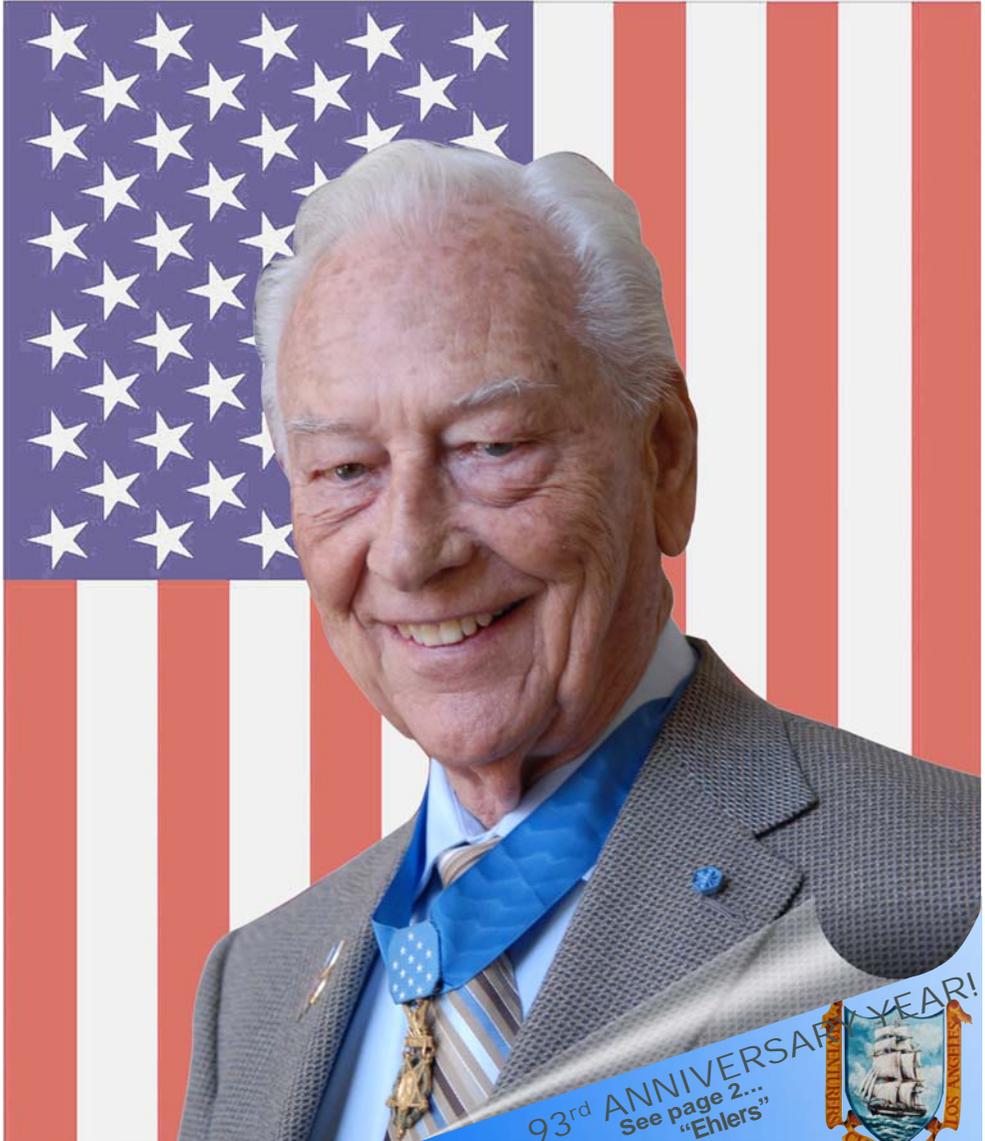


The Adventurers' Club News[®]

Volume 58

March 2014

Number 3



American Hero Walter Ehlers – OTGA

The Adventurers' Club News

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE EHLER ESTATE**

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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Martin Bloom (#1147)- President

My foot steps are now following the path of men I have never met, men I have only read about, and

men I know and have had the honor of serving beside. Each of them has served with distinction and true dedication to the objective of keeping our Club as a viable and vital organization that will continue to impact the lives of the men that you know today as well as those we have yet to meet.

Every step forward begins with a foot firmly established in the past. When we actually take time to reflect on the historical accomplishments of the Adventurers Club, our travel through history has been remarkable. History continues to reinforce that the Club has at times adapted to changing times and planned for the future. As the oldest Los Angeles organization of its kind, we have withstood the test of time. **“But the times are-a-changing”** and we are having a difficult time now supporting our “old ways.”

The 21st century has brought with

it unprecedented changes and challenges to us as individuals and to our Club. Today’s life is very different than what was experienced by the men in 1922 when our organization was formed. We live in a complicated and fast-paced world. Every one of us is experiencing change all around us; it’s the same for our Club.

Like it or not – understand it or not – new ways and new technologies are here to stay. As with our world’s ever-changing achievements, the Adventurers’ Club has come a long way since its 1922 founding and our future is still before us. We must, therefore, continue to leverage the advantages that the new world provides. We know from past experience that our purpose can grow even in the midst of an ever-changing world and the new challenges it offers us. Perhaps it’s time for us to take the opportunity to pause and reflect – to review the past – to evaluate the present – to “think outside-the-box” – and, to invest in the future.

