

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

I began writing *The Frontline Fugitives* Book I and Book II before the new Millennium. In between working on other projects, I finished Book I and Book II in the early summer of 2016. One of the reasons it took so long to complete Book I and Book II, is because I was determined to make *The Frontline Fugitives* as historically accurate as possible, while supporting a “believable” fictional plot and a cast of “believable” fictional characters.

In order to complete this process, I had to learn as much as I could about various subjects to include, life in New York City from the early 1900s to the 1940s, life in southern states during World War II, the history of the New York City Police Department and other law enforcement agencies during the early and mid 20th Century, the history of racism, segregation, ethnic rivalry and the assimilation of various ethnic groups in the United States, life in Nazi Germany before and during World War II, rationing and black market activities in the United States and in Europe during World War II, the Selective Service induction process during World War II, as well as information about basic training and life in the U.S. Army during World War II.

I also had to become familiar with The Punitive Expedition into Mexico in 1916, trench warfare and combat actions during World War I, the duties of the military police, the U.S. Army’s Provost Marshal’s Office and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigations Division during World War II, U.S. Army glider training and various battles including, The Guadalcanal Campaign, The North African Campaign, The Invasion of Sicily, The Italian Campaign, The D Day Invasion of Normandy, France on June 6, 1944, Operation Market Garden – The Invasion of Holland in September of 1944 and The Battle of the Bulge in December of 1944.

One of my greatest sources of information for this book was my father, Benedict Jacobellis, a member of The Greatest Generation who was born and raised in New York City and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. As a boy growing up in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, my father told me a seemingly endless number of stories about life in New York City before and during the war, as well as about life in the U.S. Army during World War II. These stories included information about rationing and black-market operations in New York City during the war years.

I also relied on my father-in-law, Louis Evangelista, a U.S. Army veteran who served as a member of the Allied Occupation Force in Germany, who at 88 years of age is able to remember details from the 1930s and 40s as if it was yesterday. In addition, I had several uncles and cousins who served in World War II.

While conducting research for this book, I also interviewed World War II veterans who served as U.S. Army Flight Officers and flew CG-4A Waco Gliders on a number of combat missions in the European Theater of Operation. Interviewing former U.S. Army glider pilots gave me a much greater insight into what it was like to fly an aircraft that had no engine in combat. Even some of the more personal tidbits of information that World War II veterans shared with me, helped to bring this historical fiction story to life.

Being an Italian American, who grew up in New York City in an era when different forms of ethnic rivalry and racism were prevalent, also enabled me to create certain characters from a historically accurate perspective. Some of the observations that I made while traveling and working in different parts of the country, also made it possible to develop a realistic fictional story line.

Over the years I also became familiar with various World War II era military and law enforcement firearms. This included field testing many of the law enforcement and military revolvers, pistols, rifles, carbines and submachine guns that are featured in *The Frontline Fugitives*. In addition, I became familiar with World War II era U.S. Army and German uniforms and equipment. I accomplished this by collecting military clothing and equipment, by attending one of the largest and most elaborately planned World War II reenactments and by visiting museums and other venues where antique military uniforms and equipment were displayed and sold.

Driving a World War II era Jeep around the U.S. Navy Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, when I directed and participated in covert operations during our nation's Drug War, made it possible for me to experience what it was like to operate the most famous compact 4x4 vehicle of the 1940's. This is an important point because World War II era Jeeps are featured in a number of critical scenes in this series of books. Over the years, I also became familiar with other World War II era military, civilian and law enforcement vehicles.

I also became considerably more familiar with the capabilities of the twin engine DC3/C47 that was used to tow GC4A Waco Gliders during WWII, when my colleagues and I in the U.S. Customs Service used one of these amazing

aircraft in one of our covert air operations during the Drug War. Learning how to fly and safely land a small single engine aircraft, with and without the engine operating, also made it possible for me to accurately depict certain flying scenes in this book series.

The fact that I survived the crash landing of a large twin engine (ex military) undercover aircraft, was a life changing event that had a significant impact on my ability to describe certain critical aviation scenes in Book I and Book II. During this in flight emergency I volunteered to serve as the co pilot and assisted the Contract Pilot in Command, even though at the time I had an expired student pilot's license and very limited flying experience. Serving as a co pilot during such a serious inflight emergency, also contributed to my ability to develop certain characters from a personal perspective.

My experience as a federal agent, uniformed police officer and New York (Manhattan) District Attorney's Office Investigator also enabled me to accurately develop the "police procedural" aspects of this story. I also relied heavily on my experience as a law enforcement officer who recruited and directed a number of reliable informants to develop characters such as Tony G., a colorful mobster who volunteers to assist military and civilian law enforcement officers investigate black market operations during World War II.

In order to make *The Frontline Fugitives* Book I and Book II as accurate as possible, I also included a number of footnotes to credit the research sources that provided the copyrighted information that was used to support aspects of the plot and aid in character development. *A list of general references sources and footnotes can be found at the end of the book.

I especially wish to thank Dr. Don Abbe, the Director of the Silent Wings Museum in Lubbock, Texas, for the assistance that he provided when I was putting the finishing touches to sections of this book that involve glider training and glider combat operations during World War II.

Two contacts in Belgium also assisted me when I put the finishing touches to the section of Book II that involves the GC-4A Waco glider resupply mission to a landing zone near the Village of Savy (a little over one mile northwest of Bastogne) on December 27, 1944. One particular photograph and one map that was provided by a contact from Belgium enabled me to complete a critical fiction aspect of this fugitive manhunt story, while making every effort to remain as true to actual terrain features as possible.

While every effort was made to make *The Frontline Fugitives* as realistic and historically accurate as possible, it is important to remember that this is a fiction story set in the 1940s when the world was at war. As a result, certain liberties had to be taken in order to combine fictional characters and a fictional plot with historically accurate events that occurred during the early and mid 20th Century.

*The names that were used in this book to identify different primary and secondary fictional characters were selected because the author liked the sound of these names. It is also important to remember that certain fictional characters included in this book are portrayed performing duties that were performed by real people who served with distinction in civilian life, in law enforcement positions, as well as in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. This includes enlisted men, non commissioned officers and commissioned officers who served in different training commands, support units and combat units. There is also no connection between any of the fictional characters in this book and anyone who lived in the past or is alive today. This includes individuals who served in the same or similar capacities as the fictional characters in this book.

*In order to be historically accurate this series of books uses the words Negro and colored to refer to African Americans because these words were commonly used in the early and mid 20th Century. Even though the “N Word” was used sparingly, this word was used in certain key scenes because it is historically accurate to do so. This book also includes other slang words and language that was commonly used in the early and mid 1900s.

This book series is dedicated to those who served in military and civilian positions and protected the United States and our allies during World War II. Clearly, the victory that was achieved during World War II, was made possible because decent law abiding human beings from different backgrounds banded together to fight the forces of evil.

Special thanks to my grandmother Fanny Budani for encouraging me to live my dreams in life and to my grandfather Nick Jacobellis for all that he taught me about life and my Italian heritage. Last but not least, I thank my wife for cheering me on and being incredibly supportive, while I completed this and other writing projects.