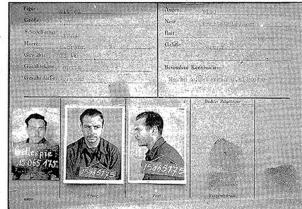
Charlie Gillespie's personal identification sheet shows his general characteristics, including that he is healthy, has dark brown hair and weighs 73 kilograms (about 160 pounds).



# **POWs share** scars from World War II



Times photo — KATHLEEN CABBLE

Jim Riley, Bernie Calderbank, Charlie Gillespie and Lee Cooning reminisce recently about their captures during the war.

■ The former prisoners tell of marches in the bitter cold, being crammed into boxcars and getting little food and

water.
By WAVENEY ANN MOORE

ST. PETERSBURG - In Bernard Calderbank's Pinellas Point home recently, a group of friends relived their war, their escape from flaming B-17s and their capture and imprisonment by the Germans.

Three of them, they now know, rode in the same train of boxcars to the prison camp.

As they reminisced, they prompted each other, nudging fading memories and good-naturedly correcting faulty ones.

James Riley, Charlie Gillespie, Lee Cooning and Calderbank were members of the Army Air Forces during World War II and are friends today. They share not only wartime experiences but also the scars of combat and imprisonment.

Calderbank was a left waist gunner and German fighter observer in a B-17 on Aug. 9, 1944, when his plane was wracked by anti-aircraft fire and German fighter planes.

He and 11 other crew members had set off on a raid against a jet fighter factory in Munich when bad weather forced its cancellation. They attempted to return to their base in Polebrook, England.

"The bad weather continued, which helped us fight off several fighter attacks, which knocked out one of our engines," recalled Calderbank, 78.

"When we neared the Dutch coast, the weather cleared up. As we sighted the North Sea, we encountered heavy ground-to-air fire. I received a head wound from the flak, which knocked me out. The right waist gunner brought me to. By this time, the plane was burning badly and we both ejected through the right bomb bay. The rest of the crew had apparently bailed out right before us.

"I landed on the slate roof of a three-story building. The last thing I remember was hitting the roof hard and seeing roof tiles flying off. I came to and saw I was hanging from my chute about 2 feet off the ground. My chute had caught on a chimney, ramming me back into the wall.

His captors were waiting. A German officer extended a greeting: "For you, American gangster, the war is over."

But for Calderbank and the friends who chatted in his living room, their capture by the Ger-

#### If you go

The Florida Gulfcoast Chapter of the American Ex-Prisoners of War meets at 11:30 a.m. the third Saturday of each month at Stacey's Buffet, 1030 58th St. N. Call commander Paul Aldhizer at 360-8880 for details.

mans was the beginning of another war, one for survival.

Cooning, who lives in the Tanglewood neighborhood, was a 23year-old navigator for the 97th bomb group in the Adriatic when he parachuted into the mountains of Czechoslovakia.

Cooning managed to elude captors for about 14 hours.

"They put me in a little German jail," he said. "There was no heat and it was very cold. I had one pail of water to drink and another pail for personal needs. I didn't have any food."

Confined to the makeshift jail for four days, he then was turned over to the Luftwaffe, or German air force. Eventually he was sent to Stalag Luft III, a prisoner of war camp, where he remained until late January 1945. With the steady advance of Soviet forces, the Germans began to march their prisoners to another camp.

"We were on the road for a total of eight days," Cooning said, recalling the inadequate clothing he wore against bitter cold.

And the end of the march brought another horror: transportation in crammed boxcars meant to fetch animals.

Of the four veterans gathered in Pinellas Point recently, Calderbank, Gillespie and Riley traveled to prison camp in the same caravan of boxcars. Three years ago, while attending a meeting of the Florida Gulfcoast Chapter of the American Ex-Prisoners of War, they discovered this shared experience.

"Maybe we were in the same boxcar, but we didn't know it then," Riley said.

Dozens of men were jammed into the 9-by-7-foot boxcars. Gillespie, 78, who kept a clan-

destine log of his experiences, checked his brown Red Cross-issued diary to confirm that 53 men traveled in his boxcar.

Calderbank, a retired sales engineer for Murchison Corp., shared the agonizing journey with about 70 men. He recalled that each was given four slices of brown bread, in which the main ingredient was sawdust. One bucket of water was provided to quench their thirst.