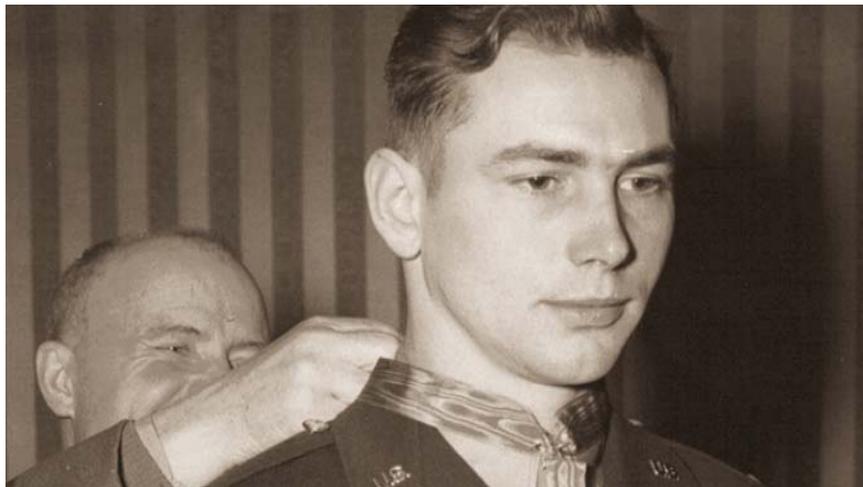
Membership is the life blood of the Adventurers’ Club. Without members nothing can or will be accomplished. I encourage you, and each and every member, to invest in the future of the Club. Let’s pledge to give the best of

(President’s Page continued on page 21)

Walt Ehlers – OTGA

Editor's Note: This tribute to fellow Club member Walt Ehlers (#1119) is a compilation from many sources. A hearty thanks to all who contributed words and photos.

Dec. 11, 1944 – Lt. Gen. John H.C. Lee presents 23-year-old S/Sgt. Walter D. Ehlers the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on June 9 & 10, 1944, near Gonville, France.



For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on 9-10 June 1944, near Goville, France. S/Sgt. Ehlers, always acting as the spearhead of the attack, repeatedly led his men against heavily defended enemy strong points exposing himself to deadly hostile fire whenever the situation required heroic and courageous leadership. Without waiting for an order, S/Sgt. Ehlers, far ahead of his men, led his squad against a strongly defended enemy strong point, personally killing 4 of an enemy patrol who attacked him en route. Then crawling forward under withering machinegun fire, he pounced upon the guncrew and put it out of action. Turning his attention to 2 mortars protected by the crossfire of 2 machineguns, S/Sgt. Ehlers led his men through this hail of bullets to kill or put to flight the enemy of the mortar section, killing 3 men himself. After mopping up the mortar positions, he again advanced on a machinegun, his progress effectively covered by his squad. When he was almost on top of the gun he leaped to his feet and, although greatly outnumbered, he knocked out the position single-handed. The next day, having advanced deep into enemy territory, the platoon of which S/Sgt. Ehlers was a member, finding itself in an untenable position as the enemy brought increased mortar, machinegun, and small arms fire to bear on it, was ordered to withdraw. S/Sgt. Ehlers, after his squad had covered the withdrawal of the remainder of the platoon, stood up and by continuous fire at the semicircle of enemy placements, diverted the bulk of the heavy hostile fire on himself, thus permitting the members of his own squad to withdraw. At this point, though wounded himself, he carried his wounded automatic rifleman to safety and then returned fearlessly over the shell-swept field to retrieve the automatic rifle which he was unable to carry previously. After having his wound treated, he refused to be evacuated, and returned to lead his squad. The intrepid leadership, indomitable courage, and fearless aggressiveness displayed by S/Sgt. Ehlers in the face of overwhelming enemy forces serve as an inspiration to others.

Editor's Note: This more detailed narrative is from medalofhonorspealout.org

Walter Ehlers' older brother, Roland, had bullied and protected him throughout their childhood in Kansas. By D-Day, the two had already fought their way through North Africa and Sicily in the same unit. While training for the Normandy landing, Walter was made a squad leader and transferred to a different company. The brothers wished each other luck and promised to "meet up on the beach."

The first wave was pinned down on the beach. Ehlers' squad, along with about two hundred other soldiers, were on an LCI (landing craft, infantry) scheduled to be in the second wave. Orders were quickly changed. Ehlers and his squad were transferred to a Higgins boat and sent to the beach three hours ahead of the second wave. They were not prepared for the chaos that they found on the beach.

By June 9, Ehlers' unit had worked its way about eight miles inland, near the small town of Goville. The French countryside was checkerboarded with thick hedgerows several feet high, which provided cover for German units fighting desperate rearguard actions. As it moved ahead

through the dense brush, Sergeant Ehlers' platoon suddenly came under heavy fire from machine guns and mortars. Ehlers climbed up a hedgerow and called on his men to follow. He spotted a German patrol coming up from the other side and killed four

of the enemy. Ordering his men to fix bayonets, and firing from the hip, he destroyed a machine-gun nest and scattered a mortar crew. Next he attacked

a second machine-gun nest, killing three more soldiers.

The platoon moved out the next morning, but it came under intense fire from both sides.

When the company commander ordered a withdrawal, Ehlers realized that if someone didn't provide cover, the Americans would be picked off one by one. Motioning to his automatic rifleman to follow him, he scrambled to the top of a mound of earth that provided a vantage point on enemy positions. Then the two men began to shoot at German machine guns and mortars, drawing fire on themselves as the rest of the platoon headed for cover. Ehlers was hit in the back but managed to kill the sniper who shot him. When his automatic rifleman was badly wounded, Ehlers dragged him to safety despite his own injuries.

(Ehlers continued on page 4)



Ehlers was treated at a field station. The bullet that hit him had actually entered his side, ricocheted off a rib, and exited through his back into his pack – where it pierced a picture of his mother, a bar of soap, and his entrenching tool. He insisted on returning to action; unable to wear a backpack, he strapped on two bandoliers of ammunition, picked up a rifle, and went to find his men.

A month later, on July 14, Ehlers encountered his brother's company commander, who told him that Roland had died at Omaha Beach when an enemy mortar round hit his landing craft. Ehlers saluted the officer who had brought the bad news, then found a private place where, for the only time during the war, he “went to pieces.”

In December 1944, on a train headed back to the front after recuperating from another wound, Ehlers read in Stars and Stripes that he had been awarded the Medal of Honor. Before he could react, the soldier sitting next to him saw the news, too. Knowing Ehlers only by his last name and knowing that he had a brother, he said, “Hey, I see that your brother just got the medal.” Without looking up, Ehlers replied, “Yes, I read that, too,” saying to himself that Roland certainly deserved it.

On December 19, 1944, Lieutenant General John H. C. Lee presented the Medal of Honor to Walter Ehlers.

Editor's Note: This selection is an excerpt from a LA Times article by David Colker, Feb. 22, 2014

For extraordinary acts of courage during the D-day invasion of World War II, Walter Ehlers received the nation's highest military award – the Medal of Honor. And it changed his life.

