

**Korean War Veterans feature**

**#39 Merlin Hass (3 pictures and a formal write-up)**



*Merlin Hass on duty on board the USS Iowa*

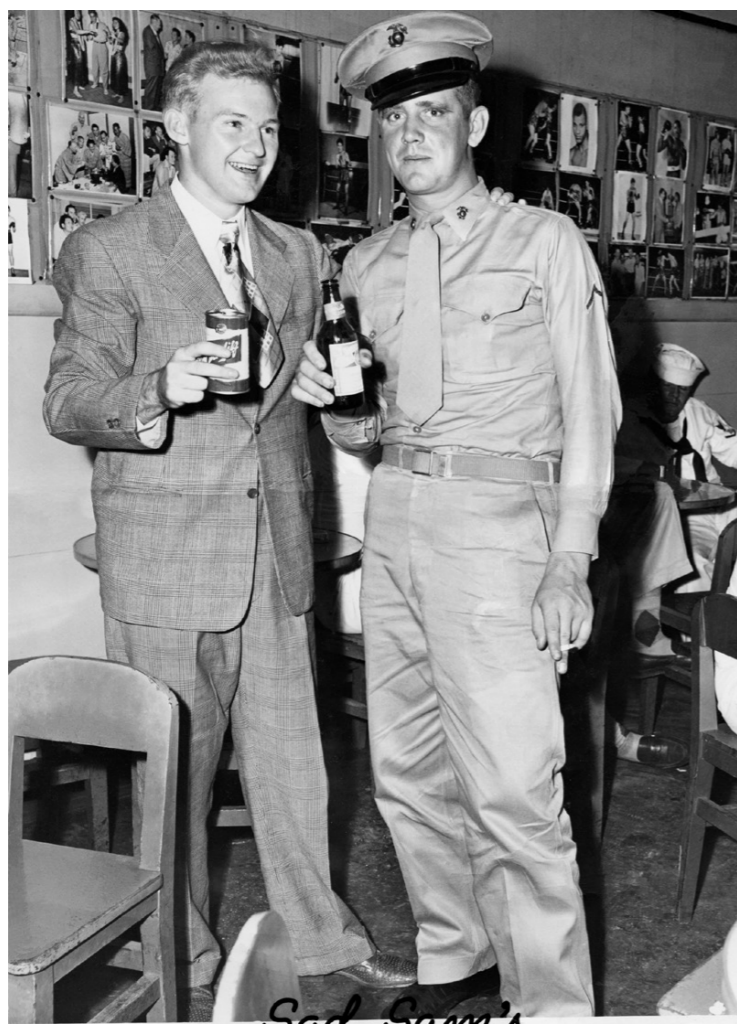
Merlin Hass was married in 1956 to Verna Singsank. He is the son of Julius and Lena (Clausen) Hass, and grandson of Claus and Anna (Meeves) Hass and Henry and Dorathea (Rasmussen) Clausen.

Merlin joined the Marines in 1951 at the age of nineteen before attending boot camp in San Diego, California. After completing security training he was assigned to Marine Security Detachment on the battleship USS Iowa. His first deployment, departing California, was to Pearl Harbor.

Following Hawaii, his military tours took him to Korea for one year and into Japan. Merlin, at this time, met up with Willis "Whitey" Lohmeier, also from Manning, Iowa.

Merlin returned to Pearl Harbor and briefly in California before tours to the Panama Canal, Rio De Janeiro, and Haiti. He then headed to the eastern US coast, Virginia, before being reassigned to the US Naval Retraining Command in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Merlin was put in charge of the Prison Control Center housing that guarded 3200 US prisoners.

On May 20, 1954, Sergeant Merlin Hass was honorably discharged from the USMC. Merlin joined the civilian work force and later retired in 1996. As of 2011, Merlin resides in Manning with his wife Verna. They have three children, Jon, Joanie (Al) Lueders, and David; with seven grandchildren (two married with one great-grandson).



*Sad Sam's  
The best joint in town Hon. HI.*

*Willis Lohmeier and Merlin Hass met up in Hawaii*

**#40 Vernon Charles Hass (no pictures or information)**

**On his tombstone: Iowa PFC 9 Marines 3 Mar Division**  
I'm having a hard time determining what Marine company Vernon served with. I can find a 3rd Marine Division but nothing that lists the 9th Marines. I find a 9th Marine Regiment but nothing about a 3rd Division.

I found a 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines but there is no mention of serving during the Korean war.

Vernon was born February 5, 1933 and died March 25, 1960.

**#41 Dale Hell (no picture, 1 newspaper clipping)**

The first time I heard Dale's name mentioned and that he is a Veteran is when Lyle Bald, a cousin of Dale, told me that he was in the Army. Then by a fluke I noticed an article about Dale that was given to me from the Wiese family to help with that family's history. Here is Dale's article, but no year.