An empty bucket was the toi-

To get more water to drink, he remembered, the POWs broke icicles that formed at the few tiny, barred windows. And on a lone train stop, water was dipped from a stream. "There was a lot of slime in it,

but people were thirsty," he said. That is how we got dysentery." Cooning recalled that during his 10-day boxcar journey, fellow prisoners resorted to eating snow on the rare occasions they were allowed to leave their cramped

Calderbank said his experience has helped him to understand what Jews and other German prisoners

"From my understanding, the conditions they had were even more horrible," he said, even as he recalled the thick layer of hardened dung that caked the floor of the boxcar in which he was forced to travel.

And, added Calderbank, it was not until after the war that he understood the significance of other observations he had made in the boxcar.

some markings we saw on the inside were Jewish lettering.

Riley, 78, a retired New Rochelle, N.Y., firefighter, endured two boxcar journeys. After his B-24 was hit, he parachuted into Hungary and was met by a group brandishing pitchforks and hoes.

Despite the excruciating boxcar journeys that followed, Riley remains grateful that he did not have to walk to prison camp as more able-bodied POWs were

forced to do. 'It was the lesser of two evils," he said. "I was badly wounded in both legs and I could never have

survived the march. His journey's end brought little

relief. The wooden barracks of the prison camp offered scant protection against the elements.

"The wind blew through and even snow," he said. "We were sleeping on burlap with straw inside and the straw was filled with little things (bugs). Every time you went to bed, you had several more

While Riley, Calderbank and Cooning rely on their memories to retell their World War II ordeals, Gillespie refers to the diary he had hidden from his captors.

"I started writing down every-thing as it happened," said the veteran in whose home the Florida Gulfcoast Chapter had its birth 26 years ago.

For lunch in prison camp, "We would receive a 10-quart bucket, about two-thirds full of boiled potatoes in the jacket," said Gillespie, who retired from the Air Force in

"My job was to separate these

potatoes in 24 piles (for each man in the group)," he said. "Once in a while, we would get some horse meat. I lost 43 pounds in the year I was a POW."

Since POWs had to survive on such a meager diet, it comes as little surprise that Cooning still speaks with relish of the white bread and condensed milk he received when his prison camp was liberated.

'It was like eating dessert," he recalled 52 years later.

A POW died after devouring doughnuts the Red Cross supplied, Cooning recollected.

"They estimated that he had eaten four dozen," he added. Food deprivation and other ordeals have had a lasting effect on

World War II POWs. Calderbank, for instance, lists stomach ailments among his medical problems.

'I have had two minor strokes as a result of the head wound," he said. "A lot of us have cycles of being silent. We sort of go through "I realized," he said, "that different mood swings. Most of us suffer from nightmares.'

Riley concurred.

"My poor wife," he said. "I relived the whole thing many times. To this day, I live on four hours of sleep a night."

For years POWs mostly kept their feelings to themselves, said Cooning, who also served in Korea and Southeast Asia.

"When we got back, we were very thankful that we survived the war. All we wanted to do was forget the war and as a result, we didn't talk about it to our wives or to our families," the retired lieutenant colonel said.

The government is aware of the problems peculiar to World War II POWs, said Tom Paquette, supervisor of the fee basis section at the VA Medical Center at Bay

Paquette, who also is the ex-POW coordinator, added: "Mainly, there are psychiatric problems. There are dietary problems, arthritic problems, frostbite, parasitic worms, panic disorders, compulsive disorders and post-traumatic stress disorders."

Despite living with unrelenting emotional and physical pain, ex-POWs still get choked up when recalling their liberation.

For Cooning, it occurred April 29, 1945, when Gen. George Patton's tanks fought near his prison camp in Moosburg, Germany.

'After the battle, we didn't know what happened and couldn't see anything," Cooning said.

"Somebody cried out to look, pointing down toward the village. he said. "And here comes the Nazi flag down the flagpole and up comes the Stars and Stripes,'

#### **BRIEFLY**

#### Youth auditions set for 'Wizard of Oz'

TARPON SPRINGS - Students from second through 12th grades can perform in a Tarpon Operetta Company production of *The Wizard of Oz.* Rehearsals are Thursday at Tarpon Springs Performing Arts Center, 324 Pine St. Second- through fifthgraders meet from 4 to 5:15 p.m., older students from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Call 938-3711, ext. 203, or 942-5605.

#### **Exhibitors** needed for arts and crafts event

LARGO - St. Paul United Methodist Church needs exhibi-

tors for its second arts and crafts festival, Homespun by Hands and Hearts, on Oct. 18. Registration is \$60; proceeds go to the church's Life Enrichment Center ministries. Deadline is Sept. 22. Call 585-4758.