“I didn't have a life before the medal,” Ehlers said in a 2004 *Washington Post* interview. A self-described “farmer boy” who not only took out enemy gun nests single handedly during the D-day operation, but also drew fire to himself so other soldiers could withdraw, Ehlers was invited to every presidential inauguration from Eisenhower on. He spoke all over the world to student, military and other groups. In Buena Park, where he where he lived after the war, a building was named after him and an action figure was made in his likeness.

But all the honors could not bring back his greatest loss during the war. His older brother, Roland, was killed on D-day.

“He was the bravest man I ever knew,” Ehlers told the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* in 2003.

Walter Ehlers, 92, died Feb. 20 at the Veterans Administration Hospital due to complications from kidney failure, said his daughter, Cathy Metcalf.

With his passing, the number of living Medal of Honor recipients from World War II falls to seven, out of the 464 who received the award for actions during that war.

Editor's Note: This selection is an excerpt from a Washington Post article by Matt Schudel, Feb. 22, 2014

Walter D. Ehlers, the last surviving recipient of the Medal of Honor to participate in the D-Day invasion of Normandy during World War II, died Feb. 20 at a veterans' hospital in Long Beach, Calif. He was 92.

The Congressional Medal of Honor Society announced his death. The cause was kidney failure.

The Kansas-born Mr. Ehlers joined the Army in 1940 along with his older brother, Roland.

They spent much of the war together in the same units and took part in campaigns in North Africa and Sicily before the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied France in 1944.

Both brothers were members of the same infantry regiment, but shortly before the Normandy invasion, Roland was transferred to a different company. They were several hundred yards apart, aboard separate landing craft, as the second wave of Allied forces swarmed ashore during the amphibious assault on Normandy's Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, or D-Day.

Walter Ehlers, then a staff sergeant, led his 12-man reconnaissance team onto the sands through water that was

sometimes above their heads. They found a path that skirted German-laid land mines, crossed barbed-wire fences and moved inland.

"All twelve of us got off Omaha Beach without a man wounded, which was a miracle," Mr. Ehlers told *World War II* magazine in 2012. "There were so many bodies everywhere. It was 60 times worse than *Saving Private Ryan*."

A day after the invasion, he learned that his brother was missing, but that was all he knew. On June 9, Mr. Ehlers and his small unit came under attack. He spotted four German riflemen through an opening in a hedgerow and picked each of them off, one by one, before they could fire back.

Next, he crawled toward a Nazi machine-gun emplacement, sneaked in from behind and, in the terse language of his Medal of Honor citation, "put it out of action."

With his team still under bombardment from two mortar positions and machine guns shooting in a crossfire, Mr. Ehlers ordered his troops to fix their bayonets.

"I came upon a mortar section with five or six people," he told the *Orange County Register* in 1994. "That's where

(Ehlers continued on page 19)



Joe Dawson, Walt Ehlers, Pres. Bill Clinton, and Robert Slaughter on Omaha Beach in 1994 during the 50th anniversary of D-Day

Photo: Win McNamee/Reuters

BOOK REVIEW:

MEDAL OF HONOR: Portraits of valor beyond the call of duty

Peter Collier (w. photographer Nick Del Calzo), Artisan, New York, NY, 2003, 11.4X10.2 Hardcover, 336p. ISBN 978-1579654627 Review by the Editor from various sources..

On October 25, 2010, Staff Sergeant Salvatore Giunta became the first living person since the Vietnam War to receive the United States' highest military decoration, and both he and Sergeant Leroy Petry (the second inductee) rightly take their place in the pages of this third edition of *Medal of Honor: Portraits of Valor Beyond the Call of Duty*. The book includes 144 contemporary portraits of recipients by award-winning photographer Nick Del Calzo and profiles by National

Book Award nominee Peter Collier. First published on Veterans Day 2003, this *New York Times* bestseller has now been updated and augmented to include new essays plus:

- Letters from all living presidents
- A foreword by Brian Williams
- Profiles of Sergeant Giunta and Sergeant Petry

There are also essays by Tom Brokaw, Senator John McCain, and Victor Davis

Hanson, and a multimedia DVD with historic footage and recipients' first-person reflections. The Medal of Honor recipients in the book fought in conflicts from World War II to Afghanistan, serving in every branch of the armed

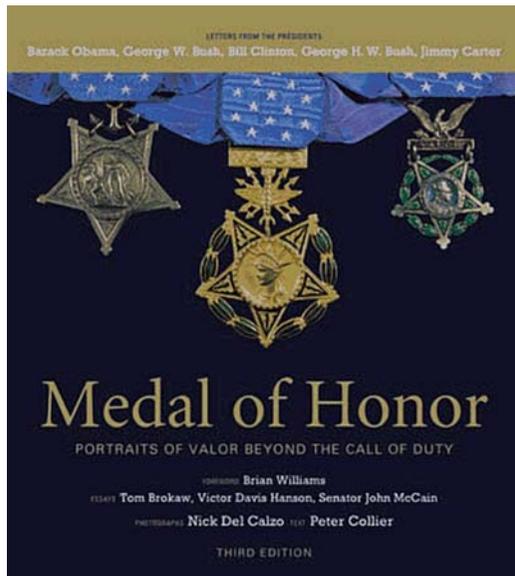
services.

Walt Ehlers' story begins on page 68 of this beautiful volume, complete with an accurate retelling of his story and several photos.

Readers have unanimously proclaimed this book to be the definitive work on Medal of Honor recipients. One reader suggested that this

book should be mandatory reading in American schools, so that young people come to understand what valor really means. Today's comic-book super hero pales in comparison to a 23-year-old Walt Ehlers taking out five machine gun emplacements or an Audie Murphy storming enemy positions on guts alone.

Available online at Amazon.com and elsewhere, and everywhere books are sold.



Robert G. Williscroft (#1116) – Editor



This month, I wish to direct your attention to the cover, to the passing of fellow Club member Walt Ehlers,

and to the Medal of Honor in a more general sense.

