

OBSERVING 75 YEARS SINCE WORLD WAR II ENDED

PEACE IN PACIFIC!



WAR'S OVER!

SPECIAL INSERT TO THE REAL MCCOY

SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

World War II veteran recalls overseas service, outprocessing through Camp McCoy

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

On April 3, 1946, Technician Fifth Grade Donald Whitaker boarded a train and left Camp McCoy after serving two years, six months, and seven days in the Army during World War II.

At that time, Camp McCoy — later known as Fort McCoy — was a transitional installation for many service members going home from the war. Tens of thousands of troops made their way through the installation to eventually leave and get to their original home of record. For Whitaker, that was DuPage, Ill.

"McCoy was full of guys getting out who were happy to get back," Whitaker said. "There was one guy who was trying to talk people into re-enlisting. They'd say I'm sorry, and then he was laughed at. The Soldiers in the Army were happy the war was over, and they wanted to go home."

Whitaker expressed that memory during a visit to Fort McCoy on July 16 — nearly 75 years after leaving the post. The 95-year-old Whitaker made a special visit to see the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area and the many World War II-era artifacts at the historical area. The former Soldier also shared some of his memories from his service.

According to his records, Whitaker joined the Army in September 1943. He joined with the idea he was going to participate in the Army Specialized Training Program, or ASTP. ASTP was a military training program instituted by the Army during World War II to meet wartime demands both for junior officers and

Soldiers with technical skills.

"I was supposed to go into the ASTP program, which would include two years in college and come out with a commission," Whitaker said. "And after I finished my 17 weeks of (initial Army) training, they canceled it. I was supposed to come to the University of Wisconsin (in Madison)."

With the commissioning program out of sight, in 1944, Whitaker went with his unit to train at Camp Livingston in Alexandria, La.

"We started jungle training because we thought at that time we were probably going to be going to the South Pacific," Whitaker said. "So we were there — I don't remember how long for sure — and then they put us on a train for Boston for more training and then overseas to Europe."

Whitaker boarded a ship and went overseas. He served there until nearly the end of the European campaign. He said they served in Cologne, Germany, as well as Salzburg, Austria. During that time, Whitaker said he served as part of a labor pool completing all sorts of duties besides being a bandsman.

"When the band went over to Germany, they took away our instruments, and we were in a labor pool," Whitaker said. "We were guarding prisoners, we were road guides, we did kitchen patrol, and we did other service and security at night. Cooks have to be used — they are not combat Soldiers. We were support Soldiers. That's what I was."

Whitaker recalled a story where he was with another Soldier, and they found themselves behind Ger-

(See VETERAN, Page 2)

Hirohito Says: I'LL SIGN ANYTHING!

Important Job Ahead For McCoy, Gen. Rice Asserts

Separation Work To Be Stepped Up Here

Camp McCoy's importance in the new problems posed by the thousands of veterans from the separation of men from the service "parallels anything undertaken here during the fighting years and will task our energies to the utmost."

The McCoy separation center, under Maj. Thomas B. Hammond, has been in operation here slightly over two weeks, having opened Aug. 1, and is beginning to function in "midseason" form.

Originally expected to handle about 300 discharges daily, the center will, it is expected, be discharging 1,000 a day in a few months.

Separates go through seven routine steps before they have their papers and pay and are en route to their homes. The men being discharged undergo a clothing shakedown, take a final physical examination, attend counseling sessions where they are apprised of their benefits as veterans, sign their discharge papers, go through a final clothing inspection, hear a short talk by the chaplain — at which time they also receive medals and awards due them and their discharge papers — and then receive final pay.

Pardon! Even Sam's Excited

So excited did Sgt. Sam Wolberg, assistant manager of the center, become when informed Pres. Truman had proclaimed V-J day that he inadvertently announced: "The Roosevelt has announced the war is over."

FROM AUGUST 1945

V-J Proclamation

BY BRIG. GEN. JOHN K. RICE
Commanding General

V-J DAY! Born in the west! Out of the setting sun! Produced by the greatest collective human effort of all time and crystallized into existence by the use of a weapon fashioned from the forces of the universe.

V-J Day! Marking the turn from that terrific destructive effort which has been necessary in order to eradicate those nationally expressed ideologies of our generation that were based upon greed and avariciousness. Marking the turn of our efforts toward creating and constructing a human atmosphere in which will permit the everlasting existence of individual life, liberty and happiness throughout the world. May we pray for intelligence, guidance, patience and strength of character to succeed, as we have never done before.

