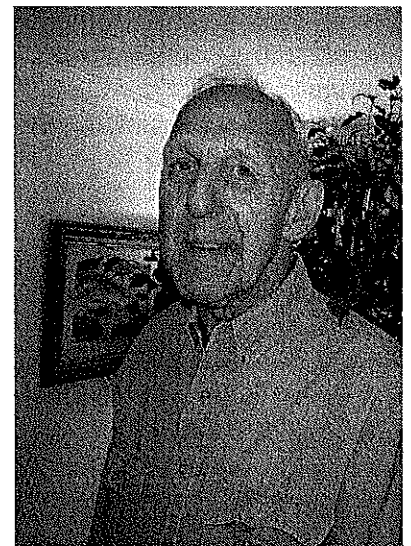
Bercie then returned to Cincinnati when her mother became ill and took a job delivering phone books. Eventually Jack was sent to Tacoma for a month and was discharged in Portland. Jack also used the GI Bill to finish his education at the University of Cincinnati, but switched to a major in Business Administration. He started his career with NW Mutual Insurance in 1948.

His best memory of service? "Learning to get along with different people." His worst memory? "There was little use of people's intelligence. There were PhD's doing raking."

Footnote: Now for all of you who are asking about the name "Bercie" (which is driving spell-check crazy right now), she was born "Bertha" and then legally changed her name.

Guenther Mueller joined the Merchant Marine the summer he graduated from high school in 1942. He spent 3 months in boot camp in New York Harbor and remembers that submarine nets were stretched between some of the islands.

Guenther signed on to the training ship USS Veema, a topsail schooner, where he climbed masts and ratlines that were often covered in ice. Then he enlisted in the Navy, which sent him back to boot camp all over again.



Guenther Mueller

The Navy asked for volunteers to be torpedo men. "When you are 18 years old, that sounds like something you might like to do." After training school, he was promoted to the rank of "rate," which earned him more pay, and he reported to a torpedo testing range north of Seattle.

"It was like a thousand flies"

By this time, General Motors had helped the Navy solve its torpedo accuracy problems by attaching a kite to the torpedo's tail. The object of the torpedo men was to drop the torpedo close to the ship's keel, the weakest part of a ship. Guenther says they also accidentally sunk a wooden US minesweeper.

Guenther also trained as a "stinger," the tail gunner on a plane. He spent most of the war on planes based on the aircraft carrier USS Boxer in the China/Burma/India area. They attacked shipping out of China to try to cut off supplies to Japan. "We hit a few." They also helped neutralize the Atoll Truc, a Japanese naval base.

His worst memory? "Flying through flak, it was like a thousand flies." Guenther says that as the gunner, he was lucky to be flying backwards, so he didn't have to look directly at the flak. He still has some jagged pieces that were embedded in his plane. "We were somewhat scared, but at 18, you are too dumb to be scared."

In what they assumed was their last mission, they were one of 20 carriers set for the big invasion of Japan. They roamed around the China Seas, looking for hidden ships and some of the 1,200 kamikaze hidden on the ground.

When the war was declared over, Guenther's carrier was part of a big show of force in Tokyo Bay. He got to go ashore for a few days, found that the city was a mess, and was surprised that people kept bowing to them.

Guenther hoped to go home, but his carrier was one of three sent to take Marines to China to disarm thousands of Japanese POW's. The U.S. didn't want the weapons falling into the hands of Mao Tse Tung.

Finally arriving back in Cincinnati in 1946, he used the GI Bill to attend the University of Cincinnati in business administration. Six months after arriving home, he met **Jean** at a party, but she was his friend's date. Successful negotiations with his friend got Guenther permission to call her.

They were married in 1948. Many of us remember Guenther's gentle care of Jean as she weakened with her fatal illness a few years ago.

In contrast to the others, **Jack Sarvis** served in the European theater of WWII. After finishing Princeton in 1942, he joined the Signal Corps in the fall and was sent to Officer Candidate School. He trained in Air Corps intelligence for 3 months and shipped across the Atlantic on the Queen Mary.



Jack and Mary Louise Sarvis

Instead of cruise ship luxury, soldiers experienced being bunked 4 or 5 high, and a strong fear of sub attacks. Jack was an intelligence briefing officer near Norwich, England, for a bomb squadron of B24 bombers.