#### Free classes held in braille transcribing

Pinellas Braille Group is offering free classes to people interested in becoming volunteer braille transcribers. An intro-ductory session will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday at 400 Pasadena Ave. S, St. Petersburg. Classes begin at 10 a.m. Sept. 10. Call 347-9836 or 360-6563.

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## **Local gets chance** to play with idol

n Osceola High School golfer is going to Las Vegas this weekend to play with Senior PGA Tour regular Tom Wargo.

Eric Blanchard, who served as the standard bearer for Wargo's foursome at the JCPenney Classic at Innisbrook from 1994-96, has been invited to play with his idol in a match during the annual international golf show. He will be accompanied by his uncle Fred Deubel of Tarpon Springs, who is going there on business.

Blanchard, who was a member of the district champion Warriors last spring, has sharpened his game this summer working at Bardmoor Golf Club. In the afternoons he worked on the cart staff. In the mornings he practiced at 8 and played free until lunchtime.

The culmination of his efforts came three weeks ago at the annual Pinellas Country Junior Golf Association Tournament of Champions where he shot 3-over 75 from the blue tees at Countryside Country Club to win the boys 16-18 title for the second straight year. Last year at Belleview Mido, he posted 75 for the title.

Blanchard, 17, won by two strokes over Andy Goodwin, a Countryside High graduate, and Ryan Holloway of Northside Christian. He attributes his success to his putting.

"I made some good birdie putts in that tournament," Blanchard said. "My longest was a 25-footer on a par 3. I had it going pretty good, needing only 26 putts in the

At times Blanchard might have questioned whether he was meant to have clubs and play the ancient game. On two occasions over the past three years, he's had his bag

In 1995 at Bardmoor, he was in the pro shop when a man took his bag off the rack in front of the clubhouse and drove off with it. Fortunately, an observant attendant, who happened to be a former police officer, took down the license-plate number. The thief was later apprehended, but not before he got rid of the clubs.

Blanchard was scheduled to play in the Greater Tampa Junior Championship two days later. With a set of clubs borrowed from teaching pro Pat McClanan, Blanchard won his age division with rounds of 78-78 at Cheval and Wentworth.

Last year, Blanchard lost his second set when someone broke into the trunk of his car parked in his driveway.

The good news, if any from the experience, is both thefts were covered by homeowners insurance,

Blanchard said. Looking ahead, Blanchard hopes to earn a scholarship to a Division I college, preferably Arnold Palmer's alma mater, Wake

"If I can't go there on a scholarship, I may go there and try to walk on to the golf team," Blanchard said. "Or I may go to a good Division II program. The main thing I want is good competition.'

NOTES: Jason Ward, Osceola's No. 1 player last spring, has enrolled at the University of Florida where he hopes to walk on, LPGA rookie Michele Vinieratos, who played for Pinellas Park and Florida, shot a 3-under 69 at Sunday's second round of the Rail Classic in Springfield, Ill., to qualify for Monday's final round. Sue Veasey (Countryside/USF) missed the 36-

FOR THE RECORD

GOLF

Schedule

■ Sept. 6, 8 a.m. — Kids Helping Kids tournament at Countryside Executive Golf Course. Age divisions are 7-9, 10-12, 13-15 and 16-17. Entry fee of \$30 includes awards, prizes, cookout at the Countryside Golf Practice and Learning Center, and donation to children's programs at Family Service Centers of Pinellas County. To sign up or for information, call Phyllis Lewellyn at 726-8481 (work) or 445-2494 (pager).
■ Oct. 1, 12:30 p.m. — The inaugural TFGE Fall Classic, sponsored by Palm Garden of Largo, at Bardmoor Golf Club. The \$75 fee includes dinner and awards, with proceeds benefiting the

er and awards, with proceeds benefiting the ndation of Geriatric Education. Call 397-8166

Foundation of Geriatric Education. Call 377-0 100.

a Oct. 4, 1 p.m. — First annual four-person scramble sponsored by A Brighter Day of Pinelias County Inc., at East Lake Woodlands. Perperson fee of \$100 includes lunch, refreshments, awards banquet and prizes. Sponsorships are needed. Proceeds help homeless famillies in the area. Call 347-3333.

— Cat. 28.1 p.m. — The fifth annual Unicare



DAVE THEALL GOLF

hole cut with rounds of 71-75. Amy Benz (Dunedin/Southern Methodist) has relocated from Boca Raton to Atlanta. The former JCPenney co-winner is an honorary member of Dunedin Country Club. Kelley Winship (Dunedin), a 1996-97 member of the Times All-Pinellas County first team, has enrolled at Florida State.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP: Former County Golf Association champion Scott Sabadosh of Palm Harbor had his ups and downs at the Golf Week magazine's match-play championship at Grand Cypress Resort in Orlando last month.

