

Three WWII Aviators ... Three B-24 Crashes ... Three Willow Brook Residents ...

by Larry Harris, CEO

By all odds, Charles Allen, Ray Nally, and Bob Schild should not be living at Willow Brook. But they are. Truth be told, they probably should not be living anywhere. In World War II, all were crewmembers on different B-24 bombers engaged in the campaign to release Europe from Germany's murderous clutch 71 years ago. All three survived crashes – two were shot down, the third ran out of fuel.

B-24 crews suffered the highest rate of combat deaths of any U.S. service group in WW II. One in two never came home.

Our three heroes defied the odds, and, at war's end, found their way back home – the first leg of three very different 71-year journeys that landed them at Willow Brook. They live with us today – one at each of our three communities.

I sat down with them this spring to hear their tales.

Their stories of parachute jumps and survival on foot in German-held territory gave me cause for sober reflection many days after.

Bob Schild and wife, Carrie, live at Willow Brook Christian Home. On January 21, 1944, at age 22, he and his eight crewmates were flying a mission over German-held France, in preparation for the

Allied D-Day invasion that was to come a few weeks later.

"We had received the absolute minimum of training, so badly were we needed to replace crews that had perished," Bob reflected. "We really felt unprepared for the mission."

The French coast was heavily defended – lots of

German fighter planes and anti-aircraft guns. "We were flying dead last in formation – 'tail-end Charlie' we were called," Bob explained. "That position is usually the first to be picked off by the fighters."

Sure enough, three German planes came streaking in with guns firing. Bob, the tailgunner, was the primary defender.

"In that first pass, our co-pilot was killed," Bob said. "He took a 20mm round to the stomach. The pilot was shot in the legs, and they took out one of our four engines."

"In the next two passes they took out two more engines. You don't fly long on one engine, so we knew we were headed down," he said.

Bob jumped from the hatch with four of his crewmates. His chute opened, and he drifted into a big

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Bob Schild

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tree. Bob said, "I fell down through the tree, dragging the chute, and hit the ground, only to be met by a German soldier with his gun trained on me."

"Das is the end of ze war for you," Bob remembered him saying. "I feel like the only reason he didn't shoot me on the spot was my last name. He recognized that I was of German ancestry."

Bob was then shuttled through prison camps until the war's end.

Ray Nally and Charles Allen told survival tales with uncanny parallels. Like Bob Schild, Ray and his nine crewmates were rushed through hurry-up flight instruction. Parachute training was cut from the schedule so they could get quickly into action as a replacement crew. So when they arrived at their base in Italy, none had ever jumped from a plane. Not good. It was a proficiency that soon would have proved useful.



Ray Nally

The afternoon of April 12, 1944, Ray and his crewmates were over target in Yugoslavia when flak took out two engines.

Flak is antiaircraft ordnance launched skyward, like Red, White, and Boom fireworks, timed to explode at the invading aircrafts' approximate altitude. The explosions propel shrapnel in all directions, often at great peril to bomber formations.

The plane was crippled beyond hope. "We were going down," Ray recalled, "so we bailed. It was our first jump. Seven of us got out and survived, but three went down with the plane – the pilot, co-pilot, and bombardier."

"I trimmed a tree as I came in, breaking five ribs," Ray said. "But I was alive!"

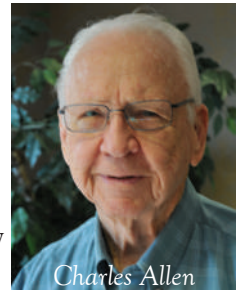
Some of Marshal Tito's Partisans saw them come down. The Partisans were Yugoslav resistance fighters – friends in hostile territory. They were skilled at spiriting downed flight crews to safety.

Ray and his mates set off on a multi-week trek across mountains and rivers with the Partisans guiding every step of the way. "They kept us safe until we arrived at a landing strip near the Adriatic Sea," Ray explained. At a prearranged time, a C-47 troop

carrier arrived, picked them up, and dashed them off to Italy.

Ray Nally lives today with his wife Helen at Willow Brook Christian Village.

