

HAYCOCK HISTORICAL NEWS

The Newsletter of The Haycock Historical Society • Spring 2008

— Honoring Those Who Served —

WEB SINGER, JR. WORLD WAR II VETERAN AND FARMER

Written by Nancy Singer and Edited by Jane Nase

Webster Singer, Jr. grandson of the famous potter, Simon Singer and son of Webster Sr. and Alma, was born Jan. 24, 1924. His mother called him "Laddie." The word Laddie would later be on the plane where Web operated the remote gun turret on the B-29 airship during World War II.

In 1943, he was inducted into the Army but transferred to the Army Air Force where he qualified for the cadet program. Six-weeks of basic training were followed by an eight week college prep course at the University of North Carolina. With the invention of the atomic bomb this part of the cadet program was ended. He was then transferred to an Air Force gunnery program in Florida for intensive training. Web continued on to Lincoln, Nebraska, headquarters of heavy and very heavy bombardment equipment. Here he was assigned to the 6th Bomb Group (VH), 24th Squadron (VH), 313th Wing of the 20th Air Force (Serial #33833256).

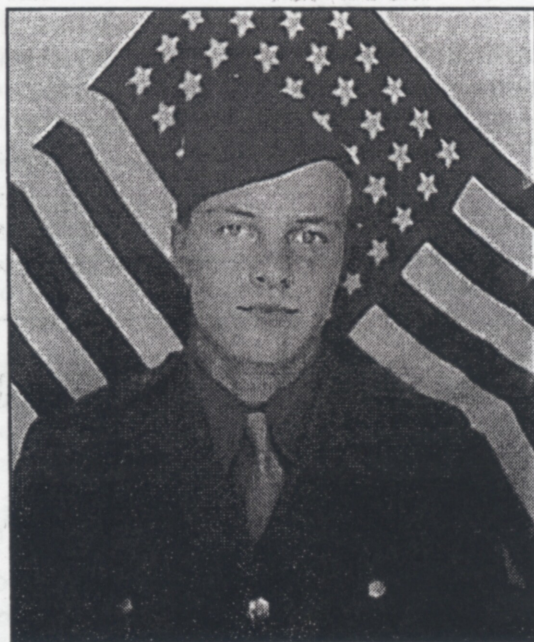
At Grand Island, Nebraska, he was assigned to crew #13 and further trained with flights to Puerto Rico and South America, bonding with those he would serve with. In January 1945, they flew from Grand Island to Bakersfield, California, and then to Squadron Base on Tinian of the Marianas. He flew 30 missions on the B-29 over all main cities of Japan including Tokyo, Truk, Osaka, Nagoya, Kobe, Okinawa. His crew mined Inland Sea and major ports of Japan. These were particularly dangerous missions, as they had to fly low

and drop the mines into the sea while being the target of anti-aircraft guns. Their task was to "light up" the four corners of a city with incendiary bombs. Besides mines and incendiaries they also dropped blockbusters and fragmentary bombs on airfields, even after the first A-bomb was dropped.

Web was an airplane electric mechanic and aerial gunner on the remote control turret. On one flight the ship received 50 big holes and over 200 small ones caused by anti-aircraft flack but no one was hurt. One large piece of that flak just missed Web's head. They always made it back to Tinian, unlike many other planes that went down. Due to his heroic actions he received many awards and medals such as the Distinguished Flying Cross and three Bronze Stars before he was honorably discharged in 1945.

When Web returned home to Bucks County, he reenlisted in the reserves for six years. Planning to be a dairy farmer, he studied under the G. I. Bill and received an Agriculture Certificate for Institutional On-Farm Training. Web met his wife, Nancy, during a Young Farmers of Revere Square Dance and fulfilled his dreams of farming. He operated a 300-acre farm called Singerlea, near Pleasant Valley, where he raised more than 100 head of Holstein cattle.

Web, who died in September 2007, was like many other WWII veterans who served their country well and we greatly appreciate their service.