V-J Day! With its heart-rending recollections of all the supreme sacrifices that have been made in order to accomplish our initial common purpose. Our strength so far has been based upon a neutral faith in our objectives. May we retain our strength to keep forever the faith of those who will not return and, in the rush of our individual lives, may we never fail to provide and care for those who do return with physical or mental wounds. I quote what to me is the finest expression of an American soldier's creed that I have ever seen:

"IF YOU KEEP FAITH
If you keep faith with me you need not weep
If I am killed, for I will not complain
Of any death if by it others gain
The things I think are worth my life to keep:
The right to have, to know, to love, to speak.
If all win these, I will endure my pain
And on the battlefield, where I have lain,
Will find an honored place in which to sleep.
But if when peace returns to you once more,
You break the word you gave humanity
By keeping not the pledge to which you swore,
Then carve in stone this epitaph for me:
Here lies a fool who placed his hope in war
And gave his faith to insincerity."
V-J Day! Just another Armistice Day? Or are we made of sterner stuff as the result of our recent forging?
Let US THINK — and do — and pray!

What of Pacific Bases We Won? U.S. To Keep Them: Truman

All Japanese islands held by mandates will be taken away from that nation and placed under the jurisdiction of the United Nations security council.

It is believed the United States will return bases in the Caribbean to the nations from which they were taken.

Supreme Commander Given Authority Over Nips' Emperor Hirohito

Just four months short of four years after Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor touched off the most terrible world war in history, the Japanese were bowed in defeat as Pres. Harry S. Truman announced at 6 p. m. Tuesday that Tokyo has accepted surrender terms laid down by the four Allied powers — United States, Great Britain, Russia and China.

Japan Accepts Surrender Terms Set at Potsdam

The Potsdam surrender declaration of the United States, Great Britain, and China which Japan accepted outlines what Japan can expect as the consequences of unconditional surrender. These consequences were enumerated as follows and the declaration set them forth with this precise introduction: "Following are our terms. We will not deviate from them. There are no alternatives. We shall brook no delay."

Authority and influence of the persons who "deceived and misled" the Japanese people into seeking world conquest must be eliminated for all time. (These persons were not named; the Japanese were asking in effect, if their emperor was included in this category, which was defined indirectly as persons guilty of "irresponsible military.")
2. Such Japanese territory as designated by the Allies will be occupied until a "new order" is established and "there is convincing proof that Japan's war-making power is destroyed."
3. All of Japan's conquered and stolen territory will be returned to its rightful sovereignty. Japan's sovereignty will be limited.

(Continued on page 4)

War Jap Allies

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No Reaction Among PWs

There was no reaction among Japanese prisoners of war at Camp McCoy's PW camp today when they were informed Japan had been defeated. Listening to the radio reports during the last few days "conditioned" the PWs to the inevitable. The prisoners were kept within the confines of their compounds.

Who'll Be Allied Chief In Japan?

The selection of Gen. of the Army Douglas MacArthur as occupational chief for Japan was announced by Pres. Harry S. Truman after his V-J proclamation Tuesday night.

That's Right! Gen. M' Arthur

Gen. MacArthur, by his rank as top five-star general, rates as the no. 1 choice for the difficult task of governing the Japanese and changing their form of government from a militaristic one to a peaceful democracy.

Gen. MacArthur is not a stranger to the Japanese. In fact, the MacArthur name has for years been known to Nippon, for the general's father, Lt. Gen. Arthur MacArthur, was once honored by Emperor Hirohito's father, Hirohito himself has pinned decorations on Gen. MacArthur.

An international force composed of United States, British, Russian and Chinese troops will police Japan and the lands taken from it. About a million American soldiers are expected to be used for this police duty. The Chinese and Russians are expected to handle Manchuria and Korea. The British are expected to handle the Pacific islands, while the Yanks will force Japan proper and the

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American Super Fortresses had pounded Japan's industrial cities into rubble. The U. S. Navy will and had bombed Japanese will and had bombed Japanese coastal areas without cessation.

Atom Bomb Speeds Peace

Atomic bombings of two Japanese cities — Hiroshima and Nagasaki — are believed to have been instrumental in bringing the war in the Pacific to its sudden end.

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GEN. DOUGLAS MACARTHUR
British will take over in such lands as Malaya, French Indo-China, Hong Kong, Formosa and other Pacific isles.

VETERAN

from Page 1

man lines when they took a wrong turn at an intersection. He said they got up to where they saw a German gun emplacement and had to make a choice.

“We shut our vehicle off, turned it around manually, and stayed as quiet as we could,” he said. “We then rolled it down a hill, popped the clutch, and got the heck out of there. We probably would have become prisoners of war had we kept going.”