We all knew Walt as an elderly dignified gentleman who took great pride in belonging to the Adventurers' Club of Los Angeles. What many of us don't realize is that Walt was only twenty-three when he stormed Omaha Beach. I once asked him to relate the sequence of events that took place that fateful day. He described the events pretty much as you have read them in the previous pages. He added, however, that as the afternoon progressed, and in the morning following when his guys were being picked off by enemy gunmen, he got "pissed off." That's when he terrified the German soldiers; that's when he went to the top of the mound, drawing all the fire toward himself. He told me he didn't give it a lot of thought; he was just "pissed off."

He also said that if he had had time to think about it, there is no way he would have gone up there. But – as he told me – he was "pissed off."

Later on, I asked Walt what he thought the biggest benefit was to being a Medal of Honor recipient. "That's

an easy one," he said. "The Medal of Honor is a real chick magnet!"

By-the-way, Walt also was awarded the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, and a Purple Heart with a Cluster (signifying several awards).

The Congressional Medal of Honor has gone through several iterations since its origin during the Civil War. What has always set it aside, however, is the idea that if the recipient had not taken the action for which the medal was awarded, there would be absolutely no discredit to the person. The Medal of Honor is awarded for actions so far above the norm that they defy rational explanation. As Walt told me, he did what he did because he was "pissed off." A man acting rationally would have hunkered down to avoid the hail of bullets, not gone to the top of the mound to draw the fire to himself. This is the essence of the heroism that differentiates a Medal of Honor recipient from all others.

So when you think of Walt Ehlers, Audie Murphy, Salvatore Giunta, Leroy Petry, and other Medal of Honor recipients, think of young men with their entire lives ahead of them, who risk everything in one moment of unplanned-for heroic effort, without thought for themselves or their personal safety – laying it all on the line.

These are the real American superheroes who mark the milestones of freedom in our long history for survival.

THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE CLUB

February 13, 2014

Bob Zeman (#878)

Photos Roy Roush

We had 141 people attend our birthday party last Saturday. Everyone is convinced that it broke the old record but no one knew what or when the old record was. Martin Bloom said we celebrated our 92nd birthday – let's go for another ninety-two.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Milt Valois. Milt was ninety-six and had served the Club as treasurer in 1987 and as director in 1988-91 and 1994. He was a dentist and avid sailor. He sailed along the Alaskan coast, Tahitian, Grenadine and Virgin Islands. He sailed his own boat for decades and the last four and a half years he sailed almost every Sunday with Eric Flanders out of Long Beach. Just a few weeks ago Milt, at age ninety-six, went snorkeling in Belize.

The badge of Lee Talbert (#879) was retired. Lee passed away in January. He was a petroleum geologist who managed an offshore oil rig off of Indonesia. He collected batik art. In later years, he lived in Carpinteria and had a cherimoya and babaco farm.

Kevin Lee was recognized by the Orange County Register as the outdoor sportsman of the year.

Peter Jensen drove up to Lake Louise and Banff over the Christmas holidays. On Christmas Eve, the lights were turned off on the hill and he joined about 100 other skiers skiing down the mountain with flares to light the way. He then drove to Calgary and then home. Unfortunately, on the drive home he witnessed a fatal accident of a car skidding on black ice.

Kevin Lee is leaving for Beijing and Seoul on a business trip.

Steve Bein is going to a ranch in Texas to view bird migration. And he is going to Alaska in March.

Jeff Holmes is moving to Boyle Heights after living in Venice Beach for seventeen years. He is going to Burma and taking a boat trip down the Irrawaddy. Burma is increasing its manufacturing capability to entice foreign investors.

Shane Berry is flying out of L. A. tomorrow (Feb. 14) at 6:30 a.m. to meet his son in the Canary Islands. They will meet in Tenerife and do some hiking. The highest peak is 3,700 meters. They will then go to Gomera where Columbus landed. And will return to Tenerife to celebrate Carnival, supposedly the second biggest pre-Lenten celebration in the world.

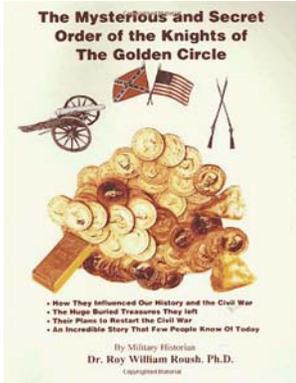
Shane and Rick Flores went hiking in Zuma Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains. They had hoped to return by 3 p.m. but got lost twice and came upon a wrecked car that has recently been abandoned. Much of the driver's paperwork was still there. They notified police who came out and investigated.

Knights of the Golden Circle and the Great Mexican Train Robbery

Roy Roush (#864) grew up in Oklahoma and fought as a Marine in the South Pacific islands of World War II. He later flew jets in the Korean War. Later on he got into treasure hunting. He bought some metal detectors and wrote for *Treasure Magazine*.

Roy had heard about the Knights of the Golden Circle (KGC) in his youth. This group was formed during the Civil War as

sympathizers to the southern cause. Its plan was not only to continue the Confederate



effort, but to create a great confederation of slave-owning states stretching from the Mason-Dixon Line south, including Mexico, Central America, northern South America, Cuba, and the rest of the Caribbean. First, however, it needed money. KGC acquired a vast treasure through donations, confiscation, and robbery, and buried it in various southern sites to be used in the next Civil War. Roy's fascination with the KGC led him to become an expert on the subject. Roy has lectured extensively about the KGC, and has visited four of their treasure sites.

During the period of the Mexican Revolution in 1914, President Victoriano Huerta quietly resigned as president since he knew he was about to be assassinated. Prior to this the Germans had asked him to declare war on the United States to thwart U. S. aid to the western powers. He did not declare war and prevailed upon the Germans to help him flee Mexico. Germany told him to go to Acapulco to board the cruiser *Dresden* and to bring along his treasury. President Huerta took a train from Mexico City, but the tracks did not go all the way to Acapul-

co, so his entourage had to transfer.

A bandit leader named Henry Hill was one of the last active members of the KGC, still collecting treasure for the eventual Second Civil War that he hoped would take place during his lifetime. Hill and his gang ambushed the Huerta gold shipment. It consisted of forty ammunition boxes of American twenty-dollar gold coins worth at the time about two-and-a-half-million dollars. Hill and his band buried the gold in a remote area of Michoacan, marking it, as always, with the KGC secret signs.