At 4 AM he would receive the orders for the day and brief the crews about what to look for and why. After they returned, he would debrief them. Jack said one of those debriefings was how he first heard about jets. He got to fly a few missions and experienced flak. He stood behind the pilot, wearing a flak jacket and a steel helmet.

For the pilots a tour of duty was 20 missions. Early in the war, pilots buzzed the field to celebrate returning from a mission, but that was later forbidden as too dangerous.

Jack says he never saw a full air battle because the Allies controlled the air by then. Jack spent his time-off in London, where he experienced buzz bomb attacks. His more peaceful trips were to St. Andrews to play golf.

Continued on Page 12

"We felt this was a war we had to fight."

Jack prepared his squadron for their D-Day assignment of bombing French rail yards. The course and maps had been sent down from London, and Jack briefed the navigation officers. "The lousy weather didn't help."

As the war in Europe was winding down, Jack was sent to California to prepare for service in the Pacific. He flew back to the U.S. in a B24 that got lost over Newfoundland and became the object of a search mission. Jack's next assignment was to be the Pacific theater, but VJ Day came before he was shipped out.

And where was **Mary Louise** through all this? She had married Jack at the end of her junior year at Smith and never finished college. Her parents had told her they had waited until after WWI to get

married and recommended getting married sooner. She spent the war in Flint, waiting for much appreciated letters. (*The Breeze editors heard no mention of spelling corrections, Gil*). After the war, they settled in Flint, where Jack used his medieval history degree to become a banker at Genesee Bank, now part of Chase.

All these soldiers modestly insist that they only played a small part, and that others had it much tougher. Guenther says, "It never entered our minds that we wouldn't win. We never gave it a thought."

Jack Sarvis says, "We all felt this was a war we had to fight. Since then wars have become more complicated."

The rest of us just say, "THANK YOU!"



**"The bay is that way."
Stu Mulligan providing essential information.**

"Attractive cottage on Omena Bay, Four BR, Two Baths, on one floor, screened porch, gorgeous sunset, NO PETS, Available June-July 15 and Aug. 19-mid-Oct. **Call John Ray, 847-256-1026** or email johnhray@att.net - Website: www.Omenacottage.com"

LASER FOR SALE - The donor of the club Laser sailboat has generously agreed that the boat should be offered for sale to our membership. The Laser brand is often called a "super sunfish"

because of its size and speed. This boat is about 14 feet long, with all hardware and a very soft chine. The Laser puts up about twice as much sail surface as the Sunfish and is a real scooter, very sensitive to changes in wind velocity and direction.

Although this hull is an older one, it is still in good shape and can be seen at the club. If any interest, please make an offer in writing or email tom buehler at tombuehler@earthlink.net. Highest bidder will take it!

Alan Read - Man of Mystery ???????

The Encyclopedia of Geographical Places states that Brockton, Mass., is known for three things: Former shoe capital of the world; birthplace of Rocky Marciano; and home of **Alan Read**. Alan's ancestors were among the original settlers on Cape Cod - after the Indians, of course - which may account for Alan's love of the smell of salt water.

Alan enlisted in the Army just after his high school graduation in 1945. He was 17. His joining may have had something to do with the Japanese surrendering soon after his enlistment (*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*).

While many soldiers were eager to leave the service, Alan decided to make the Army his career and was accepted to Officer Candidate School. He graduated from OCS in 1947 as second lieutenant. Alan's first duty station was in Frankfurt, Germany, where he served four years in the Signal Corps. Alan maintains that the Russian blockade of Berlin had nothing to do with his presence in Germany.

Signals Intelligence was Alan's specialty. Alan describes it as listening in on radio signals from all over the world and trying to make some sort of sense out of a cacophony of voices speaking in a babble of languages.

