

INDIAN LAKE

SMOKE SIGNAL

VETERAN'S DAY NOVEMBER 11,

Just a year ago a neighbour and a friend Joe Weaver died. The following part of an article in our paper about Joe was to start a remarkable reaction. Never in all the 28 years of the paper can I remember anything like it. Some people call it coincidence-some fate-some Divine Appointment. Several residents found out that they had fought in the same Battles.

were in the
same hospitals
on far away

Guam at exactly the same time. They had returned to Indianapolis and this little lake

HERE IS OUR TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE....





OR



FROM ACROSS THE FENCE DECEMBER 1989.

The one thing I could never forget is how we became friends in a few minutes. Joe and Barbara Weaver were looking around the lake, just after they purchased their house. While I was talking to Joe, the Army at Fort Ben took that moment to start using Fire Power. At the thump of Mortars and the rattle of machine guns, my reactions were enough to startle anyone. Needless to say, I came to my senses in a minute. Then I tried to explain to these strangers that my reactions were the results of having grown up during the Blitz of the British Isles. I remember Joe looking at me and saying in his quiet voice, "I understand." Joe had, as a young man, added some years to his age so he could join the Marines. He was to serve through many of the major battles in the South Pacific. He served as a sniper until he was wounded. The Purple Heart and all the other medals are only a very small token of what this man was and did. Our prayers are for Barbara.

THE STORY CONTINUES

Six months after Joe died, his long time friend, John Marco, also died of a heart attack. John lived on Indian Lake Blvd, South Drive. He had served in the Marines through the campaigns of the Pacific, returned to Indianapolis, and both men served over twenty years in the Indianapolis Fire Department. A few homes to the West of John Marco's home lives another Marine his name is John Flack, and much of the later part of the paper will tell you John's W W 2 and Korea story. Most of us on the lake pass the lovely log house right on the creek and Indian Lake Road. That home was built by Wilson P. Haymaker, "Wid" to his friends and neighbors. Wid also served with the 1st Marine Division in the Pacific. The battle for Okinawa is engraved on his memory. According to Wid, it started on April 1st 1945 at 8-32 a.m. and ended June 22, 1945. Wid sustained severe injuries and he spent considerable time in the Hospital in Guam.

Another lake resident very familiar with the Hospital in Guam was Jane Quirk. She was assigned to the Army Hospital on Guam near the end of the Pacific conflict. Before her Guam assignment she had been on the staff of the Navy Hospital in Chatham England. During her term of duty in England Jane had made friends with a young man by the name of Cecil Kirk. Would you believe that Cecil Kirk came from my neck of the woods, and he became Lord Mayor of the City of Belfast.

Wid and Jane were not the only two Indian Lake residents to serve on Guam. Janes neighbour on the West end of the lake, **Joe Zainey**, was stationed there at the same time as Jane.

Joe flew B-29 Bomber Night Missions from Guam to the Oil refineries in Japan until the end of the war. When he was recalled to Korea in 1950, he flew RB47 Jet Bombers. He flew photo surveillance missions against military installations along the Russian coast, while playing hide and seek with the Russians. That is not exactly the safest job in the world. Joe stayed in the Air-Force, serving his country for twenty-six and one half years. He was awarded the Air Medal and three commendations, but ask him what he is most proud of, and he will surely tell you it is his Master Navigator's Award. He received it for three thousand, yes, three thousand hours of flying. You would think that would be enough flying for anyone! Wrong! (see next paragraph)

NORTH SIDE

Harold McCullough and Joe have a little plane and I heard that one of their favorite activities is to get up very early, to fly around the beautiful Indiana countryside, and then to land at some little Air-field for breakfast. Harold also retired as an officer after many years in the service. I believe he was in the Army.

Near McCullough's house, right on the corner of Indian Lake Road and Mowhawk drive, is the home of Bev and Mike Minter. Mike served in the Navy as a Nuclear Power Officer. I don't remember if it was on a surface vessel or with the Dolphin service, but I do remember it was in or under the Atlantic whichever the case may be.

On the other corner of Indian Lake Road and Mowhawk is the home of **Sue and Russ Koehring**. I do know that Russ served in the Air Force. A stones throw along the road are the **Okeys** and the **Kingsburys**. Jack Okey served in the Army as an instructor in the artillery. **David Kingsbury** served in the Air Force, and he spent a year with a Mobile Medical Team in the villages of Vietnam. David had the opportunity to help native doctors and villagers in CaMau and Kwan Long.

SOUTHSIDE

Jumping over to the southside we find more veterans. **Ron Vantrees** entered the Navy as an enlisted man, and left the service as a warrant officer. Ron flew the desolate Artic Circle area, including Alaska and the Bering Straits with a bomber patrol squadron. He also became the personal aide to a Flight Surgeon who was promoted to Admiral just as Rons term of duty finished.

