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# CONFLUENCE

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Culp, "A Personal Episode," WVMCC #93-84-489



Time-Life Books, World War II, WVMCC #005-67-7



Courtesy of Peggy Ludwick

**Ludwick and Culp Provided  
Medical Support during WWII**

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**From the Director**

*Keni Sturgeon*

As I listened to National Public Radio's 1-A program on Veterans' Day, I was enthralled by the stories of U.S. service members they shared through their letters home. The show's focus was The Center for American War Letters at Chapman University in California, which houses thousands of letters.

Their vast collection includes unpublished letters from every major American conflict — starting with handwritten notes from the Revolutionary War, all the way up to emails from Iraq and Afghanistan. These personal correspondences are a crucial historical record of events, as voiced by service members, veterans and their loved ones, who experienced these wars firsthand.

These letters and emails are hugely impactful for those in our military and their families and loved ones, and for the broader community and country. These missives not only capture history, they give us insight into human nature — into fear, love, courage, empathy, anger, grief, and resilience.

The article in this *Confluence* edition about Dr. Arthur L. Ludwick, Jr. was written with much input from his daughter, Peggy Ludwick, including her personal conversations with him, words from others who knew him, and the 275 letters he wrote home during World War II.

As had been the case during World War I, letters quickly became the most important means of communication between families at home and their loved ones serving overseas. The average service member wrote six letters a week during World War II, and those letters took anywhere from one to four weeks to cross the oceans to the United States.

These letters are significant. I'd encourage you, if you have such documents, to share the stories they contain with others, as Peggy has done. To store them in a safe place and a sustainable way, you might want to explore best practices (such as <https://www.archivalmethods.com/blog/preserving-old-letters/>). You may also want to consider donating them to a local, state, regional, or national museum or archive.



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*Cover: Top left, Bob Culp; below left, medics carry a man wounded on a WWII battlefield; right, Dr. Arthur Ludwick.*

**Dr. Arthur L. Ludwick, Jr. Was a War Hero**

*by Chris Rader*

*Note: Peggy Ludwick, daughter of the late doctor, is finishing a book about her father's two and one-half years on the front lines of World War II as a medical officer, based on her interviews with him and his 275 eloquent letters home during the war. The Confluence is indebted to Peggy for contributing some of her writing and resources to this article.*

Many Wenatchee Valley residents remember Dr. Arthur L. Ludwick, Jr. as a beloved family physician who delivered almost 2,000 babies, made house calls and took care of generations of families. In 1988 he was honored by the Washington State Medical Association for practicing medicine for more than 50 years.

He was a modest and humble man, and most people didn't know of his heroism during World War II. He served on the front lines from 1942 to 1944 as a battalion and regimental surgeon in 14 major engagements with the enemy in North Africa and Italy. As part of the 34th Infantry Division, he insisted on serving as far forward as possible to ensure that wounded soldiers were quickly treated where they fell and properly evacuated.

Ludwick was born Nov. 15, 1913, in Kansas City, Missouri, the only child of Dr. Arthur Lee Ludwick, Sr., and Margaret Gallaher Ludwick. His early schooling was in several different states while his father served as a medical officer in the Army during the First World War. A psychiatrist, Dr. Ludwick Sr. became one of America's first flight surgeons trained to treat shell-shocked pilots.

After Arthur's father was discharged from the Army, he started a general medicine practice in Overland Park, Kansas, a suburb of Kansas City. Arthur attended school there from fifth grade through high school. A very good student, he was two years younger than his Kansas classmates. "He was physically late to bloom, socially naïve and inexperienced in many ways, although his father made sure he learned the manners and practices of a proper Southern gentleman: how to ballroom dance, play a decent game of golf and bridge, and above all, respect women," Peggy Ludwick writes.

Arthur's father died unexpectedly of a massive heart attack in the spring of 1930, when Arthur was

just 16 and about to graduate from high school. "This sudden and traumatic loss might have been crippling, but he coped by setting himself on a focused course of college and medical school while also helping support his widowed mother," Peggy writes.

"His education and new role as head-of-household was suddenly ratcheted into fast forward, forcing him to grow up quickly."

He entered the University of Kansas ("K.U.") that fall. His mother followed him to Lawrence and operated a boarding house near the campus. Arthur lived in the Delta Upsilon fraternity house for six months, enjoying the companionship of "brothers" he had never had. However, he felt guilty at the thought of his elderly mother shoveling coal into the furnace each night, so he moved into the boarding house with her to help with the work.

Arthur graduated with a B.S. in just two years, thanks to a special fast-track program for ambitious students emerging from the Great Depression. He then entered K.U.'s medical school at age 18 and earned his Medical Degree in 1936. He interned at Ancker Hospital in St.

Paul, Minn., and completed a year of surgical residency at the highly respected Hertzler Clinic in Halstead, Kansas.

In 1938 he moved to Waterloo, Iowa and joined an older doctor's medical practice, his first real job as a physician. There he met his future wife, Jean Hoyer, who was a medical technologist in Waterloo's small Presbyterian Hospital. She had thought that this, her first job after training as a "med tech," included further "on-the-job" instruction. Instead, despite her inexperience, she found herself in charge of the hospital's clinical lab, x-ray department, and blood bank, with little to no supervision by the pathologist. So she approached the new young doctor in town, Dr. Arthur Ludwick, to give her some pointers.

Jean was an outgoing, independent and sporty young woman who called him "Lud," a nickname he'd never been called by but which he liked. He had never met anyone like her. She earned her pilot's license and chipped in with four men to rent a Taylorcraft light,



*Four-year-old Arthur carries the flag in his World War I uniform in 1917.*

*Courtesy of Peggy Ludwick*



Jean and "Lud" in Waterloo, Iowa

single-engine airplane. During the war years while Lud was overseas, she delivered critically needed units of blood to outlying rural community hospitals via plane.