Whitaker also remembered when he was performing perimeter duty at his deployed camp and had a German officer approach holding up a white flag.

“He wanted to surrender to another officer,” Whitaker said. “We had a brigadier general at the camp, so I went to wake him up in the middle of the night. He told me, ‘Corporal — you better not be kidding me, or I will have your stripes.’”

That officer did surrender not just himself but also more than 9,000 German troops, Whitaker said.

And then his time in Germany was done in 1945.

“(Our) division had ... action in various places,” Whitaker said. “Then we were thinking we were done when Victory in Europe Day came. But they sent us back, we went through a parade in New York, and then all off the sudden we are in Oklahoma training on this equipment for amphibious training to go to the South Pacific.”

By summer 1945, Whitaker had crossed back over the Atlantic, done some quick training in Oklahoma, and crossed the Pacific to the Philippines.

“I had a friend in the Navy, and I had more time on the water than he did because I went across the Atlantic and back as well as the Pacific,” he said.

Whitaker was in the Philippines when the war was officially ended Sept. 2, 1945, when the Japanese signed the official surrender on the U.S.S. Battleship Missouri.

“After Germany, we knew we were going to the South Pacific,” Whitaker said. “We were told at that time that (Gen. Douglas) MacArthur had a plan to invade Japan with 1 million men with the expectation of millions of American and Japanese casualties. But that never came about because of the atomic bomb. And we were absolutely thrilled when we heard that. It’s not that we wanted to see people killed. It’s just that it was a much lesser amount than if we had invaded. Then, of course, the emperor surrendered, and that was the end of that.”



World War II veteran Donald Whitaker, who served in the Army from 1943 to 1946, holds a display case July 16 with the medals he earned during the war while visiting the Commemorative Area at Fort McCoy. Whitaker, of Elk Grove, Wis., and originally from DuPage County, Ill., made his first visit to Fort McCoy after having left 75 years earlier.

Even after the surrender and the end of the war, Whitaker said that in the Philippines, people were still dying.

“We had a number of Japanese soldiers who didn’t give up, and we had a number of them coming into camp at night and killing Soldiers (at our base in the Northern Philippines),” Whitaker said. “They even brought in Japanese officers to tell them the war was over, and they thought the officers were lying to them.”

“I also played Taps for a number of Soldiers who were killed,” he said.

Eventually, in March 1946, Whita-

ker arrived back in the United States from the Philippines and was sent to Camp McCoy. By that time, he had earned a Meritorious Unit Award, the American Theater Service Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Theater Service Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal, and a Good Conduct Medal. Mostly, though, he was ready to go home.

“I just remember coming in by train (to McCoy) knowing you were getting out, and we were all saying the sooner the better,” Whitaker said. “We had to go through some lines to give up this, that, and the other thing. They also gave us train-

ing about transition back to civilian life.”

Whitaker said that in the years he served, he was 18 to 21 years old.

“In a way, I would say it was good for me,” Whitaker said. “I think serving was definitely good for the country. I went with the idea that I wanted to do my service, but I also wanted to come back, so I didn’t take any unusual chances. ... When you are deployed, you have to remember to do your duty and then come back.”

After the war, Whitaker earned a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in music from Northwest-

ern University in Illinois. He then worked in the music business for more than 50 years before retiring.

The July 16 stop to the Commemorative Area was his first stop back at the post in more than seven and a half decades, and he said it was worth it.

“I’m glad I was able to see this,” he said. “It brought back a lot of memories.”

The Department of Defense has observed the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II throughout 2020. See more of the observance at <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Spotlight/WWII>.

World War II-era Exchange employee receives Fort McCoy cheer-up

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Thirty-seven years after retiring from Fort McCoy, Lola Morrison of Sparta, Wis., received a special cheering up from the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, or AAFES, and Fort McCoy personnel in August.

The 107-year-old Morrison began working at then-Camp McCoy in 1942 in food service with the Army Exchange Service (later called AAFES).

At that time, the installation was in a construction boom, and troops were busy training for their roles in World War II. Morrison worked at the installation in that capacity for 41 years, retiring at the age of 70 in 1983.

In late July, Morrison's relative Jo Morstatter said Lola was looking for a "cheering up" because the COVID-19 pandemic has kept visitors to a minimum all year. It also seemed Morrison's health was diminishing, and Morstatter knew how much Lola loved Fort McCoy and serving there.

After a call to the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office, and a further spreading of the word to Fort Mc-

Coy Exchange and post workforce members, Morrison soon received letters and post cards from all over.