On April 21, 1944, just nine days after Ray's crash, Delaware Run resident Charles Allen was a co-pilot on his seventh mission. Their target also was in Yugoslavia, some distance from Ray Nally's. They found themselves in heavy flak as they approached.



Charles Allen

Their bomber sustained a hit that caused a fuel leak. Their precious petrol was streaming out behind them. Said Charles, "It was a helpless feeling. We knew we wouldn't have enough to make it back to our base in Italy, so we decided to bail at 12,000 feet. Our flight engineer was ahead of me. He froze when it was his turn to jump, so we pushed him out of the bomb bay. Don't worry. He made it."

All eleven aboard survived the jump. Charles hid his chute. As he was getting away from it, he heard a voice. It turned out to be a Yugoslav Partisan – of the same ragtag league that saved Ray.

"We knew they were good at getting our people out," recalled Charles. "They put their lives on the line as they led us through the mountains, moving us from one safe place to another. They took good care of us."

"They escorted us to a landing strip that had been cleared in a forest," Charles said. "We waited there for about ten days with other American flyers – about 50 in all. Then a C-47 swooped in to ferry us to safety. The Partisans even gave us a farewell dinner!"

Charles and Ray have compared notes and concluded that they were not in the same group of rescued airmen, although their paths may have crossed somewhere – in stateside training, at their base in Italy. Who knows. They certainly have crossed now at Willow Brook.

Willow Brook has been a haven for many World War II vets in their later years. The survivors are mostly in their 90s now. One is a hundred. Time has exacted a severe toll from their number. Soon the last will make his way to the exit, and their final story will die as he passes through.

I consider it the highest honor to have served these men and women who risked so much.

Their bomber sustained a hit that caused a fuel leak. Their precious petrol was streaming out behind them.



Stambaugh Gallery Opens at The Village

The Gathering Place at Willow Brook Christian Village became a photo gallery this April. Now, you can not only grab some coffee and a snack, watch a little TV, and chat with friends, you can also enjoy nature photos taken by Village resident Joyce Stambaugh, RN.

The back yard of Joyce's twin-single home is an animal haven (see photo on back page). She became a Willow Brook resident in 1997, and immediately started feeding the birds and animals that lived in the woods behind her house. Word spread among the forest creatures, and the wild menagerie has grown.

Retirement from her staff position as the wellness nurse in 2011 gave Joyce more time to focus on her photography, and The Village has benefitted. If you have ever been in the lobby you may have noticed a striking nature photograph above the drinking fountain. It is where Joyce shares recent photos she has taken around campus, and every few weeks she changes it out for one more bird, flower or animal.

We took thirty of those shots and arranged them on the Gathering Place walls. Every picture was taken right on campus and each one makes you pause to appreciate what Joyce can create with a good camera, a little critter food, considerable patience and a whole lot of talent.



Clockwise from below: a hummingbird at the feeder; Becky Harris, registered dietitian, and Lee Chopin, personal care attendant, view the collection; a fawn who happened by; a female cardinal; and Joyce Stambaugh.



Jeanetta Alban

Jack Alban

**All Who Gave Their Lives
for This Country**

Donald L. Freidenberg, D.O.

Joseph L. Allen

Wayne & Mary Gregg Hasty

John L. Anderson

Julie Bardelang

Margaret C. "Peg" Anderson

John Anderson, Jr.

Ray Andrews

Alma B. Eshelman

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Richard C. Atkinson

Carol A. Roden

Bernard O. Baker

Allen & Barbara Ulrich

Elmer Beasley

Phyllis Beasley

Rose Berner

John & Sue Dickman

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Ruth Duke Bower

Everett & Susan Hendrickson

Jack L. Brader

Peggy Brader

John Buchanan

Mary L. Waugh

Woodrow Buchanan

Mary L. Waugh

Sue Buchanan

Mary L. Waugh

John R. Burns, Sr.