**Pfc. Dale Hell On Mail Clerk Duty With Eighth Army From: Yokohama Command.**

**With the Eighth Army in Yokohama, Japan, September 19.**  
Pfc. Dale F. Hell, son of Frank and Laura (Ewoldt) Hell, Route 3, Manning, Iowa, is now serving as mail clerk with the 21st transportation car company.

Stationed in Yokohama, Japan's major port city and seat of the headquarters of the Eighth Army, Private Hell is filling an essential job with the army's occupational forces here. His company operates sedans used by senior commanders and staff officers for the administration of the occupation in the Yokohama area.

To occupy his leisure hours, he has access to theaters, clubs, libraries, evening classes, a gymnasium, bowling alleys, volleyball and tennis courts, 6 a golf course, as well as the picturesque scenery of this ancient country.

Entering the army in March 1947, he arrived in this theater in August of the same year. He attended school in Manning, Iowa.

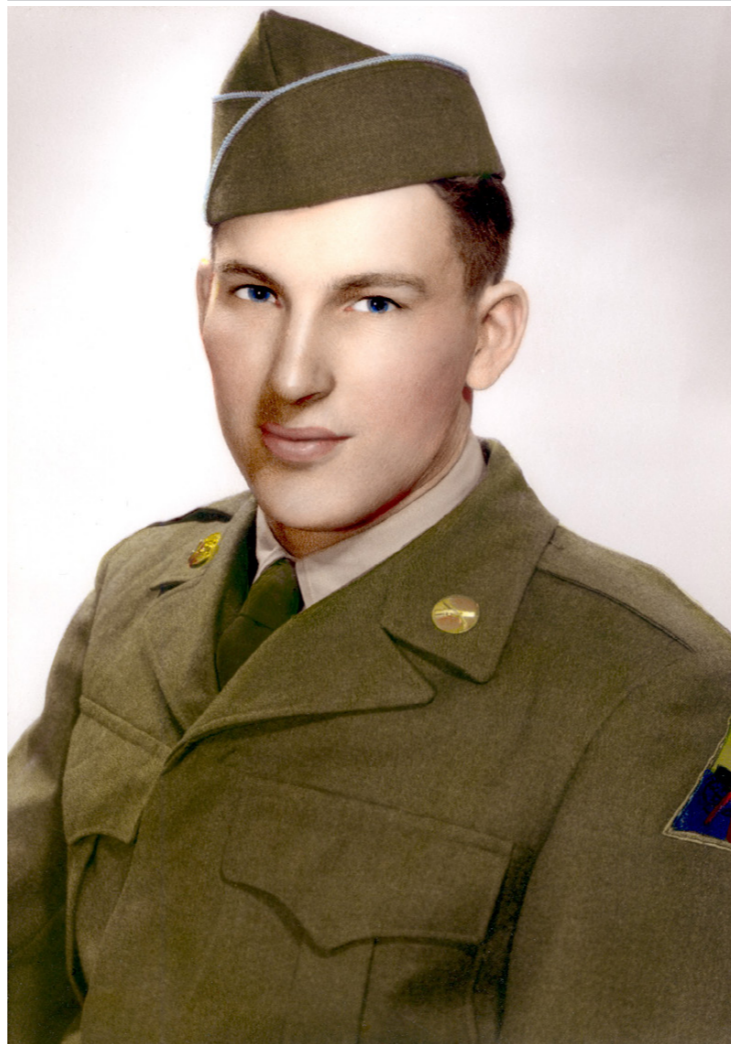
**#42 Donald E. Hinners (many pictures and other military information, a draft story)**

In April of 2015, I met with Don to gather some information about his service and gather pictures and documents he had for me to scan. I scanned his items but did not edit the information from his interview until just now.

Normally I go over a story several times and then come up with a final version with the Veteran. Below is an example of a draft version which I'll print and get to Don so he can go over the story to make adjustments and corrections and maybe add some other information.

Even when I have a final version I like to publish it in a more formal version, with pictures to provide the Veteran another chance to go over his story to check for accuracy.

Unfortunately I don't have extra time to always follow a consistent process to get to a final version, so I do the best I can with the limited resources I have.



*Official portrait taken February 7, 1952*

Don is the son of Art and Loretta (Trecker) Hinners. He has eight siblings: Jeanette, Marge, Delores, Vernon, Arden, Larry, Dick, Jack. Vernon, Arden, and Dick all served in the military. Don was sworn in at Omaha on January 9, 1952. It was the largest draft call out of Carroll County at that time.

He had eight weeks of basic training and eight weeks of heavy artillery at Camp Roberts near San Miguel, California.

Don trained with 50 mm machine guns and bazookas and practiced while large artillery guns shot over their heads. They had no protective gear for the ears and Don says this is why he is hard of hearing later in life.