In 1940, many of Lud's Waterloo friends encouraged him to join the Iowa National Guard with the promise of a captain's commission and \$1,000 bonus after just one year of service. He thought this sounded like a good deal, and joined in

December 1940 as a first lieutenant. With faint rumblings of U.S. involvement in Europe's war, his National Guard unit was sent to Camp Claiborne, La. in February 1941 for intensive training maneuvers. Mostly through correspondence over the course of several months, Lud finally convinced Jean to marry him, and they were married in Alexandria, La. on October 11, 1941.

**Pearl Harbor interrupts marriage**

In a recorded interview near the end of her life, Jean Ludwick talked about an incident that disrupted the couple's two-month marriage. It was a Sunday afternoon, December 7.

We'd met up with these engineers who played golf. Three couples, going to play golf after church and then have a potluck dinner. I'd made my potluck dish. After golf, we went to one couple's apartment and the phone was ringing. "Where have you been? Pearl Harbor has been bombed! We (the National Guard) are moving out!"

The U.S. Congress formally declared war on Japan and its ally, Germany, on December 8. Lud's fellow National Guard officers, the golfing engineers, flew that day to San Francisco and boarded a ship for Japan. Their ship was bombed, Jean said, and their wives never saw them again.

My husband left that night. He told me, "I don't know where I'm going; I'll let you know." He was sent to a camp near New Orleans, which was a port. I thought it would just be infantry staging there, and temporary. He called me and said, "Come on down! I don't know how long I'll be here. It's nice here!" But the next thing I knew, he was back. He was told to be ready for cold weather – so I got

out his long underwear and wool socks. We girls had planned a New Year's Eve party. But that night was the last time I saw him for two and a half years.<sup>1</sup>

The Iowa National Guard was federalized as the 34th "Red Bull" Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. (It also included troops from Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.) Lud, assigned to the 133rd Infantry Regiment, was shipped



Missing his wife, back home

out on Dec. 31 as a medical officer on the first combat troop ship dispatched to Europe, destination unknown.

The 34th landed in Belfast, Northern Ireland. They secretly trained throughout N.I. for almost 10 months before being deployed to North Africa and Italy and getting involved in some of the bloodiest battles of WWII. Lud, a rapid-fire "hunt-and-peck" typist, carried his army-issued typewriter with him everywhere, and wrote long, interesting letters to his wife of just two months. They were his lifeline to a "normal life" back home. These letters, which Jean kept and daughter Peggy now has, were heavily censored, but contained fascinating details of a combat medical officer's multifaceted daily duties; keen observations about the landscapes, culture and people of Northern Ireland, North Africa, and Italy; and insights into true leadership, human character and the irrational nature of war.

**5 March, 1942; Northern Ireland**

I am up to my neck moving into a new building, getting sick call organized, getting a place to live, checking water and milk sources, issuing sanitation and hygiene orders, advising the newly arrived officers, trying to get supplies, running the medics' canteen, inspecting mess halls and kitchens, making reports of sick and well, ad infinitum.

**23 April, 1942; N. I.**

Yesterday (fellow doctor and friend) Leslie and I did a Hebrew amputation at our aid station, unbeknownst to the Major, etc. I've established a card history system for



Lud's WWII letters home

all patients seen on sick call and yesterday sent five of them down to the hospital. This afternoon we each did one tonsillectomy under local anesthesia. It still seems funny, though, that a licensed M.D., who has been out in practice some time, has to "beg" or "engineer" deals in order to practice his profession for which he is trained, but that's the Army for you.

In the officers' quarters, Lud and his assistant, Dr. Morris Leslie, rigged up a hot and cold running water system using petrol cans and a hot plate. They also applied Yankee ingenuity to simplify the pumping of water from a 100-foot well. Teams of British soldiers had been spending two hours at a time pumping the water manually into a tank. The Americans jacked up a jeep and attached a belt from the right front wheel to the pump; the jeep's spinning wheel then pumped the water in short order into the tank.

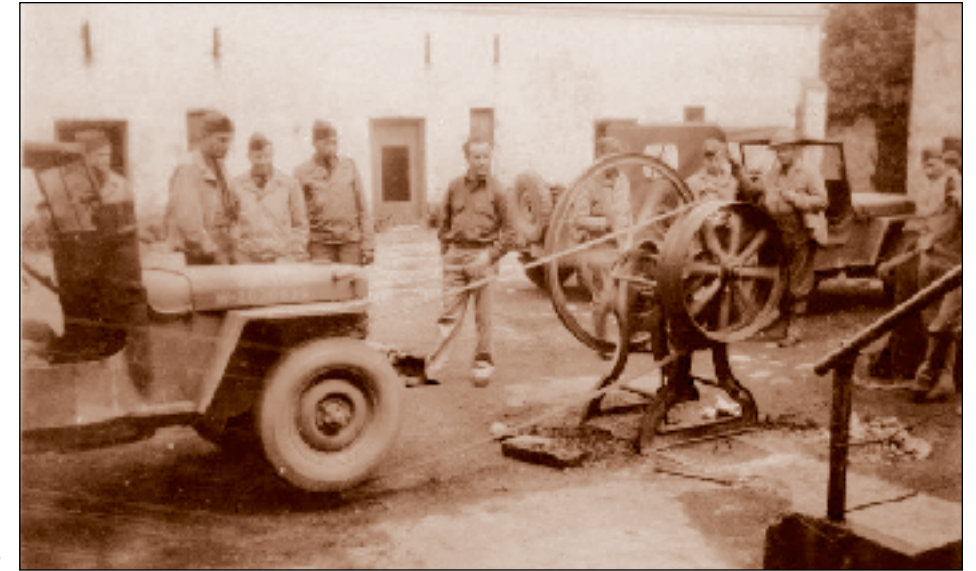
Being the earliest U.S. troops deployed to Europe, the men of the 34th Infantry Division at first were furnished with uniforms, helmets and equipment left over from World War I. Subsequent troops fared much better. The 34th during World War II still holds the U.S. Army record for most days in continual combat (500).