Curtis & Genevieve Burns

Frances Carlton

Bobby & Debbie Chester

April L. Jackson

Betty Cash

Jean Springer

Joseph Caudy

Roger & Jane Sagar

Margaret Caudy

Roger & Jane Sagar

Michael Chucta

Teresa J. Ryan

Katherine "Louise" Clark

John & Shelly Hubbell

Robert "Bob" Coe

Rosemary Coe

Donna J. French

Raymond & Helen Nally

Helen J. Reppart

Lois K. Smith

Village Residents Advisory Council

Robert Craddock

Stanton & Jane Craddock

Wilma Craddock

Stanton & Jane Craddock

Dorothy J. Dale

Joy D. Lackey

Esther Daniels

Carl & Avalene Daniels

Neal Daniels

Carl & Avalene Daniels

Nancy DeTray

Karen Mesenburg

Reuben & Eleanor Dickman

John & Sue Dickman

Martha A. "Marty" Dickson

Ralph Dickson

William J. Dilleuth

Donald & Gladys Dilleuth

John O. Eckhardt

Joan Lee Eckhardt

Okey and Helen Eddy

James & Betty Perry

Randy Edwards

Geneva B. Connor

Verne Edwards

Dolores I. Edwards

Donna Ewing

Robert Ewing

Jean L. Flahive

William & Rosemary Warner

Joan Fletcher

Karen Fletcher

Randy & Judith Mobley

Lawrence Fletcher

Karen Fletcher

Randy & Judith Mobley

Richard "Dick" Foley

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Robert French

Donna J. French

Marilyn Frische

Kenneth Frische

Charles Gerhart

Rebecca L. Gerhart

Elsie Goodman

Leslie Goodman

Lloyd Gray

Michael & Deborah Gray

Clinton Griffith

Alma B. Eshelman

Martha Haines

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Vernon Hall

Wanda Hall

Opal J. Hardin

Corinne D. Esau

Margaret V. Harper

Ed & Stephanie Harden

Shirley M. Harper

Ed & Stephanie Harden

Audrey & Alberta Harris

Larry & Janet Harris

John T. Hayes

Karen S. Hayes

Carl Hertwig

Joy D. Lackey

Katherine K. Hilborn

James & Sharon Edwards

Edward Q. Holston

David Holston's Co-Workers

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

John "Jack" Humler

Greg & Macy Layer

Ann M. Ickes

Stanton T. Ickes

Howard S. Ickes

Robert & Ellie Scheuer

James E. Jackson

Mitchell & Dyana Welch

Guy C. Johnson

Owen Johnson

Lois J. Johnson

Manuel L. Johnson

Emily Kerr

Boyd & Beverly Hill

Evelyn Kerr

Martha K. Sprout

Jean W. Kohan

Andrew J. Kohan

Lydia Landis

Linda A. Raber

Charles L. Lang

Grace M. Lang

Claudia "Sue" Lasley

Mark Lasley

Thomas J. Lasley

Anna F. Lasley

Mark Lasley

William C. Lauderman

Clifton & Nancy Bailey

Corinne D. Esau

Don & Sally Evans

A. Richard Teller

Wanda Lee

Kitchen Aid Small Appliances Div

Bruce & Barbara Reiersen

Bertha A. Lengacher

John & Deloris Suppes

James Leslie

Betty Leslie

Hilda M. Wick

Vincent and Evelyn Loverde

John & Sue Dickman

Tribute

Memorial C

March 16 – J

Sandra Lowden

Dennis & Melanie Day

Martha Mattox

James A. Mattox

Harold MacLaughlin

Alan Johnston &

Heather MacLaughlin

Robert Mahler, Sr.

Clara Mahler

Ernest Mallery

Duane & Diane Yothers

Jo Mallery

Duane & Diane Yothers

Adam E. Metzler

Donald & Gladys Dilleuth

Robert W. "Bob" Meyer

Michael & Shannon Bell

W. Virgil Miller

Village Residents Advisory C

Elizabeth C. "Liz" Mintos

Stephen C. Mintos

Helen Mocker

Mariella C. Dunnan

Martha Mong

Gloria Brubaker

Ralph Mong

Gloria Brubaker

Guy Cliff Murphy

Sheila J. Murphy

David Myers, Sr.