After sixteen weeks at Camp Roberts, some of the men went to Korea and the rest went to Camp Cooke to make room for the next group of trainees that came in for their basic training. To determine who went to Korea, the soldiers stood in a line and every fourth person was told to step forward. The soldiers who stepped forward were sent to Korea; the rest, including Don, were sent to Germany.

The soldiers were very aware that the average life span of a machine gunner in Korea at that time was about two and a half minutes.

Don rode in a convoy of approximately 500 men from Camp Roberts to Camp Cooke.

At Camp Cooke he trained in Ordnance, and with the service department where he serviced vehicles and test drove them. Don indicated that he did not want to be a machine gunner, but would rather learn something he could use when he returned home. Since he had been a part-time trucker in Halbur, as well as a welder for six months, they reassigned him as an Ordnance welder.

He was at Camp Cooke for about two weeks before heading to Kaiserslautern, Germany, in July of 1952. There he served with the 519th Ordnance HAM (heavy automotive maintenance) Company.

When they arrived in Germany, the men were put in cattle cars and transported by rail to Kaiserslautern which took a day. The train went through Frankfurt along the way.

After riding in those old train cars they didn't know what to expect when they arrived at the base, but they were pleasantly surprised with the barracks they were assigned to.

What surprised Don the most when he arrived in Kaiserslautern were all of bombed out buildings left over from WWII.



*EM club where Don worked and Erv Bauer made a surprise visit. Photo from Erv's military collection*

While in Germany, Don was the Assistant Manager and bouncer at the EM (Enlisted Men's) Club, where all branches of the service went to drink and relax. His primary job there was to make sure everyone stayed civil, but he occasionally had to break up a few fights. One night he was told that someone outside wanted to kill him, but when he walked outside, fortunately nothing happened.

Don's other jobs at the club included calling bingo and lining up performers. Many types of performers came to the club to entertain the enlisted men. This included midgets who would arrive in large groups to audition for the EM Club because it was so new. They mainly performed acrobatic shows. Don remembers about 1500 customers one evening.



*Don (left) in the EM club*



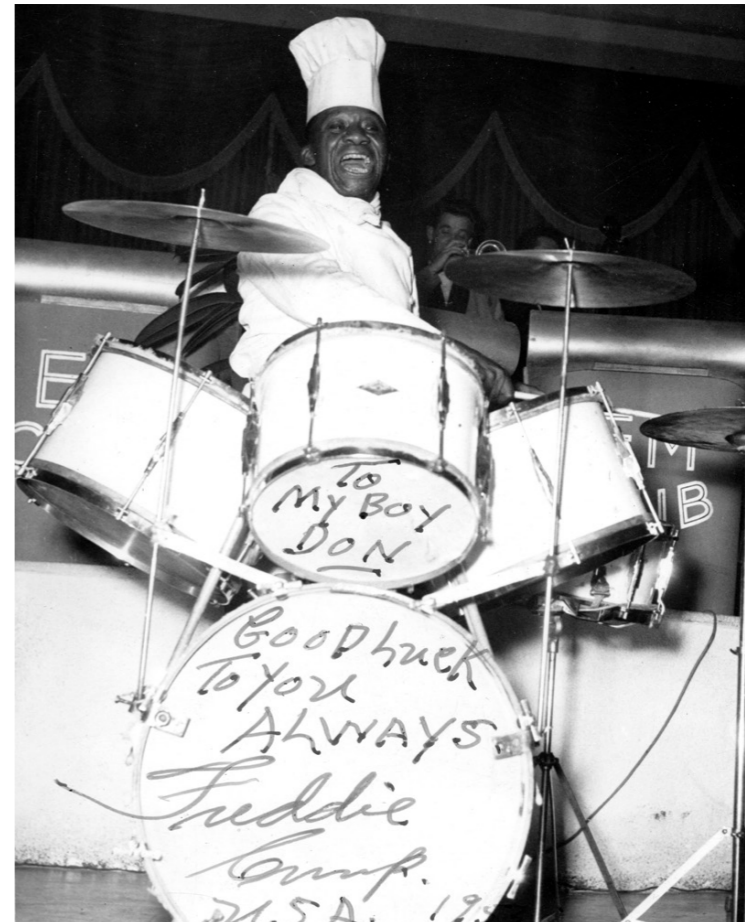
*Lawrence Nepple (left) and Don Hinners with a group of Little People who entertained at the club.*

Lawrence and Don went to country school together near Halbur. They started a baseball team in Halbur when they were 15, called The Halbur Bearcats.

Lawrence served in the Air Force in Rhine Air Force base in Kaiserslautern.



*Herb Eich is holding the horn, Don is 2nd from left*



*Freddie, who worked for Don at the club*



*Various groups that entertained at the club*



*Various groups that entertained at the club*



*There were also special parties held for officers. Here you see Don 2nd from the right with a special cake made for the party.*

**Don Hinners continues on page 3**