Morrison received from not just the Fort McCoy Exchange but from other stores as well as Exchange leaders in Texas. Installation workforce members also sent a package and numerous post cards.

"The response from Fort McCoy was terrific and cheered her so much," Morstatter said. "The special package you had made up for her plus the Fort McCoy postcards and the other cards were so much appreciated that this was her response to her niece Bonnie Hall — 'I feel so much better,'" Morstatter said in an email to the installation. "Your help and response was deeply appreciated and so greatly appreciated by Lola. Thank you all. Thank you all for your service."

Fort McCoy Exchange personnel reached out also in 2016, presenting Morrison with an Exceeding Excellence Award certificate and a military coin from the AAFES chief executive officer.

During her time on post, Morrison saw the construction of the cantonment area, where more than

1,500 buildings went up in just a few years.

She saw tens of thousands of troops complete transient training for World War II, the Korean War, Cold War, and the Vietnam War, and she helped feed all those troops. She also was working on the post when it was renamed from Camp McCoy to Fort McCoy in September 1974.

In the June 30, 2016, edition of the Monroe County Herald, writer Vicki Horstman featured Morrison, who was born in 1913 in Viroqua, in a story for her 103rd birthday and also discussed her time at Fort McCoy.

"I fed 480 cadets two times a day with only one helper," said Morrison in the story.

Morrison also had a couple of mentions in The Real McCoy newspaper in the 1940s. The Aug. 14, 1943, issue, under the "P. Extras" column, stated that she and two other workers "hung up their aprons and caps from Cafeteria No. 1 and marched off on their vacations."

For more information about AAFES history, go online to www.aafes.com/about-exchange/history-mission.



Lola Morrison of Sparta, Wis., shown here Aug. 27, received a special cheering up from Army and Air Force Exchange Service, or AAFES, and Fort McCoy personnel in late July. The 107-year-old Morrison began working at then-Camp McCoy in 1942 in food service with the Army Exchange Service (later called AAFES).

Special World War II vet visited McCoy in 2016, recalled friends from famed 100th

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Clarence and Thelma Suzuki of Fresno, Calif., had wanted to visit "Camp McCoy" for decades to see the place the legendary 100th Infantry Battalion once trained.

Their visit became a reality Oct. 28, 2016.

Both Clarence and Thelma grew up in Hawaii and were married there 71 years ago in 1949. Clarence, who was 91 during the visit, is a former Army sergeant who served for 30 months with the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) in Japan and on the Northern Mariana island of Tinian during World War II.

He said they both heard about "Camp McCoy" from friends and family who had trained at the post in 1942-43 with the 100th Infantry Battalion — a Hawaii National Guard unit whose members were of Americans of Japanese ancestry, or Nissei.

The 100th fought in six campaigns in Italy and France during World War II and earned three Presidential Unit Citations. The 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team is recognized as one of the most-decorated units for its size and length of service in the history of the U.S. military.

In 2011, veterans of the 100th, 442nd, and MIS earned the Congressional Gold Medal for their service during the war. The medal, along with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, is considered the highest civilian award in the United States. "That was a real honor," Clarence said.

"We know it was a short time that the 100th was here (at Fort McCoy), but in Hawaii it's a big thing," Thelma said. "It seemed like everyone knew about McCoy. I would hear about it from my brother's friends."

Clarence added, "Because we always heard about Camp McCoy ... (we) always wanted to visit but never had the chance."



Clarence and Thelma Suzuki of Fresno, Calif., look at a picture of the 100th Infantry Battalion on Oct. 28, 2016, in the Fort McCoy History Center. The photo was taken during the battalion's training at McCoy in 1942-43.

The couple toured each of the Commemorative Area's five World War II-era buildings. The buildings are representative of the types found in the cantonment area when it was constructed in 1942 and include an administrative facility, dining facility, and barracks. The 100th Infantry Battalion was the first unit to train at the "new camp" after its inauguration Aug. 30, 1942.

An Army Jeep on display in the administrative building sparked a memory for the couple.

"That's just like the Jeep that Clarence used to teach me how to drive in Hawaii," Thelma said. "It was a scary, mountainous road where we would practice."

"She had a lot of fun learning to drive on those roads, and she did have a lot of trouble parking that Jeep," Clarence said jokingly. "We had so much fun."

The Suzukis also viewed photos — some with people they

knew from the 100th — while touring the Fort McCoy History Center. Clarence said he enjoyed everything he saw.

"I was very impressed," he said. "It was a real historic review for me. A lot of things I didn't know (about Fort McCoy) I saw for the first time, and I'm really impressed with this historic site."