Thomas & Carolyn Myers

Lynda H. Myers

Thomas & Carolyn Myers

Bernard L. Nester

Linda J. Nester

Marjorie R. Nichols

Walter & Wendy Nichols

Frieda Otto

Lavonne F. Horman

Herbert Otto

Lavonne F. Horman

Our wonderful parents

James & Sandra McDonie

David & Rosalie Miller

Kenneth & Genevieve Peters

Robert M. Palmer, M.D.

Catherine G. Palmer

e Gifts

Contributions

June 21, 2015

Monterey "Monty" Patty

Corinne D. Esau
Jean Jennings
Peggy Johnson
Robert & Donna Limburg
Philip Mark
Jim & Bonnie McCoy & Family
Raymond & Helen Nally
Brenda K. Neal
Helen J. Reppart
Lois K. Smith
Village Residents Advisory Council
Phyllis M. Wood

Lawrence Pijanowski

Anne Pijanowski

Bill G. Pittman

Michael R. Pittman

T. C. Pollock

George & Brenda Spradling

Florence Poulson

Thomas & Sara Poulson

Emma "Maude" Prince

Rebecca L. Harris

Gene & Maude Prince

Larry & Janet Harris
Jill Yates

Elizabeth S. Raber

Linda A. Raber

Roy A. Reed

David & Rosalie Miller
Arlene W. Palenshus
Helen J. Reppart
Lois K. Smith
Phyllis M. Wood

Edmund Reinhard

Brian & Mary Binch

Pauline L. Reuwee

Rebecca Reuwee

Mary C. Roden

Carol A. Roden

Don Rost

Thomas & Sara Poulson

Mark E. Ryan

Teresa J. Ryan

Delpha Sawyer

Ronald & Kay Hammond

Austin E. Showman

Ben & Ann Bilikam

Lura Jane Stewart

Lucille M. Burkett

Corrine Snyder-Poulson

Thomas & Sara Poulson

A. M. Spradling

George & Brenda Spradling

Alice Tannehill

Robert Tannehill

Bessie Taylor

Lawrence & Alice Smith

Sam Taylor

Lawrence & Alice Smith

Village Residents

Phyllis M. Wood

Richard Waugh

Mary L. Waugh

Everett Weber

Myra Weber

George Wellington

Alan Johnston &
Heather MacLaughlin

George F. Wellman

Lucretia M. Wellman

Harold H. West

Gordon & Barbara Rood

Max Wildermuth

Jayne W. MacKay

Helen Williams

John & Sue Dickman

xA. Gale Winnett, Jr.

Terrie Winnett

Edward Winter

William Ahonen
Julie Bardelang
Gary & Carol Davis
Corinne D. Esau
Dave Freedlander
Jan & Karen Gravenkamp
Harry & Mary Jo Humes
Dan & Helen Miller
Georgeanna M. Mills
Marilyn Perry
Mrs. Thomas E. Price
Pamela Spitzer
A. Richard Teller
Barbara Wangerin & Family
Nancy Winter
Mary Zaye

John Wood

Phyllis M. Wood

Richard Wood

Phyllis M. Wood

Daniel Yaw

Charlotte Yaw

Arden Yothers

Duane & Diane Yothers

Helen Yothers

Duane & Diane Yothers

Edward Ziegler

Anita Bourke

Frank & Jeanine Frastaci

Gifts

to honor the living

John & Joanne Bill

Owen Johnson

Michael Casto

Anonymous

Phyllis Chucta

Teresa J. Ryan

Patsy J. "Pat" Crewe

Janice Monks

Julia A. Foster

Charlotte A. Gallant

Marilyn A. Laubacher

Grace Lackey

Carolyn Sue Lauderman

Don & Sally Evans

Loved Ones

Robert & Betsy Johnson

Our Children

Calvin & Dorothy Knight

Phyllis A. Slone

Charles & Phyllis Slone

Keith S. Veters

Anonymous

Constance C. Whitaker

Bruce Gardner &
Bonnie Gardner

Mary L. Ziegler

Frank & Jeanine Frastaci



The photo on this page is in memory of Thelma Sims, a longtime resident of Willow Brook Christian Home.

