

THIS WEEK: FULL REPORTS FROM ANA CONVENTION SESSIONS

EDITOR & PUBLISHER



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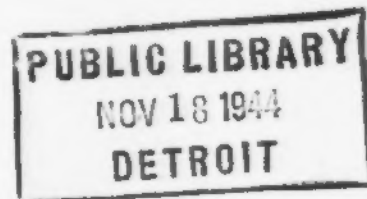
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Invasion Pictures Took Long Preparation

Still Photo Pool Organized Months Ahead. Rehearsals and Tests Carried Out

By E. K. Butler, Associated Press

E. K. BUTLER of the AP News-photo Service has just returned from Europe where he acted as editor and supervisor of production for the U. S. War-time Still Photo Pool during the invasion. In the following article he describes operations of the Pool.

YOU'VE SEEN the smashing still picture coverage of the European invasion. You've read stories about feats of individual photographers. But little has been made known about the Wartime Still Photo Pool itself—and the teamwork that has made it work.

The operations of the pool were responsible in large measure for the picture service which American newspapers received on the invasion of Europe—and the campaign that followed.

Months of painstaking preparation lay behind the pool's operations in Europe. Originally organized at the suggestion of the Army and Navy shortly after Pearl Harbor for civilian photographer coverage of the war, the pool made unprecedented preparations for D-Day.

The pool's participants—Associated Press, Acme Newspictures, International News Photos and Life magazine—sent more than 20 photographers, editors and darkroom men to London months ahead of the invasion.

Coordinated by Smith

In London, Charles Smith of INP acted as Pool coordinator, handling contacts with Allied officers and advance arrangements on assignments. It was my job to edit the Pool pictures, supervise processing and to see that original negatives and prints were forwarded to the U. S. as expeditiously as possible.

From the outset it seemed inadvisable to set up one central darkroom because of shortage of materials, equipment and help. Hence the processing of Acme Pool material was handled by its London affiliate, Planet News. International's processing was handled by its affiliate, Keystone. The Associated Press staff in London, augmented by two American darkroom men, processed AP material and Life's London bureau processed Life negatives.

Darkroom and editorial re-

hearsals were held during the weeks ahead of D-Day, and many test prints were made for the U. S. Army Signal Corps radio transmitter which requires a certain type of flat picture for best transmission. Outlines of instructions were distributed and everything was arranged so there could be no slip-ups.

Meantime SHAEF officials were figuring just how many D-Day assignments could be allotted to Pool cameramen. Going in with the first assault waves were Peter Carroll of AP, Bob Capa and Bob Landry of Life, and Bert Brandt of Acme. Flying over the beach-heads in bombers were Bede Irvin, AP, and Frank Scherschel of Life. With the navies were Jack Rice, AP, Sonnee Gottlieb, INP, and Dave Scherman and Ralph Morse, Life.

Following into France later were Harry Harris, Horace Cort, Dan Grossi, Byron Rollins and Eddie Worth of AP, Andy Lopez and Charles Haacker of Acme, and Hugh Broderick, Fred Ramage and Horace Abrams, INP.

Because it appeared that the huge volume of invasion news would tax existing commercial radio facilities and because the problem of coordinating radio transmission of pictures to avoid duplication was so complicated, it was agreed by all concerned beforehand that the Signal Corps radio transmitter would handle all transmission of invasion pictures to Washington.

Hence Pool photos, plus pictures made by scores of U. S. Signal Corps, Navy, Coast Guard and Air Force photographers, OWI photos, and British and Canadian official photos all literally were tossed into the hopper together.

Major Herbert Bregstein, Army pictorial officer for the ETO, made final decisions on priority of movement, and his only rule in making selections was that the best should go first regardless of source. That he followed the rule is evident from the well-rounded radio picture report that moved.

While cooperation was the keynote in all the invasion picture coverage, there naturally was friendly rivalry as to whose actual landing pictures should be first on the radio circuit. That the Pool scored a "beat" on all other sources was due largely to the well-oiled machinery it had set up.

