

Silvester / Neujahr 1944 im Palace - Hotel Wengen

U.S.A.A.F Swiss-Internees Camp Wengen, Switerland

Auszug aus dem Tagebuch von Radio: T/Sgt. George W. Michel, B-24H, Serial Nr. 42-51106, 8th Air-Force, 392 Bomb Group, 576th Squadron, in Wendling gestartet und nach der Mission München am 11. Juli 1944 in Altenrhein notgelandet. Die B-24 H hatte den Namen «Georgia Patch», aber der Name wurde nicht verwendet, bevor das Flugzeug notlandete.

Dec. 28, 1944

I got quite a bit of exercise while skiing today but it was for a good cause: Bomers was taking pictures of Jack and I. Usually we'd have to make a dry-run over a spot so that he could get all set up. A couple of times he didn't trust our turning and he jumped up to get out of the way. It meant climbing up and doing it over again. Some of those shots should be good, that is if the camera stopped us. After skiing, I went down to the Palace and picked up my package. It sure was a pleasant surprise to open that box of cookies from Claire. The letter she had placed in the box was written in English, I had expected French but not English. She even included some Almonds, I'll have to collect on those nuts some day. The cinema had "Pride and Prejudice" for our entertainment this evening. I could have enjoyed it more if the sound would have remained clear in the more important parts. As it was, it turned out to be more of a guessing contest. Green Harson was good as usual. Our after-the-show dinner was made from a warmed up can of U.S. K-ration STEW. I certainly could use more of it.

Dec. 29, 1944

Getting on the ball early this morning, I went to the school right after I had brought up a cup of jam from breakfast and proceeded to type up an article about the Christmas Eve Party of the professor's. It's all part of a contest for a prize that would be hard to value: a watch fob with his insignia on it. I would be only too proud to wear it but then Miles and Rhodes can easily out-write me. At least I've tried my best. Taking a new run down from Wengen Alp was just about the end of me today. I broke through the crust, slid a 100 yards down-hill head first and landed on the railroad tracks; not, however, before

going through a fence. It's still a puzzle as to why skis or bones weren't broken. God must have been with me. The pictures came back today and actually look good. Sometimes my form is nearly correct. I had a Jan. 1939 issue of the Reader's Digest today. Old but still good.
Dec. 30, 1944

I got the idea today that instead of continually eating between meals I'd put those francs to buying steaks a few more times a week. If we only had some good G.I. food that we used to gripe about so much, we could really build ourselves up with all of the exercise we get skiing. As it is, potatoes, soup, and bread don't do much more than fill the ^{own} empty cavity. Figuring that such a good idea needed immediate action, I had a steak tonite. Not very large but still more than the 50 grams of meat that we are supposedly getting each day. If people don't stop coming to Nenzen, they'll have to erect temporary shelters for them. It's a puzzle to me as to where they've put the ones who have come already. At least there is some life around here now.

Dec. 31, 1944

Well, here's another year gone but to what good. Yes the war is going in the favor of the allies but it still has so long to go. I often wonder what the fellows think who are fighting the ground battle; it's the roughest one, in my opinion. The little Frenchman, whom we met at the Hirsch, took us for some fine skiing today. For a small package, he holds a lot of energy. Yesterday we tried for passes to Grindelwald and couldn't get any satisfaction out of the Swiss Comander so we just went sans pass. It's the nicest run we've made yet; fast but wide enough for good turning. Most of the turns through the forest were banked way up to take care of the speed on all of the fast turns. At Grindelwald, we



PALACE-HOTEL WENGEN

1 ENTRÉE



Vanderwied

Moore Burdette
Garcia Kintana
Grediceck Nickols
Elliot

Batts

Bomers Y _____
Dvorak Michel
Lattimer Babin

25 December 1944

had a merry scramble to get a seat on the train back to Scheidegg. These Swiss tried to reserve half of the car with everything from gloves to ski-poles, anything but people. It sure was an uncomfortable ride up. I even had company on a seat barely wide enough for one person. The Swiss Federal Railways lost some money today when the conductor didn't notice the punch I had replaced and as a result saved me 7 punches. Even with all of the snow that fell today, the Standard was like a grease track on a gun slide --- swish! We had to boost our spirits to-mite, in order to see the new year in properly, and that called for an encore of the steak dinner of last night. After dinner, we went down to the Palace for the big New Year's dance. I really must have been operating, because I danced for the first time in, --- well, it must be a year at least. It was a good party, everyone seemed to enjoy and not even mind the few bothersome bums who smelled the well known cork just once too often. I hope that next year we are all home.

Jan. 1, 1945

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Oh what a cold day to welcome in a new year. We went out to watch a slalom race and before 20 of the contestants had started we were cold enough to leave. Even with all of that open space out there, we had to buy a ticket to watch. I wasn't exactly pleased with the skiing; according to the talk of the town, some of the boys were good but in my opinion they didn't even try. Molitor for one. The biggest disappointment of the day came with the confirmation of the rumor that all passes are canceled, when we were to leave in 3 days for a stay in Geneva. I hope that the professor still has a trick or two that will turn the tide. He and Sgtm. Pfeiffer are the only ones who help us around this place.

Jan. 2, 1945

Skiing like I did today is fun. The snow conditions were perfect and with a large number of the reactionists gone home we had the run comparatively to ourselves. I made the bumps in my best time yet, what a ride. The second trip I made against time from the Water Station by the Oberland trail to the Hirschchen in 10 min. 56 sec. for an average of 25 miles an hour. The stretch of walking through the woods slowed me down quite a bit. At supper time, I received my second cable: both Mom + Jean received their flowers, I hope they were the roses that I ordered. Supper wasn't even up to the usual poor standards tonite and this brought out the cook in me when I got back to the room. I set the pot boiling with a can of red salmon, oleo, cheese, powdered milk, seasoning, and bread crumbs. It made a very delightful dish and when washed down with real coffee satisfied my hunger. The real coffee in the Red Cross box is so much stronger than the "dish-water" we've been getting, we can make 2 cups of coffee out of not even a quarter of a tea-spoonful of the powder. Lt. Brubins broke his new skis today and badly hurt his right ankle. That's the latest "poop from the group".

Jan. 3, 1945

There's a lot of truth ^{in the statement} that skiing is a rich man's sport. Just the price of the 2 trips yesterday and again today adds up to quite a bit. Frances francs, francs, --- these Swiss seem to know how to get them out of our pocket books. The biggest trouble lies in the fact that we have no choice up here in Wengen. If you need or want something, there's probably only one store in town that stocks it and they get the price they ask, every time. I'm afraid that the re-opening of school this morning wasn't very successful; the vacation spirit was too well instilled during the past week and a half.