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Fred R. Kaplan Editor

Happy New Year to all of you and your families

Women's Army Corps

An article in the MALIBU SURFSIDE NEWS by writer Ashleigh Fryer on November 11, 2014 introduces us to Ethel Margolin WOW member.

"Twenty year old Ethel Margolin was standing in front of her favorite candy store in New York City on Dec. 7, 1941, when she heard the news.

"War was declared," she said. "I couldn't wait until I was 21."

It was at age 21 that Margolin would be able to make the commitment that approximately 12 million of her male peers would make during the six years of the United States' involvement in World War II. She would eventually become one of 150,000 women in the country to serve in the Women's Army Corps.

"The day I was 21, I ran down to the Marine Corps: the Marine Corps was closed." Margolin said to a crowd of approximately 200 people on Nov. 11 at the City of Malibu's Veteran's Day celebration. "I went to the Army the next day and they grabbed me ... I was a private and I happened to have the highest IQ on the base — that is why I was approached by the OCS (Officer Candidate School). But I said no." I had to come up through the ranks."

After rejecting her field commission, Margolin was stationed at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, where she operated B 24 and B 25 aircraft. She eventually moved to the Air Transport Command of the 8th Air Force in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she stayed for the remainder of the war.

"We were behind the lines — we were in the States and no matter how often we tried to get to go overseas, we didn't get to go."

Margolin said. "We did the best we could — we worked very hard to support our troops all over the world ... I was very, very proud to do what I could do."

After her service in the Air Transport Command and successfully completing many personnel and administrative duties, she married and with her husband began their lives in the San Fernando Valley.

She has been active for several decades with a group that rescues dogs and other animals. Ethel served as a den mother while her children were growing up. She has been volunteering at the Platt Library for the last seventeen years. As a member of the homeowner's association in the Los Angeles County area of Canoga Park, she led the effort to rename the area Westhills. When the city of Los Angeles got involved in the renaming the end result was West Hills.

Her other lifelong interest has been the theatre. She has written and produced plays. They played at Mitchell Field in Long Island, New York. PFC MARY BROWN was a play she produced and directed. She is active in the Los Angeles County Shakespearean Group.

Now this, young ninety year old, veteran is an assistant to her son who is an attorney. Her other son a karate master depends on his mother to edit his written works and proof all scripts.

This lady WAC is still very proud of all she does.

Ed Moreno

Hal's Passing



Harold R. "Hal" Knowles 39301 went west the week before Christmas, 2014, after a long life of service to his country. He was born March 2, 1923, in Lankershim, which changed its name to North Hollywood when he

was four in an effort to acquire reflected glory from the burgeoning movie industry. There he grew to young manhood. His home was about equal distant from Metropolitan Airport (Van Nuys) established when he was five, and United Air Terminal (Bob Hope) established when he was eight. He grew up in the golden age of aviation, when Southern California was becoming the aviation center of the United States. In 1941 he went to work for Lockheed as it geared up for war production, and started to take flying lessons at Metropolitan Airport. He later remembered, "When I was working for Lockheed (on the Hudson bombers and the P-38s) I started taking flight lessons at Van Nuys Airport. I was all set for solo on the morning of December 8, 1941, having just made a loop of the pattern with my instructor. The instructor got out of the Cub, gave me a few last minute verbal instructions, and then noticed that the RED FLAG was flying from the flagpole, signifying the field was closed!!

I noted another strange thing; there was no one visible around the flight line! I shut the engine down and we went into the nearby line shack where a few folks were gathered about a radio. It was just at that time that we heard President Roosevelt addressing Congress on the "day of infamy" at Pearl Harbor, and declaring a state of war to be then in existence with the Empire of Japan!



All civilian flying was curtailed in defense areas - period. Private aircraft were to be made unflyable for spur-of-the-moment flight, with the propeller, wheels, or a flight control removed.

Later on, by special permit, an aircraft owner could get a onetime ferry permit to depart the defense area with the nearest places acceptable for civilian travel.