Told by Coordinator Smith beforehand that it would be okay if any of them saw a chance to rush back to London with their own negatives and thus beat the official Army courier service, the Pool cameramen were on the alert. And Bert Brandt seized such an op-

portunity. He literally "hitchhiked" back to London with his film, and the Pool setup then swung into action.

Planet processed Brandt's negatives on the double quick. They were "messengered" to the Ministry of Information for censorship by no less a person than Fred Ferguson, president of Acme-NEA, who happened to be in London at the time.

Then came the struggle with censors. The first picture offered was stopped because of a technicality. The second was "stopped" because of some landmarks showing on the coastline. But a bit of fast talking on my part got the technical restriction lifted quickly and a little scratching with a razor blade removed the offensive landmark from the other.

After that initial flurry, the handling of Pool material in London settled down to a routine. Undeveloped film was brought to a nearby airport in official red and white striped "Press" bags by Army planes, and then rushed to a film depot in London. Life, AP, Planet and Keystone were notified when film shipments arrived, and after quick pickups and security checks, the processing went on day and night. Night work was complicated by lack of transportation, the blackout and buzz-bombs.

Finished radio prints were channeled to me at the Ministry of Information for censoring and editing. From there they went to the Signal Corps radio transmitter which operated 24 hours a day.

For several days after the start of the invasion the Signal Corps transmitter moved more than 50 pictures daily to Washington where they were distributed by American picture services. Of these, Signal Corps photographers produced the largest number, with the Pool generally second in line. American Pool pictures took the play in London papers for several days after the invasion.

With its machinery always in gear and ready to go, the Pool also was ahead with first pictures on the fall of Cherbourg, the break-through at St. Lo, the fall of Rennes, entry of the Allies into Belgium and the break through the Siegfried Line, and it contributed its share of pictures on the fall of Paris.

Now that the Signal Corps is transmitting radio pictures from both London and Paris, Sherman Montrose of Acme has been assigned to Paris to act as Pool editor. He supervises the processing of anything worthy by radio from there. The bulk of the Pool material, however, still is being handled in London.

In proportion to the number of photographers it has in the European theater, Pool casualties have been heavy. Bede Irvin lies buried in France, having lost his life covering the bombing which preceded the Normandy break-through at St. Lo. Sonnee Gottlieb received a broken leg when his jeep was run down by a tank. And Andy Lopez was injured when his jeep was ambushed, and was lucky to escape with his life.

Barry Bingham Wins U. S. Navy Bronze Star

For "meritorious service" in organizing news coverage of the invasion of France, Lt. Comdr. Barry Bingham, president of the Louisville Courier-Journal and Times, was awarded the Bronze



Lt. Comdr. Bingham

Star by Adm. Harold R. Stark, commander of U. S. Naval forces in Europe.

Comdr. Bingham, who has been serving on Adm. Stark's staff since August, 1942, "succeeded in so organizing the U. S. Navy public relations in this theater that the participation of the U. S. naval forces in the operation was given complete coverage," said the citation accompanying the medal, which was presented personally by the admiral.

"His cheerful and diplomatic liaison with the Royal Navy, the U. S. Army and the British Ministry of Information won for the U. S. Navy the co-operation and good will of those service organizations which made the expeditious publication of news possible.

"The energy, tact, ability and devotion to duty exhibited by Lieutenant Commander Bingham during this period were in keeping with the best traditions of the United States naval service."

The Kentucky publisher volunteered for Navy duty in May, 1941, and was commissioned a lieutenant (j.g.) in May, 1942, after training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

Sikes in Army Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13—Rep. Robert L. F. Sikes, a former president of the Florida Press Association and publisher of a weekly newspaper at Crestview, Fla., has resigned his seat in Congress to serve as a major in the U. S. Army to "fulfill a special mission." Re-elected last week, Mr. Sikes will return to his Congressional service in January.