**Campaigns in North Africa and Italy**

In December 1942 the men of the 34th boarded ships in Liverpool, England, destination unknown. After rounding Gibraltar they learned they were headed to North Africa to participate with other Allied forces in the risky "Operation Torch" incursion. The goal was to invade and seize North Africa, specifically Tunisia, as a launching site for Allied troops to more easily gain access to Sicily and southern Italy. It was also a delay tactic to divert the Germans' attention and give Allied forces more time to prepare for their eventual D-Day invasion of Normandy in June of 1944.

The 34th Infantry Division soon discovered it was poorly trained and ill-equipped for actual live combat, and suffered heavy casualties during major skirmishes with the highly skilled German forces. These losses gave Ludwick and others in the Army's medical services plenty of practice in caring for large numbers of wounded under combat conditions.

In his letters to his wife, Lud described the



American soldiers rig a jeep to pump water from a well in Northern Ireland.

North African countryside. "I feel like I'm in western Montana," he wrote on Feb. 13, 1943.

The country is rough and sort of mountainous, the ground being covered with various types of low brush and small evergreen trees. The wind blows all the time.... I wish I could talk to you about it, but you know that any great attention to details is forbidden by the censorship. However, it's a small thrill to zoom around mountain curves in the dead of night without driving lights, feeling your way along as best you can with a whole bunch of friends behind you.

At one location, Capt. Ludwick's aid station was located in a cactus patch, under a camouflage net. He told Jean his bedroll constantly contained a quart of sand, even after shaking it out.

The wind is swirling and sweeping over the landscape and carries a cloud of dust with it. If you get out your canteen



In North Africa, Lud set up his aid station under a camouflage net in a cactus patch.



Major Ludwick and an unknown compatriot stand on rocky soil "somewhere in North Africa." Censorship forbade troops to disclose their locations in letters home.

cup to take a drink you have to move fast or the water will be a little gritty. Here I was complaining about the rainy weather some letters back. I guess I'm never satisfied. (8 April 1943, North Africa)

As the division's medical officer, or battalion surgeon, Lud's duties were more substantial than those of a medic treating individual injuries. He was responsible for the physical and psychological health of his troops. At each posting, he set up an aid station and managed sanitation facilities to prevent outbreaks of cholera and other infectious diseases. He oversaw the medics who gave emergency treatment on the battlefield; the litter bearers who cleared the field of casualties; the aid station where injured troops were cared for; the ambulance drivers that, in some cases, transferred critical-care patients to field hospitals miles behind the front lines; and even maintenance of the ambulances. His administrative duties included requisition and procurement of medical supplies as well as exhaustive record keeping.

In a long letter to his wife on Feb. 17, 1944, Lud wrote:

... My job is certainly varied enough; from carrying wounded occasionally off the field during action, organizing mule trains for medical supplies, confidant and psychiatrist for the boys that have gone through hell and have

momentarily cracked, sanitary inspector and hard boiled SOC who makes the boys keep decent and healthy in spite of their lowered incentive to do so, to "inside man" for the higher-ups when they get "stalled" -- and then, occasionally, I practice medicine on the side.... We have quite a business at the aid station from Italian civilians. Many of them have been hurt by shelling, etc. and of course the little kids are frequently picking up things that they shouldn't and getting killed or maimed.

Soldiers who were frightened by the random devastation of the war ("combat fatigue") were sent to Ludwick's aid station, where he implemented an



"Making war on a foreign soil is a curious mixture of almost hysterical excitement and mind-dulling boredom," he wrote Jean. His trusty typewriter, a fixture of the medical tent, was also a link to his young wife.

unusual treatment plan. He set them up in pup tents and fed them homemade oatmeal with canned milk for several days, gently counseling them. He told them that he, too, was afraid; that this was a normal reaction in battle, and it was okay. "But we've all got to do it," he would say. "We can't give up and say 'I just can't make it,' because I know you can do it. You're an American soldier!" After a few days of hot oatmeal and compassionate counseling, the men would go back to the front lines and not be counted as casualties.

In April 1943 the 34th Infantry Division assaulted and captured the steep-sloped Hill 609, the last bastion of Erwin Rommel's "Afrika Korps" in Tunisia. It was a bloody but decisive battle for the Allies. The 34th then participated in the Allied invasion of Italy, an amphibious landing on German-controlled mainland Italy following the successful invasion of Sicily. Their target was Salerno, a city on the west coast of the peninsula slightly southeast of Naples.

Moving with a sense of purpose, the 34th Division, with the 133rd (infantry regiment) leading the way, hastened to relieve enemy pressure on the British, who were still trying to clear Naples. Moving north, it eliminated resistance at Ponte Romito, then crossed the Calore River and continued through Montemarano. At Benevento a raging battle developed. With Benevento captured, the Volturno River loomed in sight. An autumn chill was in the air and swimming season had long passed when the Red Bull Dogfaces reached the lower reaches of the Volturno River, where the German Army had decided to make a strong stand.

On October 13, 1943, the 135th Infantry launched its crossing near the Calore River, using guide rope and fording and engineer assault boats.... (The men) braved the swiftly flowing water and swam ropes across to the opposite bank. The going was tough with heavy enemy resistance, but the advance continued and a bridgehead was established.<sup>2</sup>

### Courage on Mount Pantano

The 34th Division had to cross the winding Volturno River three times in October and November, encountering the enemy on numerous occasions. They liberated at least 18 small towns from Nazi German control before preparing to confront German troops entrenched on the snowy slopes of Mount Pantano. The frigid air chilled the American troops to the bone, especially since they had not yet been issued winter uniforms. Lud's regiment cleared out enemy blockhouses on the lower slopes, but in a saddle near the crest the Germans mounted a fierce counter-attack.

