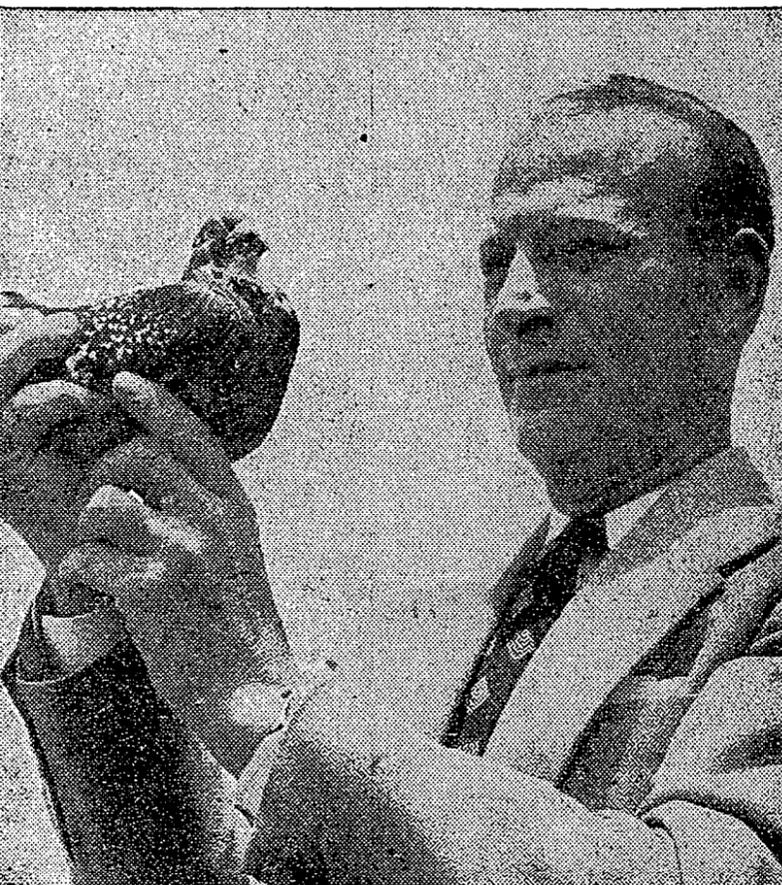
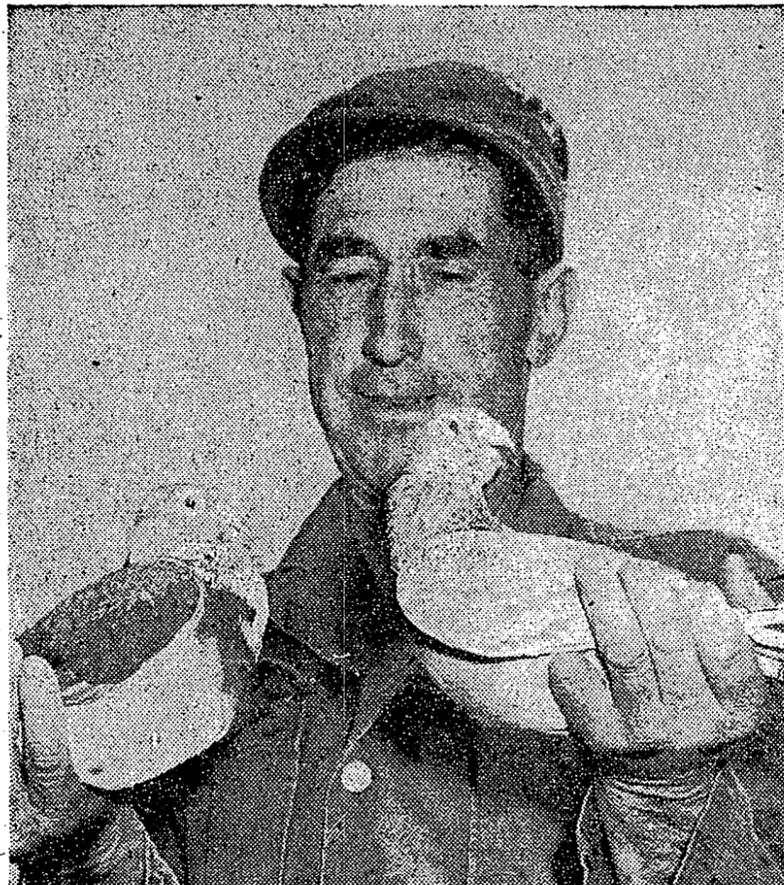