Webster Singer, Jr., age 19

KENNY HORNE, ARMY VETERAN

by Heather Radick

Haycock resident Kenneth Horne, age 74, was drafted into the Army in January 1957 at the age of 22. In June, after basic training in Fort Jackson, South Carolina, he sailed to Germany on the U.S.N.S. Upshur. He was stationed at Karlsruhe, Germany from June 1957 to December 1958. Horne said that the barracks in Karlsruhe were relatively upscale, as they had been built in World War II for the Nazi Party's elite and brutal military unit called the SS, which in German means Schutzstaffel.

Because of his upbringing, he felt he was well prepared for some aspects of basic training. In Haycock most homes did not have indoor plumbing until the 1940s. To bathe in the field during basic training the men were given a washcloth, towel, and a bar of soap. The only water they had to use was poured into their helmets.

"Some men just stood there with their helmets not knowing what exactly to do," said Horne.

Horne's assignment in the Army was calculating the rations for mess halls in the area.

"I considered myself lucky to have that job, because one guy who was afraid of climbing up ladders got assigned to the airborne outfit," said Horne. "The

thought of jumping from an airplane upset him so much he would jump up in bed at night with nightmares."

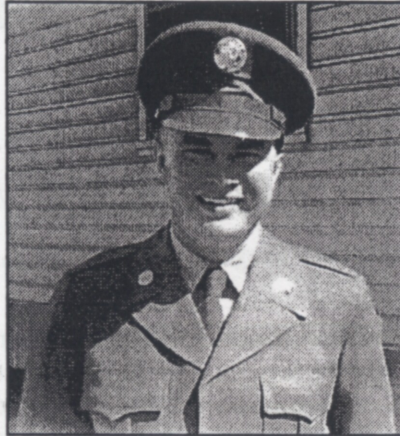
At the snack bar in the post exchange building, Horne sat at the same table and had coffee with Elvis Presley.

Presley was the driver for a lieutenant in charge of a mess hall. He saw Presley more than once when he came in with the lieutenant to pick up his rations. Horne also played cards with Gary Crosby, son of Bing Crosby, a few Saturday afternoons. Crosby spent time performing at the USO club. Horne was invited to play cards with him because his friend was stationed in a room alongside of Crosby.

Horne left Germany by sea on the Upshur in December 1958. He recalled that the voyage to Germany was calm, but the 12 day journey home was rough.

"For four days, the seas were at least nine feet high. Almost everyone on board was sick. Four men had their arms broken from being tossed out of their bunks," Horne recalled.

Horne was discharged January 6, 1959. Back home, he picked up where he left off working on his family's dairy farm with his father and grandfather. He keeps his discharge card in his wallet.



ERNEST KERIS, LATVIAN IMMIGRANT

Edited by Sue Kleiner-Grew

Ernest Keris was choir director of the Bucks County Latvian Baptist Church for 40 years. At his daughter's request, on January 13, 1997 he wrote about his journey from Latvia to America during World War II.

This article offers small portions of the letter, which Keris wrote in Latvian and was translated by his daughter Gunta Keris-Plostnieks.

The Keris' family which included Ernest, his wife Duda, daughter Gunta, two-years old, and son Valdis, two-months old, were well to-do landowners who left Latvia on October 1, 1944 to escape the advancing Russian army.

According to Keris, "It was difficult and heart-wrenching to leave the country of my birth because we felt that we would never return."

As they left home, Keris said, there was a "last

farewell, cannon grenades of the enemy flew over our heads. We ran into the ditches on the side of the road. The war front was close in back of us".

Eventually they boarded a ship that took them to the German port of Gottenhafen. Keris said, "The next part of our journey was by train to a city near the border of Poland to be disinfected. In a big room with about 20 showers, we could wash ourselves very well, and then we were sprayed with various powders."

