## WINGS



# Mews

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#### Eli Baker

#### Distinguished Ottawa Native Part 3"

Vern and I were put into a cell where the temperature was altered from very hot to very cold to add to our anxiety. (We were stilled dressed in civilian clothes). Then we were separately interrogated. When I was questioned, I gave my rank, name and serial number as we had been taught to do, information that was on my dog tags. The Gestapo officer opened his drawer and pulled out a dog tag of someone from Saskatchewan and said, 'That's who I am.' I said, 'No, you are not him.' He replied, 'How do I know who you say you are?' The main gist of the conversation was to learn what the Allies' strategy on our raids over Germany was. The strategies had changed since the invasion and our information would have been of no help, which we were not about to divulge, no matter what.

Eight of us who were in the cell were transferred to a prison in Brussels. After two weeks we were told we had been reported to the Canadian Red Cross, which gave us some relief; we might have been shot as spies. (We had been captured in civilian clothes).

We were sent by train from Brussels to Frankfurt, Germany. From our windows we could see the bombing damage that had been done to the cities and countryside. Frankfurt was the staging area for captured Air Force officers. About a week later, I was sent with other airmen (but not with the eight cell mates that I had previously been with) to Sagan, which had been annexed from Poland during the war. This was Stalag III, and was to be my home until January, 1945.

When the Russians broke through the front in January, 1945, the Germans decided to move us west to keep us out of their hands. We marched from January to April, 1945, in the cold of winter. When we arrived south of Hamburg on the Elbe River, the British forces were breaking through the northern front. The Germans kept us marching north toward the Kiel Canal. On May 6, when the British caught up with us, we were liberated."

In two days, Eli, at 114 lbs, and the others were flown back to England. They were deloused, debriefed, and were given all of their belongings and a year's pay.

Moreover, this Flight Lieutenant was notified that he had received the DFC (Distinguished Flying Cross).

On June, 1945, he returned to Canada, to a warm welcome from friends and family. By the way, shortly after the war, his parents sponsored one of the Dutch families of the underground who had wanted to come to Canada.

### A SOLDIER KNOWN BUT TO GOD

In 1921 an American soldier, his name "known but to God," was buried on a Virginia hillside overlooking the Potomac River and the city of Washington, DC. The burial site of the unknown World War I soldier in Arlington National cemetery symbolized dignity and reverence for America's veterans.

Similar ceremonies had occurred earlier in England and France, where an "unknown soldier" of the Great War was buried in each nation's highest place of honor (in England, Westminster Abbey; in France, the Arc de Triumphed).

These memorial gestures all took place on November 11, 1918 on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. The day became known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a Congressional resolution It became a national holiday 12 years later by similar Congressional action.

If World War I had indeed been "the war to end all wars, "November 11th Night still be called Armistice Day. But in 1939, World War II broke out in Europe and shattered that dream. Of the 1.6 million Americans who served in the Armed Forces during World War II, more than 400,000 died.

### AFTER FLIGHT 77 HIT THE PENTAGON ON 9/11, THE FOLLOWING HAPPENED

A chaplain, who happened to be assigned to the Pentagon, told of an incident that happened right after Flight 77 hit the Pentagon on 9/11.

A daycare facility inside the Pentagon had many children, including infants who were in heavy cribs. The daycare supervisor, looking at all the children they needed to evacuate, was in a panic over what they could do. There were many children, mostly toddlers, as well as the infants that would need to be taken out with the cribs. There was no time to try to bundle them into carriers and strollers.

Just then a young Marine came running into the center and asked what they needed. After hearing what the center director was trying to do, he ran back out into the hallway and disappeared. The director thought, "Well, here we are, on our own."

About 2 minutes later, that Marine returned with 40 other Marines in tow. Each of them grabbed a crib with a child, and the rest started gathering up toddlers.

The director and her staff then helped them take all the children out of the center and down toward the park near the Potomac.

Once they got about 3/4 of a mile outside the building, the Marines stopped in the park, and then did a fabulous thing - they formed a circle with the cribs, which were quite sturdy and heavy, like the covered wagons in the Old West.

Inside this circle of cribs, they put the toddlers, to keep them from wandering off. Outside this circle were the 40 Marines, forming a perimeter around the children and waiting for instructions. There they remained until the parents could be notified and come get their children.

The chaplain then said, "I don't think any of us saw nor heard of this on any of the news stories of the day. It was an incredible story of our men there." There wasn't a dry eye in the room.

The thought of those Marines and what they did and how fast they reacted; could we expect any less from them? It was one of the most touching stories from the Pentagon.

It's the Military, not the politicians that ensure our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It's the Military who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag.

If you care to offer the smallest token of recognition and appreciation for the military, please pass this on and pray for our men and women, who have served and are currently serving our country, and pray for those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for freedom.

"GOD BLESS AMERICA"

**Arts speech at Pommelo School** 



To the parents and faculty, you are doing a great job. And now I want to talk to the kids, because they as many people said are the future, you will lead this nation and I want you to remember from my lips a few things. Freedom isn't free, it takes a lot of effort on your part in the future, and one thing I learned is treat everybody as you want to be treated and you will make a great American citizen. I look forward to you handling the torch of liberty in the future and thanking the people who taught you. Thank you third grade class.

#### **December Birthdays**

Katherine Frangos-December 20, 1929 Doug Rankin-December-26, 1929 Shirley Andrews December 4, 1936 Judge Donald Foster-December 24, 1920 Lee Auger-December 23, 1929 Howard Swerdlick-December 7, 1936 Juan Cama Cho-December 24, 1945 Alan Hill December 22, 1966 Paul Morrison-December 8, 1924 David Plumb-December 7, 1952 Lee Levitan-Decenber 24, 1923 Brian Anderson-December 12, 1980 Dick Thackson-December 18, 1924 Barbara Wright-December 24, 1931 Bill Turner-December 15, 1944 Roscoe Frazier-December 8, 1939 John Helm-December 24, 1020 Peggy Jean Bassett-December 20, 1938 Cliff Rose-December 16, 1926

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