Eventually, after a big gun battle with Huerta's troops, Hill and his men were all captured and executed, except Hill.

Hill was told that if he revealed where the money was hidden, they would not execute him. After he told them where to look, they killed him anyway, and went to retrieve the gold. Guess what? It wasn't there. Hill apparently had not believed his captors, and gave them false information, but he had told his son where it actually was, and his son had returned safely to Texas.



Ammo box of the type used - held approximately 1,500 pounds of gold coins.

(Minutes continued on page 13)

(Minutes continued from page 9)

In 1938, his son went looking for the Huerta treasure with a friend. They both secretly carried out as much gold as possible. A cubic foot of gold weighs 1,200 pounds. The ammo boxes each held about 1,500 pounds of gold coins.

Later the son was killed in an attempt to go back after more coins. His friend found him hacked to death along the trail, his clothes and shoes stolen. It was extremely dangerous country then, and it still is today.

In 1974 Roy was secretly contacted by a friend who lived in Mexico City. He supposedly knew where the treasure was buried. Roy flew to the capitol, but nobody met him there. His contact had a post office box. So after three days and much effort, Roy met Bob Shamas who spoke six languages. Unfortunately, their third friend Vic was in jail and could not meet with Roy and Bob.



The mountains Roy crossed heading to Apatzingan

The two drove to Michoacan on highways for awhile; but later the roads turned very bad as they neared Apatzingan. The area was rural with cattle and chickens roaming and water drawn from a well. They met a woman who had a twenty-dollar gold coin which Roy bought. She owned a fighting cock that she kept shel-

tered from the chickens.

Roy and Bob had been given general



Roy's vehicle for the gold hunting expedition

directions to the site where the ammunition boxes full of gold coins had been buried. They drove down a bad road



The road to Apatzingan

and then crossed a lake. There they viewed a mountainside with a golden circle painted on it. They started digging



The treasure must be here somewhere

near the place, but found nothing.

Later on they contacted the partner who had been in jail and he said they were close but in the wrong ravine.

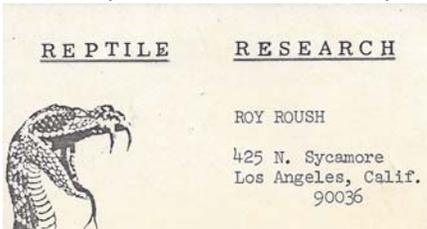
Roy and Bob drove out and met a



Apatzingan road hazard

group of armed locals. They slowly drove around them.

And Roy is alive to tell the story, be-



Roy's business card kept him alive

cause he is no fool. He had previously printed up business cards identifying himself as a rattlesnake researcher. He is always armed. His plan, if he found the gold, was to put it in a wooden container and ship it to Tijuana where he would have gone to pick it up.

He hopes that someone finds the rest of the gold, and it does not go into oblivion.



Photo Steve Bein

February 20, 2014

Bob Zeman (#878)

The bell was rung tonight for Walter Ehlers (#1119) who went On the Great Adventure today at age ninety-two. Walt is best known for his achievements during the D-Day landings and after at Goville where he destroyed several Axis machine gun nests.

Joe Brown (#928) gave a moving tribute to Walt having gotten to know him through trips to the Club. Walt had one brother in the Pacific theatre and another brother Roland who was killed in the landings at Omaha Beach when his landing craft was hit by an enemy shell. Actually the Normandy landings were the third that the two Ehlers participated in. They were earlier in North Africa and Italy. Walt was awarded a silver star, two bronze stars, and a Purple Heart with cluster.

After the war, Walt worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs for thirty years and also had a job as a security guard at Disneyland. In later years, he had dialysis treatments for his kidney and at the age of ninety broke his hip and then his femur. He had been bed ridden for the past year. Joe remembered Walt's humility and the fond thoughts he had for his brother.

Vince Weatherby (#1060) also remembered Walt as being humble and dignified. He wore the medal for those who did not make it. Walt tried to follow the advice of his mother who said to be a Christian soldier. At his 90th birthday party in Buena Park, former Governor Pete Wilson and his wife attended.

Bob Silver (#728) said that Walt as a

(Minutes continued on page 12)

Mustang got a field commission to lieutenant.

Jay Foonberg (#1126) admired Walt and got first-day covers of the Medal of Honor stamp in which Walt and nineteen others were honored on the selvage (outer strip of the stamp.) Walt's life will live in the minds of people forever.

Sid Hallburn (#1125) reiterated Walt's thought in that the real heroes are buried overseas.

Bernie Harris (#1063) noted that Walt's citation for the Medal of Honor was signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in December, 1944. And Walt had met every President since then.

There will be a Memorial Service for Walt on March 8th and he will be interred at Arlington.

President Martin Bloom (#1147) called the meeting to order.

Bob Oberto (#1124) returned from hiking in Yosemite and diving in Maui. He could hear the sounds of the whales communicating from miles away when he was below the surface.

Pierre Odier (#988) returned from Cambodia. He said that Bill Morse (#1130) is getting re-married to Jill there in March. He said that Bill thanked all for their recent donations to his campaign. Pierre met a husband and wife who had a son that Pierre taught at Glendale Hoover High School years ago.

Pierre is leaving for Costa Rica to visit an island off the coast that used to hold a prison. There are also some bird sanctuaries there.

Bernie Harris finally got his plane working and flew it three times this past week including an Angel Flight.

Jim Dorsey (#1081) flew to Nairobi

and then drove to Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania and a Masai village. While in the village, he went on a baboon hunt. He is leaving soon for San Ygnacio lagoon in Baja.

Hero Cities of the Soviet Union

The world's most traveled man Bill Altaffer (#1095) has visited Russia twenty-five times and has been to all ninety-two oblasts. Tonight he took us to four of the hero cities.



Photo Dalma Heyn

Saint Petersburg canal

St. Petersburg, formerly Leningrad, was under siege by the Axis armies for 900 days. The Axis tried to force its way in but could not, so it decided to let the city and its inhabitants starve.

Some roads in St. Petersburg are reinforced to support tanks. There are many war memorials in the city founded by Peter the Great. He built a large fort at the Neva estuary and then the Kronstadt naval base. There are mass graves for the million Leningraders who died during the siege.