Flying to be Lone Pine or Olanche to the north, Baker to the northeast, and Yuma to the east. and, it was Baker (up toward Las Vegas) where I eventually did get to fly - with Chaffee Junior College under US Navy contract, at a much later date." In 1942 after the United States entered the war, he enlisted in the Marines. He was selected for flight training and sent to

the remote desert village of Baker for flight training. Hal remembered, "I got my first 30 hours or so of flight training under Naval contract with Chaffee Junior College, at a little dirt airport at Baker, California (flew Cubs in 1942). After that there was time available prior to scheduled Pre-Flight School participation where I was sent to secondary Civilian Pilot Training at Susanville, California, with Lassen Junior College. There we flew Ryans, Fairchild PT-19s, Wacos, and a Meyers. The Meyers [OTW] is what I put most of the time in, and learned aerobatics. Following this I went to Naval Pre-Flight at St. Mary's College in Walnut Creek, California, for three months, then to NAS Livermore for Primary Flight Training." The airport at Silver Lake, near Baker, was an unpaved square of desert located near today's Baker Airport (002). Susanville is in far northern California, northwest of Reno.

After completing his advanced training and qualifying in Vought F4Us, he joined VMF-114 (the "Death Dealers"), activated at El Toro and sent to MCAS Ewa, Hawaii, then Espiritu Santo and the Green Island where they flew strike missions against bypassed Japanese units in the Bismarcks. They then went to the island of Peleliu, scene of some of the bloodiest fighting of the Pacific war. On September 17, 1944 (D+11) VMF-114 landed on the just-liberated airstrip and began dive-bombing missions across the island, using rockets to open cave entrances where the Japanese were dug in and dropping napalm (for only the second time in the Pacific war). The First Marine Division suffered casualties equal to a third of their force, and a Japanese lieutenant and 26 men were able to hold out until April, 1947. Temperatures regularly ran to 115° F. VMF-114 stayed at Peleliu until ceasing combat operations on June 1, 1945 and was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation.

Hal stayed in the Marines and when the Korean War started was assigned to VMF-312, still flying the old faithful Corsairs, which in this unit were marked with a distinctive checkerboard around the cowlings and on the rudder. These were -4s, more powerful, faster and with better range than the -1s Hal had flown in the Pacific. Only four months after the North Korean invasion across the 38th parallel, VMF-312 was stationed at Kimpo Airfield (K-14). The unit relocated a number of times, following the ebb and flow of the war, until March, 1951, when it went aboard CVL 29, the Bataan. The primary mission was to escort friendly ships and blockade the enemy West coast ports, with a secondary mission of aerial

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reconnaissance and close air support on the Korean peninsula. Throughout the war the unit had many changes of station, including Pusan (K-1), Pyongtaek (K-6), the carriers *Bairoko* (CVE 11), *Sicily* (CVE-118), *Badoeng Strait* (CVE 16), and other locations. Combat operations ceased in June, 1953, with the truce. Hal was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, with a citation for "for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight, in action against enemy forces in Korea."



In 1953, Hal was back at MCAS El Toro, shown as second from the right in the second row. He was now a captain, and serving in HMR-163, a helicopter transport outfit. Transferring to HMX1 at Quantico, Hal made the first landing of a Marine helicopter on the White House lawn in 1957. From the Marines in 1964, having accumulated time in F4U Corsairs, F6F Hellcats, SBD Dauntless, TBM/TBF Avengers, F8F Bearcats, and F7F Tigercats. He also acquired over 2500 hours in various types of helicopters.

After retirement Hal joined the Engineering Division of the City of Los Angeles, but was not through with service to his country. He joined the Civil Air Patrol, and became Commanding Officer of Valley Senior Squadron 195, with the CAP rank of Lt. Colonel. He continued to be devoted to aviation and to Navy and

Marine aviation in particular. In the accompanying picture he is in the cockpit of a Nieuport 28 replicating those which flew in Navy service World War I.