After winning his first three matches, including 3 and 2 over Joe Williams of Clearwater, Sabadosh was scheduled to play Donny Lee in the semifinals. After waiting for his opponent at the clubhouse before driving to the first tee, Sabadosh learned he was a few minutes late and was assessed a onehole penalty. Sabadosh was so bothered by the incident, he was three down when a rain delay came at No. 11, and he withdrew from the tournament. Lee lost the final to Chip Holcombe.

Sabadosh distinguished himself this summer with a course recordtying 65 at Lansbrook, in which he had eight birdies. His 65 ties Mark Wheaton.

CHIP SHOTS: Jim Sullivan of Clearwater shot a 70 at Hunter's Green on Aug. 18 to win a Moonlight Tour event and \$240.... Bill Bandy of Clearwater finished second net in Flight 16 of the DuPont World Amateur at Myrtal Beach, S.C., on Aug. 26. He shot a gross 83 and a net 67 in what was billed as the world's largest on-site tournament with 4,400 golfers from 50 states and 26 countries. . . . Lyla Kinsel of Feather Sound won Flight B of a West Coast Women's tournament at Lone Palm on Aug. 22 with 85.... Kyle Christman of Seminole won the boys 14-15 title of the GTBJGA tournament at the 7,000-yard Disney's Palm Course on Aug. 18. He shot 75 to win by four strokes. . . . The City of St. Petersburg will have a fall junior program at Mangrove Bay and Twin Brooks starting on Monday. For more information call Adam Stuck at 893-7800. . . . Glen Oaks has reopened its back nine to again play to 18 holes on the layout. The back nine had been closed since May for extensive drainage work and landscaping. The holes have been redesigned and new greens have been installed. The course's junior rate is \$4. Call the pro shop at 446-5821.

COMING UP: The 21st annual CGA Team Championship will be held at Innisbrook. Call Cortez Ragland at 577-4515 to register.

■ The third annual Safety Harbor Classic will be held on Sept. 12 at Wentworth. Call Sandra Mc-Kenna at 726-2890 to register.

■ The Diabetes Foundation tournament will be held on Sept. 20 at Mangrove Bay at 1 p.m. The entry fee is \$75 each for the four-person scramble. Call Joe Keenan at 585-5491.

Moonlight Pro Golf Tour

Golf cards

The American Cancer Society is offering a golf discount book good at 20 courses in Pinellas County and more than 350 throughout Floride, and if features year-round play. Buy three and get one free. For more information, call 546-9822.

546-9822.

It he, Arthritis Foundation Golf Cards are \$15 each, or buy three and get one free. They offer free or discounted play at 352 courses statewide, including more than 70 in the Tampa Bay area. To order one or more, call 576-1727 or 1901 850-955

The American Lung Association's 1997 Golf Privilege Card, which offers free or reduced greens fees at more than 400 Florida courses between May 1 and Oct. 31, is available by calling Norm Alexander at 347-6133. The card is \$25, or buy three and get the fourth free. Also, a single Lung Card includes a 1997 JCPenney Clas-sic daily pass.

Mooning the Goot four he Moonlight Professional Golf Tour, based eminole, is open to professionals and compet-a mateur players for an annual fee of \$50 tournament fees. Rules and entry fees er for women, seniors and juniors. For infor-ion, call 393-8531.

#### BRIEFLY

#### Students can dive into marine science

CLEARWATER - Clearwater Marine Aquarium offers several new classes this fall to appeal to marine science lovers of all ages.

Classes feature field trips aboard the aquarium's 26-foot catamaran, a hands-on "mobile classroom" where students can explore the local marine environment.

For class schedules and registration information, call Melissa Taylor at 441-1790, ext. 32.

#### Have fun, save money and help a good cause

AIDS Community Project is selling Entertainment 1998 books. The books contain discounts of up to 50 percent on dining, travel values, and sports and leisure activities.

The book costs \$30, of which a portion is donated to ACP.

Books will be available until Dec. 31 and can be purchased from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays at 1180 Cleveland St.

#### Call going out for young dancers

LARGO — Auditions will be held soon for children who would like to perform in Cinderella's Holiday Ball on Dec. 6 and 7.