The 168th Infantry troops met the enemy eyeball to eyeball midfield with assault fire, then drove them back with bayonet and rifle butts. All day and all night the battle



Troops serving in Italy during World War II endured harsh winter conditions.

raged. Running low on ammunition, some of the 168th Infantry men threw C ration cans at the charging enemy who, in the darkness, mistook them for grenades, thus buying enough time for those with a few rounds to reload and fire. Grimly the 168th Infantry held on, advancing inch by inch, refusing to give up ground gained.<sup>3</sup>

German fighter planes strafed the area, enhancing the mortar and artillery fire that resulted in heavy American casualties. Reaching the wounded amidst such heavy fire seemed impossible. The slopes were snowy and slippery. The litter bearers were exhausted, and some suffered so badly from trench foot that they could hardly walk. Some casualties slid down the hillsides while others had to be lowered by ropes down steep cliffs.

Despite the heavy fire, now-Major Arthur Ludwick left his aid station and climbed the mountain to reconnoiter a shorter and easier route for bringing the wounded to safety. For five days he made frequent trips to the assault companies, supervising and coordinating the evacuation of the numerous casualties.

During his trips to Pantano, Major Ludwick personally carried medical supplies to the front lines and rendered aid to the wounded men on the battlefield. On 4 December 1943, when casualties had been very heavy among the front line units, Major Ludwick personally, and in the face of grave danger, led four litter squads up Mount Pantano to the forward positions of the Second Battalion and supervised the removal of three wounded men. He remained, with one litter squad, at the unit's position, which was under intense enemy fire. During this time a soldier was seriously wounded but, in spite of the intense fire, Major Ludwick went forward from his position, administered aid to the wounded man and supervised his evacuation. Due to his

Courtesy of Peggy Ludwick



Major General Mark Clark pins the Silver Star on Major Arthur Ludwick, following his brave action on Mount Pantano, Italy. The medal is the third-highest military combat decoration awarded by the U.S. Armed Forces, given for gallantry in action.

initiative and tireless efforts, many lives were saved that otherwise might have been lost.<sup>4</sup>

"I was up front with the men, because I could never stand to stay back in the protected aid station the way a doctor should, I guess," Ludwick later said. "I wanted to make sure that the wounded were treated and evacuated properly." He was awarded the Purple Heart in Tunisia and the Silver Star for "gallantry in action" on Mount Pantano in Italy, both unusual commendations for an unarmed medical officer.

The 34th Infantry Division, exhausted from the fight, was replaced on December 8 by the 2nd Moroccan Division which succeeded in taking the mountain ten days later. The 34th continued to fight in Italy – including Mount Trocchio, Cassino, Anzio, Livorno and Rome – until the Germans surrendered in Italy on May 2, 1945.

### Return to civilian life

Ludwick was finally rotated back to the U.S. in May 1944 after being overseas for 28 months. Following a joyful reunion with his wife and a short assignment at Camp Crowder near Carthage, Mo., the couple decided to head west to find a permanent place to settle. They loaded all they had into their '39 Oldsmobile Coupe, including their five-month old son, Jack, on a crib mattress in the back seat. "They



Dr. Ludwick practiced medicine in Wenatchee for 44 years.

embodied the modern version of the early pioneers' optimism and adventurous spirit, seeking a new beginning and a place to call home," Peggy writes.

Lud had contacts in Spokane and on Puget Sound and was confident he would find a job, as doctors were in high demand.

"We drove from Spokane to the coast, on the back road (U.S. Highway 2)," Jean said. "Coming down the hill from Waterville we saw the Columbia River. My husband was a man of foresight. 'That's the mighty Columbia! Look at that! We're going to stay here and look things over.' He knew that the river would provide a stable economy and a bright future for Wenatchee."<sup>5</sup>

The little family stayed in the Cascadian Hotel while Lud went around town looking for a job. An older physician, Dr. Bevis, took him into his practice in the Savings and Loan Building in downtown Wenatchee. This was fine for a few years, but Ludwick eventually decided to go out on his own. He was a solo practitioner for about five years in his office on the top floor of the Doneen Building.

In 1956 Dr. Ludwick advertised in a national medical journal for a partner. A fellow Midwesterner just finishing a tour of duty with the Air Force in Spokane, Dr. Wayne Zook, responded to the ad. The partnership was formalized and Zook and his family moved to Wenatchee. However, their arrival coincided with the Ludwick family's plans for a first-time long vacation: a reunion with Lud's best friend and medical assistant from World War II, Dr. Morris Leslie of Brooklyn, N.Y.

"I joined Lud in 1956 and he introduced me to Wenatchee by giving me a map of the city, and then he took his family on a three-week trip East," Zook wryly noted, years later. "At that time we were making many house calls, so I learned to know the city! We practiced together until he retired in 1988.... He was personally an excellent practitioner with moral values and a professionalism of superb quality. His patients loved him and he was intensely loyal and dedicated to them."<sup>6</sup>

With his medical practice growing

Courtesy of Peggy Ludwick

and needing more space, Dr. Ludwick built the Wenatchee Family Practice building in 1963, on the corner of Orondo and Oregon streets (now home of the WIC family nutrition program). He and Dr. Zook used the upper floor while several dentists rented the ground floor.



Dr. Wayne Zook

Ludwick and Zook had a close personal relationship as well. Both enjoyed hunting and fishing, both were members of the Rotary Club, and each was active in his church (Zook with the Brethren Baptist congregation and Ludwick with First Presbyterian). Both of them were members of and served in leadership positions in the American Academy of Family Physicians, Washington Academy of Family Physicians and Washington State Medical Association.