Later, the Keris family was taken to a refugee camp near Berlin. They were transported by train to Neubrandenburg in the Mecklenburg district. Keris said, "At one point the train stopped and we didn't know for how long it was going to stop. Valdis didn't have any more milk in his bottle and we had to get some somewhere. I risked it and crossed the fields to the nearest farmhouse to get some milk. I did it fast.

Continued on page 3

HENRY DEPUE, U.S. AIR FORCE VETERAN

Written by Henry DePue

After graduating from high school I started working full time at a trailer manufacturing company that I worked for while going to school. For my birthday I received a suitcase, took the hint and joined the Air Force.

On March 15, 1961, I arrived at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas for basic training. In November, I was sent to my first assignment, which was at Charleston Air Force Base in South Carolina. I worked in the machine shop repairing and manufacturing parts for the assigned aircraft and support equipment. When I first arrived, the base had F-101, C-121 and C-124 aircraft. By 1967, they were replaced with new C-130 and C-141 aircraft. While stationed at Charleston, I was promoted from Airman Basic to Staff Sergeant and had the opportunity to travel to Germany, Peru, and Panama.

In August 1967, I was sent to Phu Cat Air Base in Vietnam. I was assigned to the machine shop, but this time as the shop chief. The base had F-100 and C-47 gun ships. Over the Christmas holidays, Bob Hope brought Nancy Sinatra to entertain the troops. The base was relatively safe with the Korean Army on the border. The base was hit three times in May during the Tet Offensive.

When I arrived, the showers and toilets were outdoors. After showering you could walk to the Non-Commissioned Officers Club in just a towel and have a beer. When I left 365 days later you needed to wear a shirt with a collar to get into the club.

In August 1968, I arrived at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona. I was the night shift supervisor in the machine shop. The base was an advanced pilot train-

ing base, with A-10, F-4 and F-15 aircraft. While at Luke, I was promoted to technical sergeant and master sergeant. I received orders in June 1976 and was transferred to Moody Air Force Base in Georgia. I was the fabrication branch chief in charge of six shops. This was my first assignment that I didn't totally enjoy.

One day I received a call from personnel asking if I would be interested in applying for a special assignment at Edwards Air Force Base in California. The job would require being away from home most of the week and going back to work as a machinist. After discussing this with my wife, Nancy, and wanting to get back to the desert, I decided to apply. After an interview and security clearances, I was accepted. On February 15, 1978, I arrived at Edwards which was in the middle of nowhere, about 50 miles from the nearest town.

For the next nine years during most weeks, I would fly to work on Monday and come home on Thursday. At Edwards I saw the space shuttle land many times as well as flights of the latest test aircraft. I was able to travel many times to Germany, Greece, Pakistan, Israel and Egypt. The test program that I was assigned to was, and still is, classified. My mother thought I set up missiles in foreign countries while my travel agent, whom I purchased tickets from, thought I was a drug dealer.

I progressed from being a machinist to a program manager and was promoted to senior master and chief master sergeant. I retired March 31, 1987 from the greatest job in the U.S. Air Force. The suitcase was responsible for my military career.

ERNEST KERIS *continued from page 2*

What if the train had left, what then? But thank God, I got back on the train and soon it started moving."

When the war came to an end, the family boarded a bus to be taken to a refugee camp. According to Keris "We were still sitting on the bus when we were informed that the next day we will be able to go home to Latvia. We were upset and confused because that is not what we wanted. Luckily one of our group spoke English. He explained that we were fleeing Russian Communism and will not go back."

In 1949, the family was moved to a transit camp in Wentdorf. While there, Keris tells that he "arranged Baptist church services" during which "Duda and I sang duets. Later we also had quartets and double-quartets made up of Baptist singers."

After a time, their emigration papers were finalized and on September 24, 1949, Keris, his wife and children boarded a ship called the General Sturgis. On October 1, 1949, they landed in New York and were welcomed by Pastor J. Zeltins who drove them to Applebachsville.