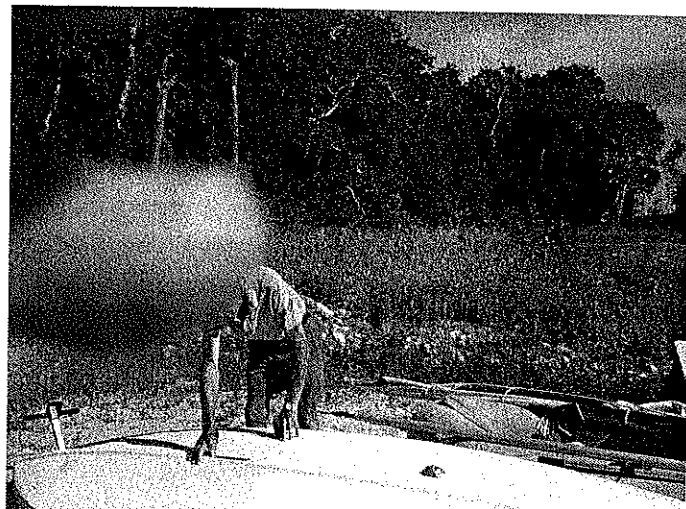
Alan then spent two years on a Taiwan mountain-top listening and analyzing Chinese radio traffic. Is it any surprise that Alan tends to be laconic? Huh! He's heard every word a thousand times over.

For the remainder of his army career, Alan worked at NSA (National Security Agency). During his four years at Fort Mead, he served as an aide-de-camp for the chief-of-staff and "all that #*!," which included toting around a briefcase bulging with highly classified radio intercepts and packing a .38.

Alan's best intelligence coup, however, came in 1962, when he agreed to a blind date in Hawaii and met **Charlotte**, a phenomenon for which all his training at NSA had not prepared him. Charlotte won Alan's heart and also introduced the salt water ocean man to the beautiful fresh water of Omena.

In 1967, Alan retired from the army and began a new career with the FAA (Federal Aviation Authority). Airplane and airport security became his specialty, and in 1980, he became the Director of Security for the FAA, from which he retired in 1985.

Alan continued working as a consultant on airplane and airport safety and taught at the Transportation



NSA-APPROVED Photo of Alan Read

Safety Institute. Hong Kong Airport hired him for advice about security issues. He told them what he tells anyone who will listen - aircraft are most vulnerable when they are on the ground and hundreds of people have access to them.

A rumor that Alan was a CIA agent has regularly made the rounds of OTYC. As best as *the Breeze* can determine, the source of the rumor seems to be a Mr. B, who has pretensions of being Omena's version of Deep Throat.

Now, however, *the Breeze* can definitively deep-six this rumor. After retiring, Alan was approached by the CIA. When Alan interviewed for the position, however, his candor and unvarnished comments may have caused some hesitation on the Agency's part because no official offer followed the interview. How much truth can a spy agency handle?

No capsule summary would be complete without mentioning Alan's contributions to OTYC. Alan will not and cannot say "No" to a plea for help.

He especially likes balky motors. A hopelessly recalcitrant outboard engine suddenly springs into purring life when Alan merely puts a hand on the carburetor.

Alan's love of mechanical things began early, to the chagrin of his mother. Once he took the ice box apart with his trusty screwdriver. He will spend hours fixing a \$20 toaster, not due to thriftiness, but because he enjoys the challenge. If you have a boat or car on the fritz, call Alan. He may seem a bit curmudgeonly, but (Alan will not like *the Breeze* reporting this), he has a heart of gold.

Seen & Overheard

This big news deserves all capital letters: **BOB GELAKOSKI AND KAREN HOWAT WERE MARRIED MARCH 4 IN ST. PETERSBURG, FLA!**

Bob wrote "The wedding took place on the Starlite Princess paddlewheel boat with our families and a few friends. We will be spending March and part of April in New Zealand and Australia for our honeymoon." Congratulations, Bob and Karen!

No one won the Omena license plate contest from the fall *Breeze*, but **Sam Knoll** came the closest. Come over and we'll SPLIT the bottle of wine, Sam.

Check out these plates this summer:

FL= the **Bills family**

KY=the **McKee family**

IL=the **Ray family**

MI= the **Grabowski family**

MO=the **Parker family**

NY= the **Grossmark family**

VA=the **Knoll family**

49674 (certainly most creative)= the **Sandt family**

Sam also solved the mystery of who has the Ohio Omena plate- it's **Susan Siemer**, the daughter of **Jeanne Hines** and sister of **Carol Knoll**.

In the fall issue, the *Breeze* asked who donated the piano. **Mary Helen Ray** suggests that it may have come from **Lestra Saxton**.