Another physician who benefited from Ludwick's mentorship was Dr. Robert Higgins. He had just finished pharmacy school when he and his wife, Barbara, moved to Wenatchee in 1957. Dr. Ludwick became their family physician, delivering their first child. In conversations with Bob about his fledgling pharmacy practice, Lud observed a very bright young man with an intense interest in medicine. He strongly encouraged Higgins to go to medical school. After five years of pharmacy practice, Higgins took Ludwick's advice and obtained his medical degree from the University of Washington. He then returned to Wenatchee to join Ludwick and Zook in family practice. (Higgins later joined the U.S. Navy, served in Vietnam, and was named Navy Deputy Surgeon and Navy Medical Corps chief.)

"I learned more from you than I could have in a formal training program," Higgins later wrote Ludwick. Higgins had the honor of presenting his mentor with the President's Award from the American Academy of Family Physicians.

### Universally respected

Peggy Ludwick writes: "Dad was an incredibly hard-working, devoted physician who took care of generations of families. He was one of the last remaining independent doctors who still made



Dr. Ludwick practiced family medicine with his partners on the top floor of the Wenatchee Professional Building, 504 Orondo Avenue, until he retired in 1988.

house calls, and he would often accept homemade goods for payment: breads and pies, hand-knit sweaters, freshly caught salmon. When visiting a patient, even in the middle of the night, he would dress in shirt, tie and jacket to maintain his professional decorum. 'Patients need to trust you,' he said."



Dr. Tom Ross

Another of his protégés and partners, Dr. Tom Ross, recalled Ludwick as a man of "amazing integrity." Ross came with his young family to Wenatchee in 1976, having chosen this community for a family medicine practice. He checked with the county health department and was referred to Ludwick and Zook. They were not actively recruiting but had space in their office for a third physician, Dr. Higgins having left. "We met, visited a while, and found we shared basic values about what we wanted to do in medicine," Ross said. "They liked my background in a very active style of family practice, including surgery and obstetrics, and told me if I wanted to come work for them they would pay me. I agreed and we shook hands; it was all done on a handshake."

Ross was a good fit with the other two doctors, though he was decades younger and his style of dress was more informal than theirs. "I considered it a joy and privilege that they brought me in to work with them. The integrity, the goodness of those two people – their work, their relationships with their families and the community – was a source of encouragement. They were just really good people."

Ross noted that their medical office was right on the parade route for Wenatchee's famous annual Apple

pressrelease.healthcare

Courtesy of Peggy Ludwick

Blossom Festival. "We would open the office for older patients and older family members of patients," he said. "The building had big glass windows and we could accommodate 20 or 30 chairs inside. The parking lot area was a welcoming place for patients and other physician friends, too. It was a good time of fellowship and conversation while watching the parade."

Dr. Arthur Ludwick practiced family medicine, including obstetrics and surgery, for 52 years before retiring in 1988. He then had more time for hobbies including fishing, sailing, hunting, dancing and "fixing things": puttering around with small household projects. He died on Feb. 24, 2008, leaving his loving wife Jean, children Jack and Peggy, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren with many good memories.

Peggy Ludwick sums up her father's legacy: "Surviving the terrible flu epidemic of 1917, coming of age during the Depression, losing his father suddenly when he was only 16, helping to support himself and



Jean and Arthur Ludwick were married for 67 years, until his passing in 2008. She served for 12 years as a Chelan County PUD commissioner, the first woman to be elected to that post.

his widowed mother through college, medical school and beyond, then serving for two and a half years on the front lines of World War II, all laid the foundation for my father's definition of success: 'Success is doing something you don't want to do, and doing it well.' This was, and still is, one of my father's best life lessons that he left for me and our family."

#### ENDNOTES

1. Jean Ludwick, interviewed by Karl G. Schmidt as part of Washington state's "World War II Voices in the Classroom" project, April 26, 2010.
2. Lt. Col. (Ret.) Homer R. Ankrum, "The 34th Infantry Division in World War II," [iowanationalguard.com/History](http://iowanationalguard.com/History).
3. *Ibid.*
4. Letter from Charles W. Ryder, Major General, U.S. Army, Commanding; Award of the Silver Star, Jan. 27, 1944.
5. Jean Ludwick interview, op. cit.
6. Wayne Zook, M.D., e-mail to Jean Ludwick Feb. 25, 2008.
7. Tom Ross, M.D., phone conversation with Chris Rader Oct. 21, 2019.

For more information on the book Peggy Ludwick is writing that chronicles her father's experiences during World War II, you may e-mail her at [peglud@charter.net](mailto:peglud@charter.net). Again, we thank Peggy for her many contributions to this article.

Courtesy of Peggy Ludwick



Dr. Arthur L. Ludwick, Jr.'s daughter, Peggy, is thankful for the example her father set as a parent, a World War II medical officer, a doctor and a respected Wenatchee Valley community member.

Courtesy of Peggy Ludwick

## Lt. Cmdr. Bob Culp Landed at Normandy on D-Day

by Robert V. Culp, Kathryn Lease and Chris Rader

*Editor's Note: Bob Culp served overseas during World War II. He kept a journal during that time, and later published a memoir titled "A Personal Episode in the Life of Lieutenant Commander Robert V. Culp, United States Naval Reserve during World War II." In 1995 junior honors English students from Eastmont High School gathered stories from Wenatchee Valley residents who served in the war, following the example of Tom Brokaw's book "The Greatest Generation." The effort, called "Honor by Listening," was led by Bob Parlette, Don Moos, Terri White (NCW Museum), Gene Sharratt (NCESD) and English teacher Allison Agnew. Among the 27 people interviewed was Bob Culp. The following article is gleaned from Culp's memoir and an interview of him by Kathryn Lease for the "Honor by Listening" project.*



Lt. Robert V. Culp in 1943

Robert Vaughn Culp, born in 1910, was one of four sons of pioneer Wenatchee doctor Frank Edward Culp. When the doctor died unexpectedly in 1932, during the Great Depression, there was not enough money for all four to begin or remain in college – so they drew straws to determine which of the brothers could complete higher education using Culp family money. Dennis and Jack got the winning straws; Bob and Frank lost.