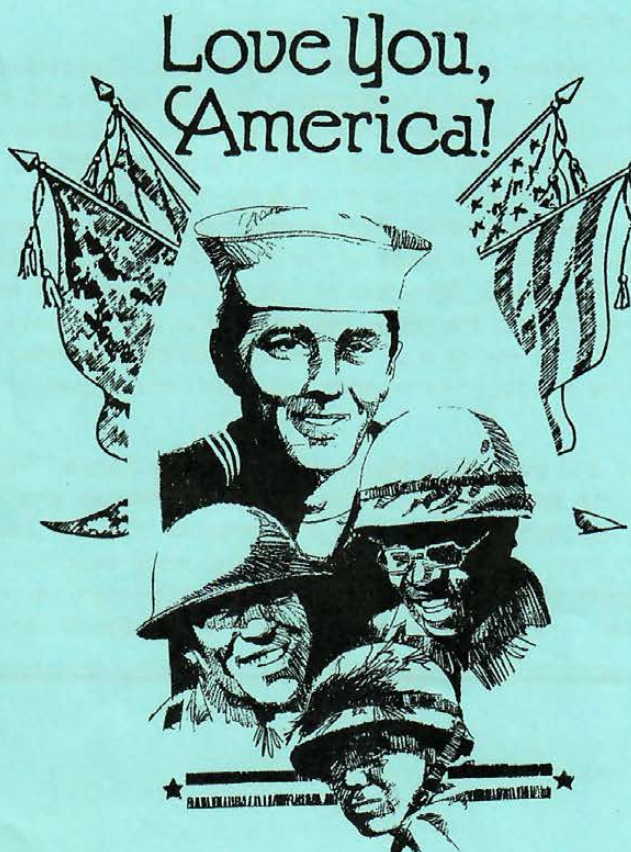
Right across the street from the VanTreeses lives **Carl and Linda Creed**. Carl served in the Navy on the U.S.S. Brinkley Bassett, a destroyer escort, in Korea Japan and Australia. The men of the ship still get together every year. Reno, Kansas, Washington and Massachusetts are a few of the special places the Creeds have travelled to meet their special friends. I won't give you the details but it was because of his Navy commitment that Carl met Linda. Right next door are the **Pecks**. **Will Peck** served in a very elite group of the Army in Washington D.C. He served as a guard at the White House and at the tomb of the Unknown soldier. Right across from Flo and Will and next to the VanTreeses is the home of **Ross and Liselotte Walker**. Ross is a judge on the Juvenile court but it was while he was serving with the Judge Advocates staff in Germany with the U.S. Army that he met his wife Lisel. **Phil and Jean Bly** are their next door neighbors. Phil served as a young officer in the Navy. He returned to active reserve status and was recalled to active duty during the Korean conflict. Phil served as a gunnery officer and then returned to Dental school. Phil and Jean lived on the lake, left for a short time and returned recently. All in all, I would guess they have been around here for 30-35 years.

Hop over the street from the Blys and you'll meet **Hugh and Johanna Jones**. Hugh is a former resident of Liverpool and served in the Pacific. He served on both the H.M.S. Indomitable and Indefatigable. The carrier Indomitable was to sustain very heavy damages as the results of Kamikazee attacks. Just down Winona are **Frank and Jean Knox**. Frank served in the Navy with the *Sea Bees*. Franks early duty was in Morrocco, North Africa. (Here's looking at you Kid!) Franks a great lover of sailing and each summer for many years, Frank has gone sailing in the beautiful blue waters of the Caribbean. He has come to know many of the islands very well but I think Granada is

top of his list. All of this started when Frank was stationed on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Our home (Bob and Maureen Wagner) is one door up from the Knoxes. Bob was a student at the University of Illinois, when he was drafted into the U.S. Army signal Corp. I was a member of the Women's Royal Naval Service and served on the H.M.S. Caroline and a little minesweeper, the H.M.S. Kilmory.

