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# The Round Tablette

*Founding Editor: James W. Gerber, MD (1951–2009)*

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Written by Dr. Connie Harris

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## Welcome to the second October session of the Dr. Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Round Table.

Tonight's speaker is Alex Kershaw author of *Against All Odds*, which follows the campaigns of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division from Africa to Bavaria. He will be joined by World War II veterans fighting to liberate Europe.

Constituted as a regular army formation for service in the Great War in November 1917, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID first saw combat in in July 1918 during the "Second Battle of Marne," the last German offensive of the war. Stationed on the south bank of the Marne, the men of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID were attacked by the new "Stoßtruppen" ("Stormtroopers") who crossed the river during the opening bombardment. Holding firm, the "Rock of the Marne" stopped the German advance and protected Paris. It was here, along the Marne, that Maj. Gen. Joseph Dickman coined the divisional motto as he cried out, "*Nous Resterons La*" ("We Shall Remain Here").

During the Second World War the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID was the only Army division to see combat on all the European fronts. After months of training in the US, the 3<sup>rd</sup> was part of the Western Task Force and landed at Fedala in French Morocco on 9 November 1942 in *OPERATION TORCH*. The division remained in Morocco, taking no part in the battles for Tunisia, but did provide security for the Casablanca Conference in January 1943.

At the conference, Chips, a German Shepherd/ Collie/Husky mix who joined

the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID as part of the Dogs for Defense program, was rumored to have sniffed out a saboteur's bomb, saving the leaders of the Grand Alliance.

In February, Maj. Gen. Lucian Truscott became commander and instituted a rigorous training program requiring the entire unit be able to march 5 miles in the first hour and 4 miles an hour thereafter — the "Truscott Trot!" On 10 July, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID was part of the invasion of Sicily, *OPERATION HUSKY*, where Chips again distinguished himself in combat, carrying messages between his cut-off platoon and the main body and then attacking an Italian machine gun post single-pawedly to great effect.

On 18 July, they went ashore at Salerno, eight days after the invasion of the Italian mainland (*OPERATION AVALANCHE*). Part of the Fifth US Army, they fought along the Volturno River and at Monte Cassino and spearheaded the advance on the Winter Line. After a period of rest, on 22 January 1944, they landed at Anzio (*OPERATION SHINGLE*).

Reassigned to Seventh US Army, the division had a brief rest and then trained for the 15 August landings on the south of France (*OPERATION DRAGOON*) at St. Tropez. Advancing up the Rhone valley through the Vosges Mountains, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID reached Strasbourg on the Rhine by 26 November. In January 1945 the unit helped clear the Colmar Pocket and reached in the Rhine River in March. In the last month of the war, they took Nuremberg, Augsburg where they liberated a sub-camp of Dachau concentration, Munich, and at war's end they were near Salzburg, Austria.

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If you are a veteran, or know a veteran, of one of these campaigns – contact Don Patton at cell 612-867-5144 or [coldpatton@yahoo.com](mailto:coldpatton@yahoo.com)

Throughout all its operations, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID served over 500 days in combat and became the most decorated division of World War II. The unit contained 38 Medal of Honor winners, the most famous being Audie Murphy. Maurice “Footsie” Brit who was the first soldier to receive every award for valor in a single war, and Keith Ware, a draftee who attained the rank of major general serving in three wars and was killed when anti-aircraft fire brought down his command helicopter in Vietnam..

Chips was also highly decorated. He received a Purple Heart and a Silver Star, and Maj. Gen. Lucian Truscott personally pinned the Distinguished Service Cross onto Chips collar. Even though his medals were rescinded later, because of domestic prejudice against canines receiving medals, Chips retained the respect of his fellow human soldiers who un-officially awarded him a Theater Ribbon with arrowhead (for amphibious landing) and eight campaign stars. Honorably discharged from the Army, Chips returned to his civilian owners and lived out the remainder of his life.

#### FURTHER READINGS:

Alex Kershaw, *Against All Odds: A True Story of Ultimate Courage and Survival in World War II* (New York: Dutton Caliber, 2023).

Vincent P. O’Hara, *TORCH: North Africa and the Allied Path of Victory* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2015).

Carlo D’Este, *Fatal Decision: Anzio and the Battle for Rome* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008)

Keith Bonn, *When the Odds were Even: The Vosges Mountains Campaign, October 1944 – January 1945* (New York: Presidio Press, 2006)

Martin Blumenson, *Salerno to Cassino. United States Army in World War II* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969, 1988).

Audie Murphy, *To Hell and Back* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1949).

#### Announcements:

Twin Cities Civil War Round Table – 14 Nov. 2023, *Gen. George Sears Green &*

*Chips Hill* – [www.tccwrt.com](http://www.tccwrt.com) -

[info@tccwrt.com](mailto:info@tccwrt.com)

Minnesota Military Museum, Camp Ripley,  
15000 Hwy 115, Little Falls, MN 56345 -  
320-616-6050 -

<http://www.mnmilitarymuseum.org/>.

8th AF Historical Society of MN, KC Hall  
Bloomington, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays at 1100 -

<https://www.8thmn.org>.

Friends of Ft. Snelling - [www.fortsnelling.org](http://www.fortsnelling.org)

Fagen Fighters WWII Museum, Granite Falls, MN -  
Air show – TBA - 320-564-6644 -

<http://www.fagenfighterswwiimuseum.org>.

Wings of the North Airshow - Eden Prairie –TBA July  
2024 - Flying Cloud Airport - 952-746-6100 -

[www.wotn.org](http://www.wotn.org)

Alliance Française 612-332-0436 - [www.afmsp.org](http://www.afmsp.org)

Friends of the **National WW II Memorial** –

<http://www.wwiimemorialfriends.org>.

Pittsburg Veterans Breakfast Club

- <http://www.vbcphg.org>.

Western Naval Historical Association

[info@wnha.net](mailto:info@wnha.net)

CAF - Commemorative Air Force - 651-455-6942 -

[www.cafmn.org](http://www.cafmn.org)

Honor Flight - Jerry Kyser - 651-338-2717 -

[crazyjerry45@hotmail.com](mailto:crazyjerry45@hotmail.com)

**We need volunteers to drive our veterans to and from meetings. Please contact Don Patton at cell 612-867-5144 or [coldpatton@yahoo.com](mailto:coldpatton@yahoo.com)**

#### Round Table Schedule 2023-2024

2023

**15 Nov. Wed.** Nazi Propaganda

12 Dec. Pearl Harbor – Air Battles

2024

9 Jan. Casablanca Conference

13 Feb. 99<sup>th</sup> “Viking” Battalion

12 Mar. Selling the War – Bill Maudlin

26 Mar. Coast Watchers: Hawaii, England

9 Apr. War of Supply–Mediterranean

14 May Dieppe’s Lessons for Normandy

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We would greatly appreciate your  
supporting the HCDWW2RT.**



3<sup>rd</sup> ID WW2 Campaign Route