Bob went to work for the state highway department in construction, eventually earning enough money to return to the University of Washington. He and Frank "shared an apartment and lived on corn flakes for four years" until they earned degrees, Bob told Lease.

He married Mary Alice Wyngaard in 1940 and they moved to Port Townsend, Wash., where Bob worked as a civil engineer. A year after the U.S. entered the war he applied for a commission in the Naval Reserve. He was appointed a Lieutenant (Junior Grade) on Feb. 25, 1943 and reported for three months of basic training at Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H. Here he met Lt. (J.G.) Roy Straight; the two became close friends and ended up serving together throughout

the war. Culp especially appreciated two classes taught at Dartmouth, seamanship and navigation, which were to serve him well the following year.

After advanced training at Fort Schuyler, N.Y., the two friends were sent to Pittsburgh for duty aboard the U.S.S. LST 293, Culp as assistant executive officer and Straight as assistant desk officer. Landing Ship, Tanks, or tank landing ships, supported amphibious military operations during World War II by carrying tanks, vehicles, cargo and troops that could be offloaded directly onto shore with no docks or piers. LSTs have been irreverently called "lousy stinking tubs" and "large slow targets,"

but military historian Samuel Morison praised them as "the indispensable workhorses of the fleet." The ships were more than 300 feet long and could carry in excess of 2,000 tons.

With a river pilot at the helm, LST 293 left Pittsburgh in January 1944, carrying Culp and Straight down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. "The rivers were in flood stage at this time and we only used a few locks; we just went over the dams," Culp wrote. They loaded up with supplies, including 5,000 rounds of 40 mm. shells and 10,000 rounds of 20 mm. shells, and then set sail for Mobile, Alabama, where they took on additional ammunition as well as 300 folding litters



The LST, developed during World War II to carry heavy equipment and troops, could discharge its cargo directly onshore. The LST 325 became temporarily stranded at low tide on June 12, 1944, while delivering materiel to the Normandy beachhead.

Culp, "A Personal Episode," WVMCC #93-84-489

NavyTimes.com

(for carrying wounded troops off the battlefield) and a large supply of medicines, bandages and medical equipment.

The LST then moved up the Atlantic to the Brooklyn Navy yard in New York Harbor to take on a 100-ton landing craft tank and some 500 troops. After a stop in Rhode Island, where the ship was loaded with 2,000 tons of bridge and pontoon steel, LST 293 sailed to Halifax, Nova Scotia to join a convoy of 40 ships en route to England.

The convoy was underway at midnight March 30, 1944. Its course was the northern route around the north of Ireland, down the Irish Sea around the southern tip of England. It was escorted by Canadian D.E.s (destroyer escorts). During the crossing we had several submarine alerts and went to general quarters, but on April 6, 1944, during midwatch (about 2 a.m.) with Ensign Hickey in charge of the watch, the Norwegian cargo ship S.S. South America, directly ahead of us, was hit by a torpedo and burst into flames. The ship broke in two and Ensign Hickey took evasive action to miss the wreckage. We all heard an explosion under our ship.... There were many large icebergs and the sea was rough.... No ship in the convoy was allowed to stop and pick up survivors; that was part of the D.E.'s job.

Two weeks later they reached Falmouth Harbor in England. A propeller damaged during the explosion



Culp's ship was nearby when LST 289 was decimated by a German E-boat.

was replaced, and then the ship headed for the large port of Southampton.

The next evening, April 27, 1944, German E boats attacked the group of LSTs on Exercise Tiger and sunk two of them, LST 531 (our pay ship), the 507 and badly damaged the 289. Over 800 men were lost in this attack. We were only a few miles away.... Our ships were attacked the next evening. We saw lots of flashes, like lightning, followed by explosions. We were not aware of this engagement at that time, thinking perhaps it was air raids.

Over the next month LST 293 visited several English ports, unloading the tank and steel and transferring 50,000 gallons of diesel fuel to another LST. Culp and Straight received a dispatch from Washington D.C. promoting them to full lieutenants, the minimum rank required to be commanding officers of an LST.

The Allies were preparing for D-Day, the invasion of German-occupied northern France that became the turning point for World War II in Europe. Some 156,000 British, Canadian and American troops moved in an overnight flotilla, landing at dawn on five beaches along 50 miles of coastline. Overhead, 11,000 Allied warplanes weakened enemy defenses and guarded against attacks from above.

At 11 p.m. on June 5, the night before the coordinated attack, Culp's LST set out in a British convoy from Portsmouth across the 100-mile English Channel to Gold Beach. Its mission, in addition to carrying 18 tanks and numerous "lorries" (trucks), was to support British doctors and medical corpsmen in handling the wounded in the invasion.

It was a dark, stormy night with lights out completely. We had to stay in the mine-swept channel which had been cleared earlier by the British minesweepers.... About 4 a.m. we arrived in the Bay of Seine and lowered our six assault boats, each with 36 soldiers. The smaller boats, LCTs and LCIs, went in and unloaded first. Our 4,300 ton, fully loaded LSTs had to wait for a proper tide or we never would have been able to retreat from the beach. When dawn came we were amazed to see so many ships and their barrage balloons attached fore and aft. These balloons were up about 2,000 feet, attached by cable, and were intended to prevent strafing. With everything blacked out and radar forbidden (could be traced), we were not aware of any other ships.