Bill had photos of the cruiser *Aurora* which fired the first shot to signal the start of the Bolshevik revolution. It is kept open as a museum.

The artillery museum in the city houses

the first Kalashnikov rifle. There are also Katusha rockets and many murals depicting the heroism of the Soviet army. And he visited the State Museum of Political History of Russia. There is a statue of a large broken ring showing the world that the city could not be surrounded by an enemy force.



Photo Edward Kessler

Alyosha monument in Murmansk

Bill then went to Murmansk. There are many eternal flames burning. The cruise tours to the Arctic leave from Murmansk. There is a memorial to the sunken submarine Kursk.



Photo Dalma Heyn

Saint Basil's Cathedral in Red Square – Moscow

Bill then flew to Moscow which is beautiful and lively at night. The museums here feature the planes used by the

Soviet air force in WWII. There is a model of the Soviets answer to the Concorde. Unfortunately, the actual plane crashed in Paris. The ice stadium is beautiful. Stalin is not liked any more because so many people died during his regime.

The Moscow subway is deep underground and each station has a different motif. About eight million people a day use the subway.

Inside the walls of the Kremlin are canvas murals. There is also a display of hundreds of German iron crosses. And there is the wreck of Francis Gary Powers' U-2. Bill also saw the GUM department store and the tomb of Lenin.

There are mass graves and memorial flames in many places. He mentioned Babi Yar in the Ukraine which was the site of the biggest mass murder in World War II.

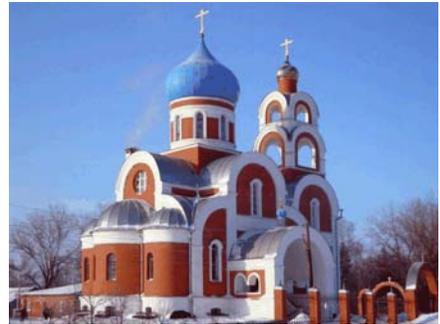


Photo 3saints.com

Church of Nativity in Kursk

Kursk is the site of the world's largest tank battle. Bill met a veteran of that battle with his rows of battle stripes on his left breast.

His next stop will be Volgograd but that is for another program.

Bill is a travel agent because he always liked telling people where to go. He leaves for the Caucasus in two months.

(Minutes continued on page 14)

February 27, 2014

Bob Zeman (#878)

We had ninety members and guests tonight – another excellent turnout.

Mike Clark was inducted into the Club as our newest member #1170. He is an



Photo Steve Bein

Newest member – Mike Clark (#1170)

anthropologist and has lived with the natives in Brazil, Niger, and the rural areas of Mexico. He has been to Haiti frequently over a ten-year period studying voodoo. And he has visited Gaza and Lebanon.

Among the guests tonight was Edward Lovick, also known as radar man. He is now ninety-six, and was instrumental in the creation of stealth aviation technology.

Julian Nott has forty years of flying and testing balloons. He developed a manned balloon that reached almost 60,000 feet high and another balloon that rose to 120,000 feet above the earth.

Marie Martin and Bob Walters (#1047) were invited to visit the British Parliament as a result of Marie's interest in Sherlock Holmes. They arrived early and looked around and then ate dinner.

Bernie Harris (#1063) was happy to have his Cessna 177 back after 10 months of downtime. He made four angel flights last month.

Steve Bein (#1057) enjoyed his trip to Texas photographing birds including two caracaras feeding. He is leaving for Alaska in two weeks to photograph the northern lights.

Jay Foonberg (#1126) is also going to Alaska to see the northern lights. And then it is off to Washington, D. C. to run a half marathon.

Eric Flanders (#1162) sailed in a boat race in Long Beach. The wind died and after three hours going only four to five miles he dropped out. He was one of fifty starters who dropped out. Only six finished.

Kevin Lee (#1163) is back from Beijing where the smog is so thick he could cut it. He also went to South Korea.

Marc Weitz (#1144) is leaving for Colombia. He will visit Bogota, Medellin, and the volcanoes in the south.

Eric Strait will film another ten episodes of *Gator Boys* in Florida. There are reports of a sixteen-foot alligator named "Moby Dick" that he will be looking for.

Steve Lawson (#1032) will attend the California Wreck Divers banquet on March 2nd.

Doug Brown (#1160) went to the museum at March Air Force Base. He recommended it.

The funeral service for Walter Ehlers (#1119) will be in Riverside at 1 p.m. on March 8th. The Medal of Honor Society will send a contingent and there will be a group of service men and women from Fort Riley, Kansas.

The memorial service for Milt Valois (#974) who went On the Great Adventure will be held on May 24th at the Long Beach Yacht Club.

Operation Paperclip – The Secret Intelligence Program That Brought Nazi Scientists to America.

Steve Bein introduced Annie Jacobsen author of the recently published book, *Operation Paperclip*. In addition to her writing abilities, Annie was captain of the women's ice hockey team at Princeton.

In the chaos following World War II, the U. S. government faced many difficult decisions, including what to do with the Third Reich's scientific minds. These were the brains behind the Nazis' oncedomitable war machine. So began Operation Paperclip, a decades-long covert project to bring Hitler's scientists and their families to the United States.

Many of these men were accused of war crimes, and others had stood trial at Nuremberg; one was convicted of mass murder and slavery. They were also directly responsible for major advances in rocketry, medical treatments, and the U. S. space program.

In the aftermath of the German surrender more than sixteen hundred of Hitler's technologists would be brought to America. The book spotlights twenty-one of them.

One of them was Dr. Eugen Haagen who specialized in weaponizing deadly viruses. He did his testing on prisoners of the concentration camps. He wrote a memo asking for 100 more prisoners who were healthy and twenty to forty years of age to continue his testing.



Eugen von Haagen

Photo National Archives

Photo biography.com



Wernher von Braun

Wernher von Braun was the Nazi scientist who developed the V-2 rocket. It was built in a mineshaft in Nordhausen. It held a payload of 2,000 pounds and flew five times the speed of sound. In March 1945 he conscripted two friends to stash his most important research in an abandoned mine.

Kurt Blome was the deputy surgeon general. He had nearly completed a bubonic plague weapon when the Red Army captured his research institute in Poland.



