

up with #3 engine feathered, and that they were hit on one occasion by an ME 110 and that to this day he carries a bullet fragment in his ankle from the ME 110's attack. His parachute was holed from the attacks and that he came down rather hard and hoped to escape detection but his parachute was caught in a tree where it could be seen from some distance. His burns were treated by civilians who saw him descend. The crew and the Luftwaffe pilot who was shot down were all gathered in an aid station or dispensary. He relates it was an eerie feeling to meet up with the Luftwaffe pilot who had a part in the shooting down of his bomber. The Americans were eventually taken to Stalag Luft III. He does not belong to the 484th Bomb Group Association.

I might add that back at Torretta Airfield where the group was based, whenever a crew was reported missing in action (MIA) personal possessions of the crew were either gathered up by the Officer of the Day and returned to the boy's parents, or taken by other crew members when a prior arrangement was made between air crews about disposal of properties, such as radios, money or foodstuffs. Items like diaries, or correspondence were often turned in for return to parents in the states. The surviving crew members are members of a POW organization that will be holding a reunion this May in Cincinnati, OH so their attendance at our reunion in September in Dayton, Oh is not certain. Again let me thank you for your letter and interest in the matter of the June 13, 1944 attack on Innsbruck. My best wishes to you and your family and friends for the New Year. I have included a B-24 tie tack memento.

Sincerely,
Bud Markel

From a Newspaper Clipping

A H Fred Walker and his wife Nell, attended the St. Louis reunion of the Stalag Luft 111 Prisoners-of-War in April. Fred met with five former POWs that he lived with in the German camp.

He also visited with the pilot who was flying the B-24 bomber he served as navigator when they were shot down over Munich, Germany on June 13, 1944.

Flying out of Foggia, Italy with the 484th Bomber Group of the 15th Air Force to bomb the Munich railroad yard on their fifth mission, the crew ran into heavy flak and didn't make it to the target. Tracers from a fighter plane hit Fred in the left ankle, wounded the turret gunner, disabled the hydraulic system and set the bomber on fire.

"The bombardier had already pulled the pins on the bombs," Fred recalled, and the bomb bay doors were open only slightly."

Only three of the 10 crew members got out of the plane. Fred was the only one to get out through the bomb bay door

"Even with all the training we received," Fred said, his parachute was on upside down and backward. He jumped at 29,000 feet and did a free fall to 5,000 feet. He pulled the rip cord and dropped it in his leg pocket, but the pocket had been burned and he lost the cord.

Floating down, with fighters circling, he watched the cowling of another plane drop to earth. His first thought of his descent was that it was the "quietest thing in the world," but then fighters began strafing the chutes.

He looked for a place to escape, but it was futile. His parachute full of holes, he attempted to control his descent by pulling on the shroud lines although the skin had been burned off his hands.

In spite of his attempts, the parachute snagged in a tree and he

was left dangling with his feet barely touching the ground.

He feels the tree saved his life, since the damaged chute was letting him descend too fast. His experience is said to be the inspiration for the scene in the movie "The Longest Day" in which Red Buttons' parachute snags on a church steeple.

The Germans were under every bush," Walker recalls. However, a civilian got to him first and "checked to see if I had a gun." He was turned over to four German lieutenants and one told him, "Well, lieutenant, the war's over for you. I just got out of prison camp in England. You won't be as lucky."

For 17 days he was cared for by Catholic sisters at a hospital in Ingolstadt, (Germany) Bavaria. After that, he was shuffled around Germany, ending up at a hospital in Sagan, where he stayed for two months until being placed in the Stalag Luft 111 compound.

Another trip ended in Lamsdorf, where he was repatriated to Switzerland on Jan. 19, 1945.

As one of only three or four soldiers selected for repatriation from among some 1,500 prisoners because of their wounds, Fred has, to this day, fought with feelings of guilt for leaving his comrades. But, his repatriation aided the Allies' cause when he returned with a notebook filled with information about many of the prisoners.

Along with the descriptions of the POWs were descriptions of fictitious prisoners that contained coded information about the POW camp and enemy fortifications.

After the war, Walker became the first extension range specialist in the Land Grant University system and retired in College Station. He continues to manage Walker Estate Ranch, a working sheep and cattle operation in Comstock, Texas.

There really was a Kilroy

by Richard O. Donnell

James J. Kilroy served on the Boston City Council and in the Massachusetts Legislature. But during WW II, he worked at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy-and that's where his famous saying got its start.

Kilroy was a "checker", noting the number of rivets driven by workers who did piecework and were paid by the rivet.

Kilroy would count a block of rivets, then put a check mark in chalk so the rivet would not be counted twice. But some riveters would come back when Kilroy went off duty, erase his mark and get paid again when another rivet checker came by.

One day Kilroy's boss called him into the office to complain about the wages being paid to riveters. The foreman told Kilroy to find out what was going on, and he did.

From then on, after Kilroy put his check mark on a job, he added "KILROY WAS HERE" in king-sized crayoned letters. Once he did that, the riveters stopped wiping out his check marks.

Ordinarily, the rivets, chalk marks and Kilroy's admonition against double-dipping would have been painted over before a ship shipped out. But there was a war on and ships were leaving the Quincy yard so fast there wasn't time to paint them.

Kilroy's inspection "trademark" was seen by thousands of servicemen using those ships. The slogan apparently appealed to the men, because they picked it up and spread it all over Europe and the South Pacific, adding sketches of the fellow peeing over the fence somewhere along the way.