Culp's ship beached with the morning tide and the vehicles were unloaded. The ship then backed away from shore, awaiting wounded to come aboard by means of amphibious DUKWs (small boat-trucks with wheels).\*

\* The name "DUKW" corresponded to General Motors' manufacturing code ("D" is "1942 model," "U" is "amphibious," "K" is "all-wheel drive," and "W" is "dual rear wheels"). Soldiers simplified this by calling them "ducks."

Over the next three days, the tank deck of LST 293 was loaded with 1,423 wounded troops, including Germans. Many of them had very serious injuries; three died before they got back to Portsmouth and several underwent onboard amputations.

It should be mentioned here that the English Channel is a cold, rough sea with high tides, some 18 feet, and heavy winds. When sailing in mine-swept channels sometimes it would be necessary to steer as much as 45 degrees into the wind in order to maintain your course and stay in the channel. The minesweepers did an excellent job of marking the channel with buoys and flags. If you strayed out of these channels you were in trouble.

This D-Day mission was the first of 71 trips Culp's ship made across the English Channel over the summer and early fall of 1944. He and Lt. Straight endured many storms as they helped guide LST 293 back and forth, transporting fresh troops to France and bringing wounded men to safety in England. Culp estimated that their ship carried 140,000 tons of supplies and equipment during this period, and about 15,000 soldiers.

Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945. Culp received word in August that he would assume top command

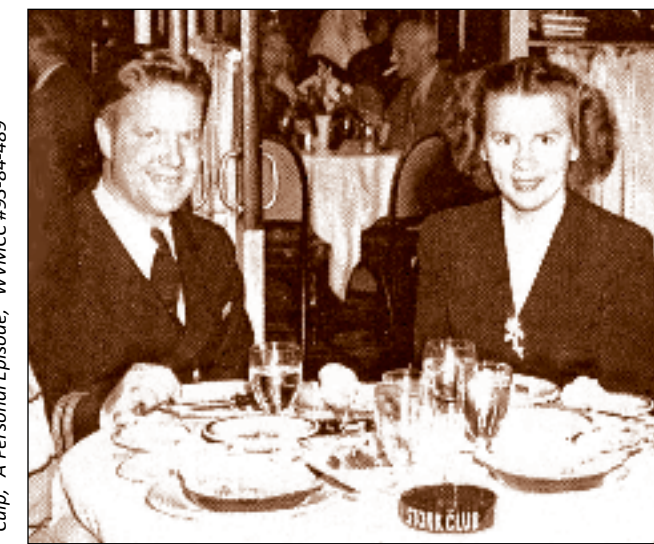


Medics carry a man wounded from Normandy action onto a waiting LST. Jeeps were kept busy driving along the invasion beach in June 1944, bringing casualties to the ships for treatment and transport back to England.

of LST 293 on Sept. 6, relieving Lt. Commander John C. Camps. He was given a month's leave so Mary Alice joined him in New York City, where the ship was being refurbished to do battle on the Pacific front. However, Japan surrendered on Sept. 2. The war was over! People celebrated across the nation, especially in New York, where music and dancing broke out in the streets and 2 million people packed into 10 blocks of Times Square to express their jubilation.

Bob and Mary Alice "did the town" for three months: attending plays, movies, Yankees baseball games, football and hockey games, Belmont Park horse races, museums, and visiting Coney Island. Bob was released from active duty on Dec. 5, so the couple rode a train home to Washington state.

They settled in Ephrata, where Bob worked in land acquisition for the Bureau of Reclamation. He remained active in the Naval Reserve for 35 years, promoted to lieutenant commander in 1951 and serving as the commanding officer of the Ephrata station. Bob was active in the Ephrata Rotary Club and coached youth baseball and basketball. After he retired, the couple moved to Wenatchee where he worked with Munson Engineering for 15 years. He died Feb. 27, 2006. He was survived by his wife, son Robert V. Culp, Jr., daughter, Nancy, four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



Bob and Mary Alice Culp celebrated the end of World War II in New York City. Here they enjoy dinner with friends at the Stork Club.

## A Year in the Life of Wenatchee 1945 – Memory Book

On October 7, 1995, the North Central Washington Museum (now the Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center) hosted a gala celebrating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. It was a fancy affair, with dinner and dancing to period music played by the Wenatchee Big Band. During the event, a blank-paged book was passed around and guests were invited to share memories of 1945. Below are most of the comments. In some cases it was hard to decipher handwriting, so we apologize for misspelled names.

I was 12 when the war started and always knew we'd win the war because "right is might." I remember when Pres. Roosevelt died. They played patriotic music all day. It was very sad. When the end of the war came my Dad was working in Minneapolis and the town went wild. Now my brother-in-law would soon be home.  
– Lois Jean Day

I remember VJ Day. I was 13 and my family was shopping in Wenatchee when the war was over. A parade was assembled out of the blue and led by a local sailor named Vern Wright. What a joyous day that was!  
– Joan Asher Zanol

I remember VJ Day. I was 15. I came to town with a group of guys from Orondo. We hooted and hollered. The street dance that was going on in the streets was the greatest.  
– Gene Zanol

I was home celebrating getting off the service in September '45.  
– Joseph A. Reeves

I was home corresponding with my would-be husband Joe.  
– L.A. Reeves

I remember my uncle coming home from the Army and one in the Navy. Men in uniforms – 2 uncles didn't make it home. Rationing – my Dad got a hold of a pair of nylon stockings for my mom, it was kind of a big thing!  
– Janet Camp

I spent WWII in Wenatchee. Was in Fort Knox, KY in training when war ended. Told my wife June what a donut dolly was like. Spent another hitch '50-51 in Korea.  
– W. Van Oeten

WWII – we were living in Branford, NC – Marine/Navy – there for the GLORIOUS END of WWII.  
– E. and J. Miller