WESTSIDE

Over the lake on the road heading to the dam, you will pass the house of Fred and Becky Lee. Fred a former Navy man served in a rather hair-raising position in an amunition dump. Want to hear how part of California nearly dissapeared into the ocean? Actually, it wasn't as bad as all that but there nothing as scary as trouble in an Ammo Dump. Pass Fred's house, and you come to Sweeneys. Jack Sweeny finished his time in the Marines and was recalled again for Korea. Catty corner to Sweeneys is the Zaney abode. You have already heard Joe's story. A little further around is Jane Quirks home. But since you have already heard about Jane we will have nothing else left to do but go back to the First Marine Division. Back to the beginning that is where this story started. Before I tell you about John Flack and the Chosin Reservoir, I would like to tell you that John is an excellent artist. One of his oil paintings of the Chosin Reservoir was one of two finalists in a competition. The winner's painting will be hung in the Ward Room of a U.S. Navy Warship. John has many decorations, but the one he received just recently is the China War Memorial Medal. It was given by the Government of the Republic of China. John enlisted in the Marines and served as a machine gunner in an armored amphibious assault unit. He served at Pearl Harbor, New Hebrades and Guadal Canal. John was transferred to the North China Patrol, 1st Battalion and promoted to tank commander. His distinguished service brought him a chest full of medals with Battle Stars. Recalled to the Korean Conflict, John takes us down a very special memory lane with the beautiful and poignant story of the Choison Reservoir rescue.



IN SEARCH OF A STAR

Never had men prayed so hard for a star. Not a skyful; merely one, which would mean clear skies in the morning and friendly planes overhead.

There was no describing its importance, the weather. To the three tense Marine regiments waiting within the village of Koto-ri, it was a grim matter of life and death.

Snow-choked skies meant the breakout attack to the south, scheduled for dawn, would be without vital air support. Moreover, delay gave the Chinese Communist horde blocking the road back time to grow stronger.

But above all, the weather mattered most to the hundreds of Marine wounded crowding the makeshift hospital in Koto-ri. If good, it meant transports could land at the rough-hewn airfield to evacuate them quickly, as was the need.

If bad, there was no choice but an overland trek south, a laborious cold trip by truck through sniper-infested gorges; one which could be started only if the rifle regiments broke through.

Men prayed hard, the night of December 7, for a star that showed no sign of coming. They huddled in small, tense groups around squat tent stoves, making quiet, grave conversation about weather. Occasionally there were half-hearted attempts to change the subject; talk of the hard fighting the Fifth and Seventh regiments had endured in their move from Hagaru-ri to Koto-ri; talk of the more exciting girls they had met in a thousand and one places. These attempts failing, men would break singly from the circle to search the dark, snow-filled sky outside. On each lined tired face, lifted to the skies, could be seen written the unspoken prayer: Be there a star...be there a star.

There were some who cursed the black sky, charging the elements had allied with the enemy. They cursed unreasonably, as men are apt to do in time of dire trial.

Fair weather had favored the Marine withdrawal from Yudam-ni to Hagaru-ri, 8 good days of bright, clear skies that permitted Leatherneck Corsairs to strafe, bomb, napalm the fiercely resisting enemy between the two reservoir villages. Then there had been 4 more good days at Hagaru-ri, time enough to airlift 4,000 Marine and Army casualties who had collected at the makeshift village airstrip.

It had been merciful, the weather, even as it punished with its snow and subzero cold. As if by plan, the skies

had stayed open as the Fifth and Seventh regiments battled south from Hagaru-ri, with a protective umbrella of aircraft overhead. As the last elements of the two regiments filed into the safety of the first Regiment's perimeter at Koto-ri, the skies had snapped shut.

The thick blinding snow began falling at dusk, December 6, and the Leathernecks, with three-quarters of their epic journey behind them, took the first flakes lightly. The last leg was ahead and it wasn't possible that fair weather would desert them, they confided. Not after Yudam-ni, Hagaru-ri and the move south.

Nor were they concerned greatly the following day, when the blinding snowstorm showed no sign of abating. They spent the day reorganizing, preparing for a jump-off with the dawn of December 8. There was plenty of time for the snow to subside.

At dusk, they began their vigil as the storm mounted with an ominous intensity. Noisy wind whipped the thick flakes into a blizzard, driving the skywatchers to seek warmth in their tents. And to anxious inquiries of men inside, they reported solemnly: "Not a star in sight; just snow and darkness."

Thus into the night, men tensely waited the coming of that first star. They squirmed through the tightly lashed tent entrances to peer hopefully into the dark sky outside. There were those who lost hope easily, who roared defiantly "To hell with the weather, we'll get through somehow!" Moments later, the very same ones squinted through tentflaps, their fingers crossed, and an unspoken prayer on their lips: Be there a star...be there a star!

It was to come, one star, at 2137, as carefully noted by the time-conscious men. It was faint to be sure, but there could be no denying its presence. It hung weakly in the sky (at times obscured by snow flurries) over a hill to the southwest of the perimeter. And the word spread like wildfire through the rejoicing camp: "There is a star, there is a star!"

So clear skies did come that following morning, bringing Marine fighter planes and transports for the wounded. And as the aircraft dipped their wings in early morning salute, the Marine troops below, preparing to move out on the last leg of their journey, cheered: "Look at those stars, Just look at those stars!"

By JOHN FLACK