Gift of Love Volunteer Awards Presented at Annual Reception

The 2015 Gift of Love Award recipients were announced at the volunteer appreciation luncheon this Spring. Each Willow Brook campus named a single volunteer or couple whose service was deemed exceptional. More than 120 volunteers gathered at the reception to receive Willow Brook's appreciation for sharing their time, their talent, and their love with the residents of Willow Brook. How fortunate and grateful we are!



The mothers of both Rick and Lisa Gawronski lived at The Village in their later years. The couple's visits continued after their moms passed away. They are available for any help needed, with events, outings, and especially their twice-monthly karaoke nights. The residents love them because they know everyone's name and bring joy and happiness along with their talent and enthusiasm.



Ken and Genevieve Peterson give their time and attention quietly, observing individual needs and serving them. In addition, Ken was the force behind Delaware Run's photo directory. Genevieve's nourishing spirit and leadership in the prayer shawl and greeting card projects has led to her being called "the pastor's wife of Delaware Run."



Martha Hutzelman, right, began volunteering at The Home when a church friend moved in. As she developed friendships with the other residents she began bringing them unique activities and entertainment. She coordinates a monthly game day, giving her time and heart to every person and every project. Activities director Lora Detlor, left, presented the award.

LeadingAge Stars Named



Seven staff members boarded a Willow Brook bus and headed to Mount Vernon, Ohio, for the 2015 LeadingAge Ohio STARS recognition luncheon. The event honored them for their ongoing dedication and excellent service provided to our residents.

Pictured at left are (back row) Stacey Maxson, nursing assistant at The Village; Daniel Lackey, laundry and social media at Delaware Run; Paul Winters, restaurant server at The Village; (front row) Sally Russell, nurse aide at The Home; Denise Murnane, receptionist at The Home; Mary Burke, line cook at Delaware Run; and Brianne Criswell, LPN at Delaware Run. Also honored but not present were Dana Owens, floor care technician at The Village and Jim Korpieski, maintenance at The Home.



Celebrating Nurses Week - Delaware Run resident Dottie Knight, RN, (left) invited resident nurses for a luncheon in May to celebrate National Nurses Week. They donned their schools' distinctive caps and exchanged "war stories." A few of the war stories were literally that, as some were military nurses during World War II. Above, Dottie holds the mic, and the group posed for a photo. They are, left to right and back to front, Sue Dickman, Ann Tyler, wellness nurse Carol Roden, Marilyn Fischer, Jennie Slider, Clara Mahler, Maxine Loyer and Dottie Knight.

Meeting the Lincoln Funeral Train

On April 29, 1865, a train carrying the assassinated Abraham Lincoln rolled into Columbus as it wound its way from Washington, D.C., on its way to his final resting place in Springfield, Illinois.

A replica of the train recreated that sad journey a few weeks ago, and we were there. A choral group from our Village, The Willow Brook Singers, assembled on the Statehouse steps with The Rainbow Kids, "our" children's volunteer group, and students from the Delaware Area Career Center's Hospitality Program who volunteer on campus. Many were in Civil War-era costumes. The columns behind them were wrapped in the black bunting of mourning, just as they were a century and a half ago.

After a thunderous cannon salute they sang patriotic songs of the day, their voices filling the skyscraper canyon of High Street as a replica coffin lay in state in the rotunda behind them.

Connie McNeal, nursing home activities director at The Village, orchestrated the event and made us proud to be selected from among all the retirement communities in Ohio to help remember the occasion.



Above, Willow Brook Singer Bill Ahonen and Village activities director Connie McNeal chat on the walkway in front of the Statehouse. Below you can see the group in song with the black-draped column behind them.

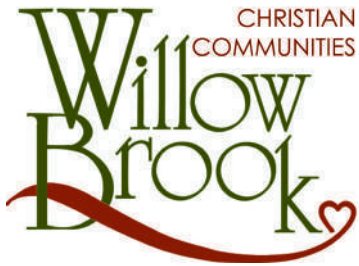


Reflections

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Joyce Stambaugh's backyard retreat at Willow Brook Christian Village, where she has taken thousands of animal and bird photographs. See her story and a few photos on page 3.