AT THE NATION'S 'PIGEON HALL OF FAME' IN FORT MONMOUTH



GI Joe, held by Otto Meyer, is "King of the Roost." Mr. Meyer is chief of the Signal Corps breeding and training center.



Sgt. Harry Lucas with Snookie, left, and Yank, two of the veterans of World War II.



The carriers are sent up for a training flight at the New Jersey post

The New York Times (by Fred Sass)

Feathery Heroes Now Live in Ease At Army's Pigeon Training Center

By WILLIAM M. MYERS

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

FORT MONMOUTH, N. J., June 26—The Army's only Pigeon Breeding and Training Center, where 800 seasoned message carriers are being kept and 500 others are being trained as air messengers, also has become the nation's "Pigeon Hall of Fame." Living in semi-retirement in the center's modern lofts here are such mighty veterans of World War II as G. I. Joe, Yank, Snookie, Jungle Joe, Burma Queen, and others that saved the lives of hundreds of Allied soldiers.

In a recent appropriations message to Congress it was made clear that the modern Army, with all its scientific accomplishments, still needed the homing pigeon. It can make contact with places in which other means of communication are impossible or impractical.

So the pigeon-training school continues to sound with the beat of hundreds of wings in practice flights. The work of breeding the best birds in the world is still the major project of Otto Meyer, the center's chief, and generally rated the country's foremost pigeon man.

Mr. Meyer says that the record military flight by an Army pigeon was made in 1939 when a bird flew with a message from Maine to Fort Sam Houston, Tex., 2,300 miles. He says it is nothing now for a good bird to fly 1,000 miles on special occasions.

"Little squawkers," as the pigeon expert calls the very young birds, are started on their message-carrying training when they are twenty-eight to thirty days old. They have exercise hops only until they are two months old and then go on flights up to twenty miles. The distance is gradually increased up to sixty miles, when they are ready for diplomas and 300 and 600 mile missions.

The "king of the roost" at the Fort Monmouth pigeon center is G. I. Joe, regarded here as probably the outstanding bird air messenger of World War II. Joe will be eight years old next month,

which is middle age for a pigeon.

G. I. Joe was on duty with the British Tenth Corps Headquarters when the Fifty-sixth Infantry Division asked for air support to blast the Germans out of the town of Colvi Vecchia, Italy, on Oct. 18, 1943. British troops meanwhile broke through unexpectedly and stormed the town, leaving the invaders in peril of being bombed by their own planes. Joe was then sent on a life-or-death flight of twenty miles with a message to cancel the order to bomb the town, now crowded with some 1,000 Allied troops. Joe made the trip in twenty minutes flat, arriving just before the take-off of the bombers.

Another famous war bird at the center is Yank, which flew ninety miles in 100 minutes in Tunisia to carry the first news of the capture of the Tenth and Fifteenth German Panzer Divisions to the Second Corps Headquarters. Snookie, which shares the loft with Yank, carried the first tactical message after the invasion of France, disclosing the location of enemy gun emplacements and enemy troop concentrations.

Burma Queen, a heroine of the China-Burma-India theatre, is another top war bird in Mr. Meyer's hall of feathered heroes and heroines. She was dropped from a B-25 into the arms of a "lost battalion" which had been cut off in an Allied retreat. Burma Queen returned to her home base with a message containing valuable information for the Allied Command, flying 320 miles over some of Burma's highest mountains in nine hours.

Mr. Meyer, who started out as a pigeon fancier in Ohio when he was 13, misses one grand old bird which had been in his care for many years. The famous Kaiser, Methuselah of all pigeons, which was captured in 1918 from the Germans in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, died last fall after reaching the remarkable age of 32.