

Thursdays at noon
Indian Hills Country Club

2014-2015 Officers

Chris Kyle, Jr., President
Jim Zeanah, President-Elect
Bev Leigh III, Vice President
Ardis Hancock, Secretary
David Jones, Treasurer
Laura Gregory, Past President

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Patrick McKane, 2018
Ormond Wilson, 2018
Betsy Jarnigan, 2017
Michael Quinn, 2017
Candice Burge, 2016
Robert Morgan, 2016

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Bill Barton
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Henry DeVasher*
Mitchell N. Drew*
Karl Elebash*
Charles DelGaudio
Samuel Gambrell, Jr.
Nan Glaus
Ardis Hancock
Dexter Hancock
James Hulsey, III
John Ingram
Tennis Jackson
David M. Jones
William Jordan*
Hubert Kessler*
Fuller Kimbrell*
Otis Lee*
Bev Leigh, Jr.*
Bev Leigh III
William Lipsey*
Harmon Looney*
Jon McGee
Patrick McKane
Buck Medley
Jim Meherg
Harlan Meredith*
Willis Meriwether
M.T. Ormond*
A.W. Patton, Jr.*
Robert Poellnitz
Joe Powell
Ralph Quarles
Lee Rearden*
David Reynolds
M.L. Roberts*
Wright Ross, Jr.*
James Russell*
Glen Smith
Munny Sokol*
Russell Stockman*
William Tate
Andy Tucker
Walt Vornbrock*
Beasor Walker*
Ernest Williams*
Hoyt Winslett*
George Wright
Jim Zeanah * deceased



The Unitor

Exchange Club of Tuscaloosa

Chartered February 9, 1923 • Affiliated with the National Exchange Club

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In service to community, state, and nation, for exchange of ideas among business and professional men and women...

September 17, 2015

TODAY: Robert Poellnitz, WWII Veteran Reminisces-the Liberation of Europe

Robert Poellnitz
by *Jim Zeanah*

Robert was born and raised in Greensboro. At the age of 18, he enrolled to attend college at Auburn. Within days he received a draft notice and was advised by the local board that if he hurried he might be able to get his tuition back.

He reported for Basic Training at Fort McClellan, and eight days into Basic suffered a broken foot. He spent the rest of his training time in various hospitals, but with no further training was released into a replacement unit eventually to join the 2nd Infantry Division in Normandy.

He landed on Omaha Beach two weeks after D Day and was assigned to an anti-tank company attached to the 38th Regiment of the Second Infantry Division. On July 11, 1944 the 38th began the assault and eventual capture of strategic Hill 192 near St Lo. After the breakout of the 3rd Army through Avranches, the 2nd Division moved north first to Brest, then deployed in Northern France north of Reims.

He was near the Belgian border in December 16, 1944 when the Battle of the Bulge began. The divisions on either flank, the 106th and the 99th, suffered heavy losses and were forced to withdraw, leaving the 2nd ID in an exposed salient position. During the fighting, the 2nd Division knocked out 38 enemy tanks and heavy vehicles, and of these Robert's company accounted for 9 tanks. When the German assault was repelled, the 2nd Division moved east and crossed the Rhein at the Remagen Bridge and pushed east. At VE Day the 2nd Division stood down near Pilsen, Czechoslovakia.

The 2nd Infantry Division was officially in combat 303 days. The Division suffered 2/3 casualties in the fighting around St Lo and a similar loss in the Bulge. The official figures for its trip across Europe are 3031 killed in action, 12,785 wounded in action, and 457 dead of wounds.

The 2nd Infantry Division returned to its New York port of embarkation on July 20, 1944, and arrived at Camp Swift at Bastrop, TX, on July 22 to train for the assault on Japan.

Fortunately for Robert and millions of other American soldiers, Japan surrendered in August. After the war, Robert learned that the order of battle for the Japanese mainland placed the 1st and 2nd Infantry Divisions on the plains of Tokyo.

After the War, Robert returned to Auburn and finished his degree. He worked initially at Crawford and Company in Atlanta and joined Duckworth-Morris Insurance in Tuscaloosa in 1949. Starting as an individual producer, he was promoted to Managing Director in 1956 and to President in 1963, in which capacity he served until his retirement.

Next Week: 9/24 Dr. Anne Witt
UA Music Dept.



Sam Gambrell, Jr. Sept. 15
Bill Walker Sept. 15
Betsy Jarnigan Sept. 23

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Weekly Newsletter of the
Exchange Club of Tuscaloosa

Linda Jackson, Editor
348-1302 • ljackson@cchs.ua.edu