Fort McCoy Public Affairs Specialist Theresa Fitzgerald, herself an Army veteran, said the visit was memorable.

"It is always an honor to meet veterans from World War II," Fitzgerald said.

"The Commemorative Area brings out their personal stories, and you learn so much from them as they reminisce about the 'good old days.' Hearing their stories also helps me in my job by allowing me to share their stories with other tour groups that come through here."

Looking back at significant events of World War II

BY DAVID VERGUN

Department of Defense News

World War II involved combatants from most of the world's nations and was considered the deadliest war in history.

Around 85 million military and civilians died as a result.

The end finally came on Sept. 2, 1945, when Japanese officials signed the surrender documents aboard the battleship USS Missouri at Tokyo Bay, Japan.

The following is a timeline of significant events in World War II.

Sept. 1, 1939

Germany invades Poland, marking what many regard as the start of the war, though Japan invaded China on July 7, 1937. Two days later, France, and the United Kingdom declare war on Germany.

April 9 to June 22, 1940

Germany takes control of much of Western Europe, including France.

July 10, 1940

Germany launches an air war, known as the Battle of Britain, against the United Kingdom.

Sept. 22, 1940

Germany, Italy and Japan sign the Tripartite Pact

Dec. 7, 1941

Japan's naval air force attacks military bases on Oahu, Hawaii.

Dec. 8, 1941

The United States declares war against Japan.

Dec. 11, 1941

The United States declares war on Germany and Italy.

June 4 to 7, 1942

The U.S. Navy defeats the Japanese navy at the Battle of Midway.

July 9, 1942

Allied forces invade Sicily.

Sept. 8, 1943

Italy surrenders to the Allies, but German forces occupy northern Italy.

June 6, 1944

Allied forces land on the beaches of Normandy, France, marking D-Day.

Aug. 25, 1944

Allies take control of Paris.

Dec. 16, 1944

Germans counterattack in northern France, Belgium, and Luxembourg, known as the Battle of the Bulge.

Feb. 19, 1945

U.S. Marines land on the Japanese island of Iwo Jima.

March 22, 1945

The U.S. 3rd Army crosses the Rhine River in Germany.

April 1, 1945

U.S. soldiers and Marines invade Okinawa, Japan.

April 25, 1945

The Soviet army encircles Berlin and links up with the Americans on the Elbe River.

May 8, 1945

Germany surrenders to the Allies, marking V-E Day.

Aug. 6, 1945

The United States drops an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.

Aug. 9, 1945

The United States drops an atomic bomb on Nagasaki, Japan.

Sept. 2, 1945

Japan formally surrenders to the Allies, marking V-J Day, although the initial announcement of surrender was made Aug. 15, 1945



Department of Defense historical photo

Supreme Allied Commander Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur signs the formal Japanese surrender during ceremonies on the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, Japan, on Sept. 2, 1945.

Praise For McCoy

BY COL. GEORGE M. MacMULLIN
Deputy Post Commander

The victory for which our nation and all United Nations have striven has been achieved, thank God.

With the proclamation by President Harry S. Truman, our Commander-in-Chief, this day has been designated as V-J day, signifying the end of hostilities against the remaining Axis foe, Japan.

The record amassed by our military forces during the fighting years since Japan attacked this nation Dec. 7, 1941,

has been studded with feats of military achievement bordering on the impossible. The magnificent triumphs of our armed forces serve as a symbol of Americanism, portray a nation united as one.



COL. MacMULLIN

For those of us at Camp McCoy there remains an important task before we write finis to the war years. The return to civilian pursuits of thousands of veterans is the responsibility of Camp McCoy's personnel center. This huge assignment parallels anything undertaken here during the fighting years and will require our maximum efforts.

I am certain I will receive your wholehearted support—as in the past—and we at Camp McCoy shall meet our objectives promptly and with as much dispatch as possible.

Again, my congratulations to you on your part in this great triumph.

FROM SEPT. 2, 1945, IN THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER

Once-Proud Nips Bow; Ceremony on Missouri

BY KENNETH McCALEB.

ABOARD THE USS. MISSOURI, Tokyo Bay, Sept. 2 (Sunday).---(INS)---World War II came to an end today when Japan's unconditional surrender---hailed by Gen. MacArthur as "a solemn agreement whereby peace may be restored"---was signed aboard the battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

MacArthur Hails New Era of Peace

The ceremony sealing the final and utter defeat of the Axis, which had plunged the globe into six years of carnage, was presided over by the austere

News clipping from Chicago Herald American newspaper at the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area