THE CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS OF COMPANY H.

By Pat DeWald

On June 18, 1861, the Applebachville volunteers departed from Applebachville for Camp Washington at Easton. The volunteers were in the 3rd Reserves/ 32d Regiment Company H. This was a company of men from the surrounding area supported in most part by General Paul Applebach. He had spent 300 dollars to supply the men with caps and flannel shirts and drawers. More money was needed to supply the men with the necessary clothing and equipment, but the surrounding communities were not very supportive of the war and little money was raised.

On June 18, the volunteers were transported to the Quakertown rail station by stage coach preceded by the California brass band. Here they joined the volunteers from Sellersville under the command of Lieut. Fischer. The company formed in line and headed by the brass band, marched through the borough of Quakertown. It was a very hot day and the men were exhausted by the time the march was over. After a brief address by Robert J. Armstrong, the men boarded the train for the trip to Easton and Camp Washington. Mr. E.T. Ochs and other citizens of Quakertown collected whatever eatables could be found from people of the borough. Since it was baking day there was no difficulty in gathering a large quantity of fresh bread, pies and biscuits. This was done to supply the soldiers with rations until they could draw rations in camp. The train reached Easton about seven o'clock and the men were escorted into camp by Gen. Applebach, Col. Maugle, ex-Sheriff Fellman and R. J. Armstrong.

The company was mustered out (discharged) June 1, 1864. Not all of the men stayed for the three years. Some resigned, some deserted and some were promoted. Captain Joseph Thomas resigned July 7, 1862. J. B. Bartholomew was promoted from 1st Sergeant to 2d Lieut., and then to 1st Lieut and mustered out with the company. William McCarty was promoted from 1st sergeant to 2d Lieut., then detached May 30, 1862 to command 61st Company, Vets.,

3rd Brigade, 2d Division Dept. West Virginia.

Out of the 105 enlisted men, three were killed at Antietam, two died of wounds at Alexandria, one was wounded and a prisoner at Cloyd Mountain and one died at Fortress Monroe. One died at Cloyd Mountain, one killed at Charles City Cross Roads, 12 discharged on Surgeon's Certificate, two killed at Bull Run, one killed at Gaines Mill, one died at Harrisburg, one missing in action at Gaines Mill, one killed at Fredericksburg and one died in Washington D.C.

Sergeant Ephrain Case was killed at Antietam, September 17, 1862, Sergeant George Vaux was wounded and prisoner at Cloyd Mountain, May 9, 1864. Corporal Jackson Bachman died at Fortress Monroe, September 21, 1862. Corporal Israel Long died of wounds received at Cloyd Mountain May 9, 1864. Corporal Harvey Alabach was killed at Charles City Cross Roads, June 30, 1862. Private Lewis Brown was killed at Antietam, September 17, 1862. Private William Crib was discharged on October 16, 1862. The following were discharged on surgeon's certificates: Private Burnes Lewis on February 24, 1863; Private Emanuel English on January 21, 1863; Private Hil'y O. Hendricks on November 20, 1862; Private John Shively, date unknown; Private Wayne F. Weider on March 5, 1863; Private Christian Wissinger on February 11, 1863; Private Levi Zeiner on April 27, 1862.

Private Andrew Huff was killed at Bull Run, August 30, 1862, and Private Adam Keiser was killed at Gaines Mill, June 27, 1862. Private George Longenbucher died at Harrisburg, Pa. January 28, 1862. Private A. J. Roberts was killed at Bull Run, August 30, 1862. Private Jacob L. Stouffer was missing in action at Gaines Mill June 27, 1862. Private Frank Sellers was killed at Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862.

Sources for this article include the websites: www.digitalarchives.state.pa.us, www.pa-roots.com and an article from the *Intelligencer* dated 6/18/1861.