Prof. Kurt Blome

Photo National Archives

Photo National Archives



Walter Schreiber

The surgeon general of the Third Reich was Walter Schreiber. He introduced intravenous lethal phenol injections as a quick and convenient means of executing troublemakers.

Arthur Rudolph specialized in V-weapons assembly and served as operations director at the slave labor facility in Nordhausen. He and George Rickhey ordered the workers to dig



Arthur Rudolph

Photo Donald E. Tarter

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(Minutes continued from page 15)

openings with their hands because he could not trust them with shovels. He later became known as the father of the Saturn Rocket.

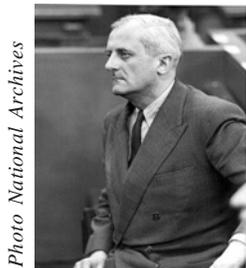


Photo National Archives

Otto Ambros

was the co-discoverer of sarin gas and chief of the Reich's Committee-C for chemical warfare. He also built synthetic rubber at a building at Auschwitz. Tried at Nuremberg, he was convicted of mass murder and slavery, then granted clemency by High Commissioner John J. McCloy.

Dr. Theodor Benzinger joined the Nazi party in 1933. At Heidelberg, he was put in charge of a department that developed oxygen equipment for air-planes. He and his staff at Rechlin researched high-altitude durability and explosive decompression and sometimes took great risks.



Photo National Archives

Dr. Theodor Benzinger

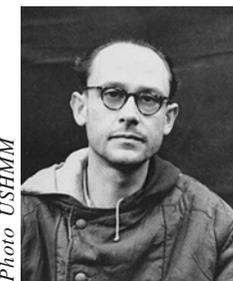


Photo USHMM

Konrad Schaefer

Dr. Konrad Schafer was a physiologist and chemist who developed a wartime process to separate salt from seawater in sea emergencies. Working with IG Farben he

created Wolfen, a mixture from barium and silver zeolith. He synthesized this into a tablet which was developed to separate the salt in a residue. Unfortunately, his experiments caused people to suffer.

Many of these were brought to trial at Nuremberg and even sentenced. But mysteriously, most of the sentences were not carried out and the perpetrators went on to good jobs with American companies using their scientific and engineering talents.

A few people like Albert Einstein and Dr. Leopold Alexander said that German science presents a grim spectacle. It became incompetent and then it was drawn into the maelstrom of depravity of which the country reeks. German doctors were not practicing science, Alexander said, but "really depraved pseudoscientific criminality."



Photo Steve Bein

By contrast: Speaker Jacobsen with Marthe Cohen – recipient of the Croix de Guerre and the title Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur (equivalent of the Congressional Medal of Honor)

Why did she write the book? Annie said she likes a good adventure.

What is her opinion of Operation Paperclip? Annie said, "Read the book."

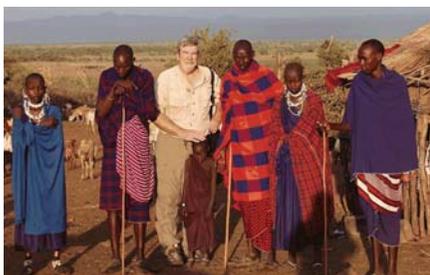


Photo Steve Bein

Off the Beaten Path again...

James Dorsey (#1081) Photos James Dorsey

I have just returned from one of my more "Off the Beaten Path" journeys. I began in Nairobi, Kenya, where I made several day trips to gather story materials for the magazines I work for, then flew south into Tanzania where Alan Feldstein provided me with a driver.



At Maasai Boma MtoWa Mbu, Manyara,

I spent three days with a friend delivering water filtration systems to Maasai villages in the Great Rift Valley, with



With Wadatoga Elders, Eyasi

the shadow of Ngorogoro Crater rim looming overhead, then drove west to Eyasi where I spent time with the Wadatoga and Baigara nomads.



With the Hadzabe Bushmen, Eyasi

The jewel of the trip was visiting the Hadzabe tribe, the last of the Bushmen in East Africa who still live in the stone age. When I arrived they were smoking a local narcotic in a cave following a fierce thunderstorm and wanted me to join them as a sign of good faith. After I smoked with them they gave me a bow and arrows, showed me how to use it, and we immediately took off to hunt Baboons.



Poison Bushmen arrow tips

It was impossible keeping up with them in the bush as they move like leopards, firing their poison arrows, (Tipped with a neurotoxin they extract from plants) while on the run and never missing. Within minutes they killed a baboon (clean shot through the neck) which was boiled and eaten (extremely tough and

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stringy). They have no homes, but sleep on the ground or in huts built for one night from tall grass, or in caves. They accepted me openly and



Shooting with the Bushmen

I made their evening fire for them using two sticks to great acclaim.

I flew ten times in fourteen days, went home for three days, and took a



Bushman smoking

twenty-four-hour bus ride into southern Baja where I work seasonally as a resident Marine naturalist in the Gray Whale nursery of San Ignacio Lagoon. Spent five days there on the water with forty-ton wild animals and am now home to sleep for several days.

What's Happening...

Jim Dorsey Wins Bronze at SOLAS



Jim Dorsey (#1081) brings home the SOLAS Awards Bronze Medal for his story "From the Ashes," about time he spent with a Buddhist monk at Angkor.

Jim was also honored with a Silver Category Award for his travel memoir about traveling in Vietnam with his wife.

Since I have been the Editor for the *News*, Jim has won seven SOLAS Awards, among others, so that today, his writings have received more awards than any currently active Club member. Congratulations, Jim, for a job well done



Editor's Note: Each month we will feature recent activities of members and friends on this page. Please send your material along with any photos to the Editor by email or snail mail.

(Ehlers continued from page 4)

my bayonet came in handy. They looked horrified and started running.”

Mr. Ehlers killed at least three enemy soldiers himself, then crawled toward another machine-gun position. He “leaped to his feet,” his citation noted, “and, although greatly outnumbered, he knocked out the position single-handed.”

The next day, surrounded by German soldiers, Mr. Ehlers and another soldier climbed a small rise and, standing completely exposed, kept up a steady barrage of rifle fire to allow the other men to withdraw.