Unbroken Movie Revue

I have experienced many miracles at Wings over Wendy's. The most recent was when we attended the World Premiere of "Unbroken" the of story Louis Zamperini.

After the Red Carpet ceremonies we saw the film in the Dolby Theater. After which entered into the ballroom, where we were served dinner.

Now it was after 11:00 o'clock, the end of the evening. A throng was milling around the ballroom, some still taking photographs.

I was in my wheelchair seated at our table waiting for my son, Arshag, to wheel out, when a woman walked up to me, leaned down and said:

"I'm from France. Thank you for saving my life."

I told her I flew a number of missions to France, at some we dropped supplies to the freedom fighters. I mentioned Grenoble. She said she was a very little girl and her father was a freedom fighter.

As we talked, something happened to my insides. I asked her, her name. She said, "Edith", and said she was Jewish. I was unable to understand her last name because of the noise.

"May I take your picture"? She asked, and took my picture. My son took a picture of her with me.

"I want to kiss you", she said. With that she kissed me on the cheek. Then she was gone.



By Guy Chookoorian

Another Unbroken Review

Upon entering the Dolby Theater and, Walking on the Red Carpet.

A Big Brass Band was playing and marching around the corridor. We were walking single file and continuously stopping for the media, newspaper reporters, photographers and the like, must have been over 60 at least. "WOW" for "Wings over Wendy's". "We where the celebrities" then on to the Complementary Popcorn & Drinks to enjoy with the movie "Unbroken" the true life story of Louis Zamperini a

WWII pilot of a B-24, and Olympic runner, now to Oh 'my' threes Brad Pitt, and his children Maddox, Pax & Shiloh, and only seven rows back.

Temptation over came me, to take pictures. So I asked Brads permission to do so, and he stood up and took off his glasses and I said, "I think I'm in heaven". Seated next to him were his parents. I went back to my seat and grabbed Barney Leone, WWII Navy. "Come Barney, get a picture & shake hands with Brad Pitt the actor", and he did, as I snapped photos capturing the moment with my camera.

Next was our introduction. The announcer on stage was telling of our WWII veterans in the audience and they gave us a long standing ovation.

Lights dimming now, the movie "Unbroken" starting. Many great B-24 scenes you will see it for yourselves, "Great work Angelica Joli and movie crew".

Now on to the ballroom experience, crystal chandeliers, luxurious décor, and beautiful floral arrangements everywhere, gourmet food dishes served continuously, D.J. music, celebrities filling the room. I strolled over to the Zamperini table with my book "Unbroken", hoping for signatures and luck was with me. I met Louie Zaperinis son Luke and daughter Cynthia Karen Loomis. That is Russell Allen Phillips; he was a survivor of the plane crash with Louie on the raft. I took photos. Oh am I dreaming?

I actually spoke with Louis Zamperini on the phone, on May 31st, 2014. Inviting him to dinner, with my dad Lt. Keith Murchland WWII pilot of a B-25 and myself. He was very polite and said he was ill, and then thanked me. And we talked for about five minutes.

"God Bless" you for this experience of the "Unbroken" Premier and thank you Gil Rendon and Lee Leviton.

Sincerely Peggy Jean Basset, flyer, supporter, and a war bird enthusiast.



Mike LaVere, Luke Zamperini, Barney Leone



Luke Zamperini standing left rear Art Sherman front left and Lee Leviton

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Rich Raymond January 1, 1931
 Bud Lindahl-January 2, 1924
 Peter K. Howenstin-January 3, 1925
 Frank Paplanus-January 3, 1948
 John Martin January 7, 1923
 Stephan Sherman-January 10, 1921
 Steve Politis-January 11, 1917
 Stephanie Pofcher-January 12, 1976
 Stan Opatowsky-January 17, 1931
 Donald Eisenberg-January 18, 1937
 Ron Hackney-January 19, 1937
 Al Yoselle-January 23, 1919
 Irv Brounstein-January 27,
 Sherwood Francis-January 26, 1922
 Al Lewis January 30, 1924
 Tom Williamson-January 30,

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