Thomas, Joseph	32 I H - 3 Res	1 - 630
Enrolled	6-18-61	at Easton, Pa.
M.I.	7-29-61	As Capt. at Hbg.
M.O.		
Discharged:		
Age at enrollment	31	Complexion Dark
Height	5-9	Eyes Blue
Hair	Dark	Occup. Physician
Residence: Bucks		
Remarks: Resigned 7-7-62 at Harrison Landing, Va.		

Civil War registration card courtesy of www.digitalarchives.state.pa.us.

SOCIETY NEWS

IN MEMORY

Gerry Deegan of the Tohickon Family Campground passed away Sunday, April 13. Gerry was a good friend and generous supporter of the Haycock Historical Society. His involvement in the preservation of the history of our area was greatly appreciated. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his family. Contributions in memory of Gerry can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

HHS Country Marketplace will be held May 31 from 9 AM until 2 P.M. at the Haycock Firehouse. Tables are \$15 with a \$5 rebate to members. Contact Trudi Rosencrans at 215-536-8849 to sign up for a table. There will be food, drink, interesting items for sale and an opportunity to meet your neighbors. Weather permitting, Greg Seifert will be providing horse & buggy rides from 9 until noon for \$4.00 per person. Live entertainment will be offered throughout the day by musicians Gordon Allem and his band Strings & Things, Rich Laughlin and Steve Applegate. In addition, there will be an old tractor show. If you own an old tractor and would like to display it, please contact Chris Handschin. Chris will also be collecting donations for the White Elephant sale, contact Chris at 215-536-0364 if you have an item you want to donate. All proceeds benefit the Haycock Historical Society.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Many thanks to Steve Applegate for leading the hike to Stony Garden April 27, 2008. The purpose of the hike was to see where the speakers stand may have been placed for the Buckwampun Society picnic held June 14, 1890. Steve read the poem, "Stony Garden" written by Wm J. Buck and the group also played the rocks as was done at the 1890 picnic.

A hike has been planned for October, 2008 with the goal of finding Shellenburger's mill. If you have an interest in participating or have info about Shellenburger's, please contact Pat DeWald 215-804-0216.



Left to Right: Wayne Keller, Rich, Paula, Mattie Laughlin, Paula, Steve Applegate, and Chris Handschin in front.
Picture courtesy of Wayne Keller.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Anyone who would like to become a Corporate Sponsor of the Haycock Historical Society will have a business card sized ad placed in the newsletter for four issues. It is a good way to support HHS while promoting your business. Please contact Sue Kleiner-Grew at 215-538-3613 to discuss placing an ad.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

We are looking for any photographs or information about the Haycock Run Post Office/General store. We are also seeking photographs or any other forms of information about Shellenburger's Mill which had a sawmill and blacksmith shop. Please contact Sue Kleiner-Grew at 215-538-3613 if you have something you would like to share.

NOTES OF THANKS

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to John Kerdock for his donation of all of Beth's research materials to HHS. Beth's research library is extensive and is a generous gift both in spirit and content.

SOCIETY MEETINGS

During the public meeting on May 15, officers elections were held. Richard Landgreen was re-elected as treasurer. Sue Kleiner-Grew was elected secretary.

Public meetings will resume in Fall 2008.

REQUEST FOR WRITTEN SUPPORT

Tim Gruber of "People for Better Pennsylvania Historical Records Access" (PAHR-Access) has contacted HHS to request support. His group's goal is to get older Pennsylvania state death certificates available online. Their website is <http://users.rcn.com/timarg/PaHR-Access.htm>. A letter of support for this cause could be written to Governor Rendell as well as State Representative Paul Clymer and State Senator Charles McIlhinney. His group will gladly help draft a letter if you would like some assistance. The more organizations they get support from, the more likely this is to happen. For those interested in genealogy, such a database would be very useful.

GRANDMA'S COUNTRY KITCHEN

at

Tohickon Family Campground

8308 Covered Bridge Road
Quakertown, PA 18951

215-536-7951

www.Tohickoncampground.com