Auditions for children's parts from ages 6 to 12 and corps de ballet from ages 13 to 18 will be at the Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo, from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Sean Musselman, director of the Dance Theatre of Florida, will incorporate young dancers and advanced students in the production. Dance experience is preferred for children's parts.

There are no criteria for height, and corps de ballet should wear dance clothes and bring pointe shoes to the audition.

For information, call Musselman at 894-5168.

#### Campus

#### from Page 1

pus in Seminole.

In 1967, the college formed a committee to look for land here. The district board of trustees bought 102 acres at 113th Street and 102nd Avenue in 1971. A site plan was finished by 1975.

The campus seemed on the verge of being in 1989 when SPJC notified the property appraiser that it finally planned to develop the land. But it wasn't until the Legislature appropriated \$5.2-million for construction in 1994 that the campus moved closer to reali-

"After a while, you start saying, 'Yeah, I'll believe it when I see said Bengston, who serves on the college's Community Advisory Committee. "But I don't think you are going to see anything happen to disrupt this."

Because the property includes

a wetlands area and an eagle's home, college officials want to promote environmental awareness.

Tami Smyrski, who lives near the construction site, will keep a watchful eye on them. She worries the construction will disturb the eagles, foxes and other animals that make the land home.

"I used to joke with my husband, 'Why can't they make it an environmental campus and leave it alone?" "Smyrski said. "But I think it's going to be good in the long run. I would rather see the college go there than a bunch of town houses.

More than 500 people have been invited to the groundbreaking ceremony, which Olliver said reflects the partnership between the community and the college to bring the 30-year project to frui-

The traditional shoveling of dirt will be done by adults and children.

After the last scoop, Olliver

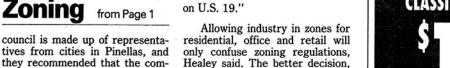
said, he plans to look at his watch and announce that the next baby born in the greater Seminole area will get a full scholarship to the campus.

The Seminole Debut Scholarship — named in honor of the baby's and the college's debut will cover all tuition and fees for an associate's degree in arts or sci-

Parents who think their baby is the winner will have until 4 p.m. Sept. 15 to go to the Seminole campus office at the recreation center. Awarding the scholarship is a way to take the focus off construction and shift it to the college's reason for being, Olliver

"We've been spending a lot of time talking about the building and the infrastructure, but it's really about people and education," Olliv-

- Information from Times files was used in



mission take other action. "I thought it altogether inappropriate and unnecessary," Heal-

ey said. "There are areas that are not appropriate for light industry

only confuse zoning regulations, Healey said. The better decision, he said, would have been to completely rezone parts of the stretch between State Road 580 and Klosterman and make some parts commercial where appropriate.

### Hockey from Page 1

us how they played where he came from, and others will add what they've learned over the years."

Both men feel that their team has what it takes to be champions. 'We all have what I call 'hockey sense,' "Costarelis said. "We just know what to do out there."

Although 11 members of the team are traveling to Las Vegas for the competition, Futher will miss the trip: It's his wedding day.

"I joked about bringing my fiancee with me and getting married out there," Futher said.

The cost for each player for the trip is \$400, and sponsors are needed. For information, call Costarelis at 893-0298



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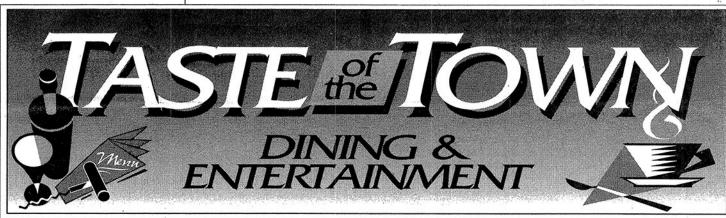
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m The Chi Chi Rodriguez. Youth Foundation offers junior programs for players of all ability levels. Call Vincent Reid 726-8829, ext. 302.
m Bardmoor is offering youths ages 13 to 18 the opportunity to join a junior membership program at a reduced fee. The one-time fee precludes monthly dues, greens fees and annual assessments. For information, call the golf shop

area, Call 347-3333.

• Oct. 25, 1 p.m. — The fifth annual Unicare Foundation fournament benefiting Alzheimer's research will have a 1 p.m. shotgun start at 1sta Del Sol Country Club. The fee is \$100 per player. Sponsors and contributors also are needed. Call 323-4711 for information. RUNNING Junior programs Schedule

■ Sept. 6, 8 a.m. — Kick-off Classic 5K at Houlihan's Stadium. Register at bay area Jumbo Sports stores. Call the USF track office, 974-2125.