



Fall 9-5-1995

Memories of Life as a Prisoner of War in WWII

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Recommended Citation

Aaron, Bob, "Memories of Life as a Prisoner of War in WWII" (1995). *News and Events*. 6413.
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Sept. 5, 1995

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Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine**Memories of Life as a Prisoner of War in WWII****Editor's Note:** Robert L. Behrends is a podiatrist in Evanston, Ill.

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--What was it like to be captured by German troops in World War II's Battle of the Bulge? Just ask Robert L. Behrends, who was taken prisoner in a Belgian barn.

"I was scared to death," Behrends said. "They pointed burp guns at me."

Behrends' five-months as a prisoner of war (POW) are recounted in the Fall, 1995, edition of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine* in an article, "A Change in Plans: IWU and the War," marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. The article, written by Bob Aaron, IWU's director of public relations, is attached to this news release.

Among Behrends' memories of life as a POW are a seven-day forced march to Germany, working with German medical personnel, losing almost 60 pounds of weight, meager rations, the cold, and an air attack by U.S. fighter planes that killed 13 and wounded 40.

Behrends attended IWU in 1941 as a pre-med student.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls 1,860 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. The university's endowment is valued at more than \$100 million. A \$25 million Center for Natural Science Learning and Research opened Aug. 28. A \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 164 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition. *101 of the Best Values in America's Colleges and Universities* calls IWU "undoubtedly one of the finest small colleges in the country," adding, "Illinois Wesleyan has surged to national prominence on the basis of its reputation as a school with a rock-solid academic program."