Although Mr. Ehlers was shot through the back, he managed to carry a fellow soldier, who suffered more grievous wounds, from the field. He then returned to retrieve his fellow soldier’s rifle.

After having his wounds treated, Mr. Ehlers was unable to wear a backpack, so he strapped two bandoleers of bullets across his chest, grabbed his rifle and led his squad to safety. In a two-day period, he killed at least seven and as many as 18 German soldiers.

“I was very lucky,” Mr. Ehlers said in 2012, describing the bullet that made a clean transit through his body. The bullet hit a bar of soap in his pack, tore through the edge of an envelope containing a picture of his mother, then pierced his trench shovel.

“It was very close to my spinal cord,” he said. “I still have that pic-

ture of my mother, with that stern look her face that says, ‘How dare they!’?”

Walter David Ehlers was born May 7, 1921, in Junction City, Kan. He and his brother spent summers together working on family farms.

More than a month after D-Day, his brother’s commanding officer told Mr. Ehlers that Roland was killed when his landing craft was struck by an artillery shell as it approached Omaha Beach.

Mr. Ehlers saluted, walked away, then for the first and only time in the war, in his words, “went to pieces.”

He was one of 12 participants in the Normandy invasion to receive the Medal of Honor, the nation’s highest honor for military valor. Nine of them received it posthumously.

Mr. Ehlers later returned to combat in the Battle of the Bulge and was wounded three more times. His other decorations included the Silver Star and two Bronze Star medals.

Survivors include his wife of 58 years, Dorothy Decker Ehlers; three children; three sisters; 11 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

After the war, Mr. Ehlers settled in Buena Park, Calif., and worked as a counselor for the Veterans Administration for almost 30 years.

During 50th-anniversary observances of D-Day in 1994, Mr. Ehlers returned to Normandy and walked alongside President Bill Clinton on Omaha Beach. Only after speaking

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(Ehlers continued from page 19)

to a group of thousands of veterans gathered at Normandy, he said, did he stop having nightmares about losing his brother.

He may have received the Medal of Honor, but many others, Mr. Ehlers said, were just as brave.

"I know my brother, Roland, was one of them," he said in 2003. "He was the bravest man I ever knew. My hero. Not a day goes by I don't think about him."

(President's Page continued from page 1)

ourselves and to do our part.

The opportunity to realize our goals rests within the power of every Adventurer's Club member. We won't be the Club we want to become without you. We need you as an engaged member to enhance the legacy that has been the Adventurers' Club and help us meet the challenges of the future. If our Club is to continue to be vital, a contributing organization in today's world, each and every member must invest in its future. We need you involved and we need new members...we will become what you make us.

Having more money doesn't make you happier. I have fifty-million dollars but I'm just as happy as when I had forty-eight million.

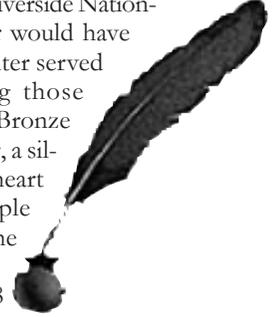
– Arnold Schwarzenegger

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

Yesterday, Sharon and I attended the funeral of a dear friend, Walter Ehlers. The funeral was at Riverside National Cemetery. Walter would have been 93 in May. Walter served in WW II. During those years in received 4 Bronze Stars with 1 for valor, a silver star, a purple heart with cluster (multiple purple hearts) and the Medal of Honor.

– Joe Brown #928



Walt was a Hero among heroes. We will all miss him. – Editor

To the Editor:

It takes a classy guy to correct an earlier stated position on global warming and replace it with an up-to-date position that is supported with scientific evidence. You did this in the February 2014 issue of the Club newsletter, a very interesting read that I appreciated. Well done!

– Doug Brown #1160

Thanks, Doug, but all I really did was to follow the data. – Editor

To the Editor:

The Board has voted to make designated seats available to members who are willing to pay \$100 for the privilege. \$100 will get you a bronze name-plate attached to the back of your chair so that it can be read from above. AND the money collected with this effort will augment the Club's coffers so that we can continue to offer you the best Thursday night experience available anywhere in Los Angeles – or for that matter, almost anywhere else!

– Bob Silver #728

Great idea! If I were there, I'd get me one, for sure! – Editor

Forthcoming Programs

- March 6, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Graham Macintosh – Baja
- March 13, 2014 – Mike Polack – What is under Wyatt Earp's Saloon?
- March 20, 2014 – Mike Clark – Haitian Voodoo
- March 27, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Rick Flores & Shane Berry – Iceland Odyssey: Exploring, Hiking and Photography in a Starkly Beautiful Land
- April 3, 2014 – Clint “Lint” Bunting – Ultralight Long Distance Hiking Adventures
- April 7, 2014 – BOARD MEETING – 7:00 PM. *The Adventurers' Club Board of Directors meets the first Monday of every month unless there is a schedule change. All Club members are welcome to attend. The location of the meetings varies each month, and will be announced “from the podium.” For up-to-date details contact President Martin Bloom (president@adventurers club.org) or Board Director, Bernie Harris (bnh33@netscape.net).*
- April 10, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Maria Daily – Spanish Galleon Wreck at Catalina Island – **JOINT MEETING WITH THE WRECK DIVERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**
- April 17, 2014 – Chris Doering – Land-Ops Geotactical Adventures
- April 24, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Fredrick Gary Hareland – Douglas Mawson’s Epic 700 Mile Antarctic Survival Journey
- May 1, 2014 – Dave Finfern & Steve Lawson – Sunken P-38's and Other Sunken WWI and WWII Planes
- May 4, 2014 – BOARD MEETING
- May 8, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Dr. Ross Piper – Wild Burma: Nature’s Lost Kingdom
- May 15, 2014 – Gary Mancuso – Six Year Journeying in Our Disappearing World: A Personal Tale of the Adventures, Misadventures and Pratfalls of Such a Project
- May 22, 2014 – **LADIES' NIGHT** – **OPEN THURSDAY** – Michael L. Oddenino – The Battle of Balls Bluff
- May 29, 2014 – Fred Grochulski – Transagulas Challenge plus Big Car Engines
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NOTES



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