End of the war! Very happy day for me and my daughter. Daddy's coming home.  
– Clara Wieshaupt

My memories of the war years were of the rationing of gas, meat, sugar and what else? I was only 13 but clearly remember saving grease and tin foil for the war effort. I had four Wilson cousins, from Omak, in the service at the same time. They sent me jewelry from various islands made out of seeds, but still very attractive. Also,



National Archives - Celebration in Times Square, Aug. 14, 1945

silk pillow covers and hankies. And who could forget the gold stars in the windows to show how many sons in the family were at war. Also had two favorite uncles overseas. All of the relatives came home safely.  
– Helen Tresedder Buchanan

My dad had just gotten home from Germany. He was a Captain in the Army and had been in combat in the last part of the war up to the surrender. My mom was waiting for him in Chicago. They started a family, including ME.  
– No name

The end of the war ... only my dad and brother understood "atomic" – but we all understood the end of hostilities! Street dancing – getting together with friends – general celebrating – too good to grasp all at once!  
– Joanne McHaney

I was in the next replacement draft for the oncoming invasion of Japan when the war ended. How lucky can you get?  
– Charles McHaney

Lived in Bremerton, WA across from the harbor where ships were built and repaired. Remember the tethered dirigibles that flew over the harbor. As a student, we had air raid drills and crawled under a stage.  
– Don Hainline

My husband was home from the Navy and we danced with most of the town on Wenatchee Avenue. What absolute joy and relief! The war was over and everyone could get on with their lives.  
– Bonnie Johnson, Mrs. Clayton L.

Though we weren't around at the time of the war, we so appreciated and honor those who served. It's important to remember and appreciate.  
– Mike and Nancy Weitsel

## What Toys Did Kids Enjoy During World War II?

by Chris Rader

While their fathers were away at war and mothers were busy keeping households together, American children during the 1940s had a variety of toys to play with. Many of these, for boys, had a kind of war slant to them: military trucks, tanks, little Army men, toy guns. Girls were playing house, imitating Mommy with toy brooms, mops, tea sets, telephones and baby dolls.

Popular toys *before* 1940 included the erector set, a motorized toy made of steel parts invented in 1911 by A.C. Gilbert. The set introduced engineering and structural principals to little boys. Lincoln Logs came along in 1918, the brain child of Frank Lloyd Wright's son John Lloyd Wright who got the idea from watching one of his father's designs being built in Japan.

In 1928 the world saw the first Mickey Mouse dolls, marketed after the release of the animated Disney cartoon "Steamboat Willie." The yo-yo also appeared that year, thanks to a California man of Filipino descent, Pedro Flores. He made his own yo-yo, a word meaning "come-come" in the native language of the Philippines.



Board games such as Monopoly, Scrabble, Sorry! and Clue came along in the early 1930s. They provided entertainment for families who couldn't afford to go out during the Depression. Candy Land and Chutes & Ladders followed in the '40s.

Originally invented as a wartime synthetic rubber substitute, Silly Putty hit the market in the 1940s. The Slinky, invented by Richard James in 1943, was not originally intended to be a toy. James, a mechanical engineer, was working to devise springs that could keep sensitive equipment on war ships steady at sea. He accidentally knocked into some of his sample springs and watched them "walk" gracefully down stairs instead of falling.

World War II halted the production of metal toys for the first half of the decade, but the post-war years made up for it with the Slinky, Lionel trains, metal Matchbox cars and Ertl farm toys, and the Radio Flyer wagon. Other toys making their appearance in the late 1940s were Crayola crayons, marbles, pick-up sticks, Raggedy Ann, slingshots and Mr. Potato Head.

## Period Toys Are Coming to the Museum!

From 1940, when it expanded from bicycle sales to model airplane supplies, Wenatchee Cycle and Toy Shop became a favorite with local children. Kasey Koski, the Wenatchee Valley Museum's curator of exhibits, is planning a grand display of photos and memorabilia from that store (which was founded in 1933). The exhibit will open on Friday, May 1 and continue for six months on the museum's main level.

"Tomfoolery: Vintage Fun from Wenatchee Cycle & Toy" will bring back memories for many. Ron and Andrea Lodge, siblings of longtime owner Bob Lodge and children of early owner Archie Lodge, are assisting with some of the planning and display items.

Exhibit coordinator



Koski noted, "Everyone loves toys. Each generation has a connection to the iconic toys of their youth. Some have staying power and some have disappeared from the toy store shelves. Toys foster early childhood development by stimulating the imagination, learning and creativity."

In this exhibit, the Wenatchee Valley Museum will be inviting all to come kindle the sense of nostalgia for those toys we grew up with, and to learn about the toys of past generations. It will include toys from '50s, '60s and '70s and explore the local toy store that brought fun and merriment to our community for so many years.







**Wenatchee Valley Museum & Cultural Center**  
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## Coming Up at the Wenatchee Valley Museum



- “Get Lit” Stained Glass Workshop:** Wednesday, December 4
- First Friday Reception:** Friday, Dec. 6
- Christmas Family Fun Day:** Friday, Dec. 6
- Family LED Christmas Tree Workshop:** Friday, Dec. 13
- Wells House Holiday Tea:** Saturday, Dec. 14
- Coyote’s Corner Drop-in Art Class:** Saturday, Dec. 21
- First Friday Reception:** Friday, January 3
- Environmental Film and Speaker:** Tuesday, Jan. 14 and Jan. 28
- Environmental Film and Speaker:** Tuesday, Feb. 4
- Wenatchee Jazz Workshop “Jazznights”:** Thurs-Fri, Feb. 6-7
- First Friday Reception:** Friday, Feb. 7
- Valentine’s Date Night at Wells House:** Friday, Feb. 14
- First Friday Reception: Regional High School Art Show,**  
Friday, March 6

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