The fall *Breeze* also asked if anyone could remember a membership chair before the long tenure of **Barb Harris**. Again, **Mary Helen Ray** came through and named **John Ray** and before him, **Nancy Weiss Gregory**.

The fall *Breeze* also asked about the beautiful JT Wing ship model. You guessed it, **Mary Helen Ray** wrote that it was purchased by **John Harris** and given to the club for display. She knew this from minutes she took as OTYC secretary at the time.

And what have **Mary Helen and John Ray** been up to beside sending us answers to our queries? They took a trip through the Panama Canal with **Betsy and Drew Ehrhardt** "aboard a motorboat, not Drew's sailboat!" Their plans for March were to spend the month on Sanibel Island "where we hope to see the many Omenaites who winter in that area."

Marcia Biskupski sent in a report that the apple picking day, which was held later in October than usual, went well. "Believe it or not, the sun was shining and we didn't freeze in there. About 40 people were in attendance."

Annette and George Husted and family have bought the 40 acre Windy Knob property with plans to turn it into a winery, complete with tasting room.

Tom and Helen Maher traveled to Italy, and Tom says they learned two things, "1) All Italians drive with maniacally reckless abandon, but there is no Road Rage. They consider it an Olympic Game-may the best man win! 2) The Italian national pastime- Tax Evasion!"

Commodore **Bill Knorp's** nephew, **Russell Bates**, directed two of the Super Bowl ads — the one for Michelob beer which involves a touch football game that goes awry and another for Outback Steak House. We say, Ads 100, Game 10.



Enjoying Dinner after Cross Country Ski Day

Mary Tonneberger reported on the Cross Country Ski Day in February, "We had a great ski outing at the Smith Orchard, plus a chili dinner put on by Mary and **Peggy** - all huddled close to the wood stove!"

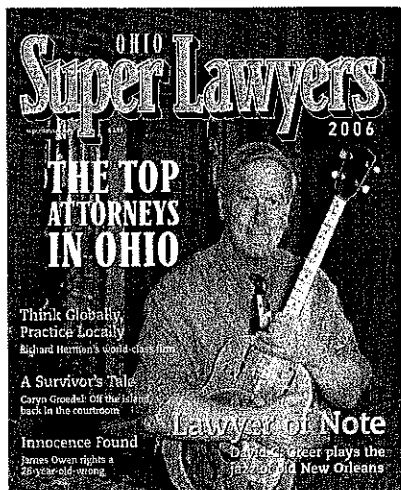
And Mary also reported that she and **Ron** were headed to Miami to escape the chilly weather. Ron is assembling a "mission style" buffet-hutch that he made for Scott's dining room. In mid-March Mary and Ron planned to join the **Edgleys** in the Yucatan for more escape from wintry blasts.

Helen Bradley wrote that she has taken classes to become a USTA tennis umpire. And that she would

be leaving soon for three weeks in Australia, including Tasmania. "It will be a nice change from memorizing tennis rules!"

From **Don Kennedy** in Grand Rapids, "**Patty** and I are busy with our new business Abrakadoodle — hiring, signing up sites, and learning the ins-and-outs of owning one's own business. Abrakadoodle brings remarkable art education to 20 months to 12 year-old children. If only our territory covered Omena!"

The Classic Jazz Stompers will be back for a third time on August 9. In his other life, the band leader **Dave Greer** has been elected to the Ohio Super Lawyers list. Ohio lawyers cast the ballots, and Dave won the most votes in the state. In addition to their OTYC gig, the band will be playing at the Perry Hotel in Petosky and at the Northport Arts Series on Aug. 12.



Ed Obendorf reports that son **Rob** has recently moved from Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where he was working as an environmental lawyer, to Bangkok, Thailand, where he will be the Asia-Pacific coordinator for a European-funded project to verify legality in the international timber trade. Ed himself says that while on Sanibel Island this winter he got a slight heel fracture while going after a tennis shot. But he won the point!

Drew & Betsy Ehrhardt had a glorious 2 weeks aboard the Crystal Symphony Cruise ship in early February, traveling with **John and Mary Helen Ray**. "The main event was a passage through the Panama Canal, which lasted from 7:30 am to about 3:30 pm. We were well prepared because there were six lectures and a film presented by a man who had been in charge of the Canal Zone for 20 years. The passage was all that was anticipated with the sights and the engineering aspects fascinating. Drew was all over the ship from top to bottom decks, fore and aft, observing the Operations. We also stopped at four Caribbean Islands and spent two delightful days in Costa Rica."

From **Tish and Bill Renz**: "We have been doing great and have stayed healthy through the winter, even with a kindergartner in the house. The year started by going to Las Vegas in January to celebrate an anniversary and being joined by Bill's sister, **Cynn timer**, and her husband, **Ron**."

Three weeks later, we were on the go again to Tish's parents in Detroit. Ron had secured Superbowl tickets since he is a huge Seahawks fan, and Bill went with him to the game. We did take time that weekend to enjoy some of the activities Detroit had leading up to the Superbowl, as well as enjoying Tish's parents' company.

Back in Cincinnati, **Rat and Bill** were keeping **Crystal** on schedule. President's weekend, Bill, Tish and Crystal headed to San Diego. The Zoo, Wild Animal Park, Seaworld and a whale-watching cruise were on the agenda. It turned out to be a nice getaway, and although the weather was a "winter blast" by southern California standards, it was quite pleasant for those of us Midwesterners.

Spring break for Crystal will give us time to head to Detroit for 3 nights to see most of Tish's family, then head to Portland, Oregon to visit 2 **Smith** cousins and family, take the train to Seattle to catch up with Cynn timer, Ron and the girls for the rest of Crystal's vacation. We look forward to our Omena return to open the cottage Memorial weekend."

Congratulations to **Sarah Cheneault** who has been chosen to display her work at a juried art show at the Dennon Museum in Traverse City this spring. Sarah is a 2004 arts graduate of Washington University in St. Louis. For the Dennon show, 350 artists submitted work, and only 77 were chosen.

Betty Smith is enjoying Tulane University tremendously. The university underwent minimal damage from Hurricane Katrina. Betty recently pledged Pi Beta Phi sorority. Fellow Omena-goer **Anne Moore** is in one of her dance classes. Betty and the rest of her family (**Crawford, Suzy, and Otto**) look forward to being in Omena in the latter part of July.

Welcome to Guest Members Who Have Now Become Full Members:

Don and Betts Chisholm of Ann Arbor & Omena
James (Kim) Kemper of Barrington, IL & Omena
David and Kerry Magrini of Avon, CT & Omena
James and Jean Stukel of Chicago & Omena

New Associate Members

OTYC welcomes new Associate Members
Alison Biskupski and **Brian Gelakoski**.

The Wind by Geoff Hodgson

*Dedicated to my mom (Jonnie Hodgson),
with memories of Omena*

The wind is a very powerful thing
It floats the birds upon their wing
Also pulls a kite against a string
And Nothing Can Stop it!

The wind wears down mountains and topples trees
It bends the peoples to their knees
Also blows bubbles and swarms the bees
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind dries out linen to smell delicious
It helps in making fruits nutritious
Also stirs men's souls to write fictitious
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind blows out fires then makes them start
It gathers clouds then blasts them apart
Also turns a mill to fill your cart
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind calms the seas and crashes waves
It sadly puts men into watery graves
Also amazes us by the lives it saves
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wine brings in the seasons
then blows them out
It pushes sailing ships round about
Also ripples rivers full of trout
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind spins tornados with aftermath
It will carve a wide destructive path

Also levels buildings with great wrath
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind is a very terrible force
It blows motor vessels off their course
Also causes some remorse
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind will clear your picnic plate
It will blow you back and make you late
Also gives rise to fear and hate
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind will cause your back to turn
It will sometimes make your stomach churn
Also make your heart long yearn
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind puffs out candles and bends the grasses
It swirls leaves into masses
Also knocks mules on their haunches
And Nothing Can Stop it!

The wind will make your body shutter
It will force flags to flutter
Also causes crowds to mutter
And Nothing Can Stop It!

The wind will chill you to your bones
It will disconnect the lines of phones
Also whistles the finest tones
And Nothing, Absolutely Nothing, Can Stop It!

*(Editor's note: Geoff first recited this poem at an
OTYC potluck last summer)*

