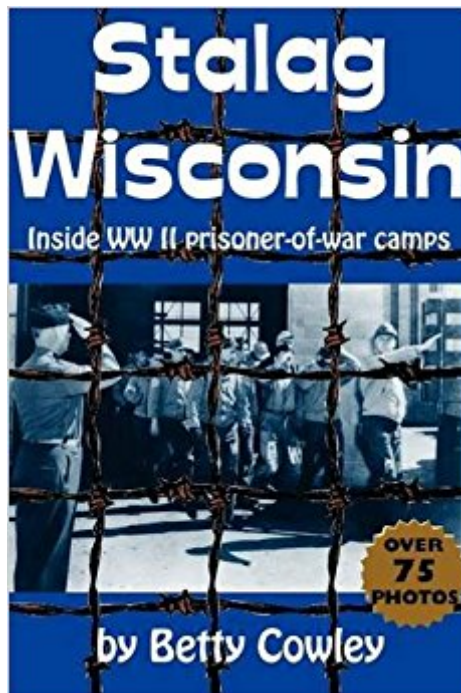




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Stalag Wisconsin: Inside WWII Prisoner Of War Camps



Synopsis

STALAG WISCONSIN: Inside WW II prisoner-of-war camps is a comprehensive look inside Wisconsin's 38 branch camps that held 20,000 Nazi and Japanese prisoners of war during World War II. Many of these prisoners blended with the local community, drinking at taverns and even dating local girls. Some returned and settled in Wisconsin after their release. Their familiarity with local residents caused resentment by returning soldiers who had battled them in Europe and Asia.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A retired history teacher... wrote her book... after her students said they didn't believe that their community once housed POWs." -- USA Today, Jan. 28, 2002

Author Betty Cowley is a retired history teacher living in Eau Claire. She spent three years researching the book, interviewed over 300 people, including former prisoners and guards, and collected over 75 photos.

An interesting reminiscence about a time so far removed from our current society as to be viewed with envy. Simpler times. This would be of interest to WW2 readers and those interested in the nostalgia of America. How rural Wisconsin handled the captured German soldiers is a lesson in how people can get along under adverse conditions. The Germans were enthusiastic workers who recognized the futility of an escape and coped the best they could. The fears of the rural

communities over the prisoners were demonstrated to be very much over-rated. Of interest was the strict adherence of the US government to the Geneva Convention (even to the point of making payroll to the German soldiers). The documentation is from local sources from the time and gives credence to the writing. An enjoyable read.

I am familiar with most of the camp locations described in the book and enjoyed reading what the locals remembered about the POWs. Maybe not the greatest history book ever written, but the author should be thanked and honored for documenting this little known aspect of Wisconsin/WW II history. Wisconsinites should take pride not only in the military participation of their sons and daughters but in the remarkable generosity and kindness shown to the enemy POWs.

The book is about what I expected. I learned about the POW camps when I was in Door County in July. The book was just what I was looking for. It was a shame that most of the POW's had to be re-patriated by the President. It sounded like they enjoyed Wisconsin. Book has a lot of anecdotes. It is an easy read.

Absolutely a fantastic book. I retired from Fort McCoy and it took me thru all that took place there and throughout Wisconsin. I recommend this to anyone from WI . just to see how our state lived thru WWII.

I was asked to speak on the German POW who were held in Door County toward the end of WWII. This well researched book served as a useful resource. Not just a collection of facts, the human side from the perspective of POW and residents of WI was addressed through interviews. This introduces an interesting bit of history to those who are interested and has nostalgic value for those few who remember.

I live in Wisconsin and my father told me of his driving a truck taking the Prisoners to where they were to work for the day. I/we are of German decent but the only German my father knew was Gesundheit. Which is what one says after someone sneezes. It means God Bless You. But all the Prisoners were not German, other ethnic people were also Prisoners. Very well researched. I bet many people today are not aware of this Wisconsin history, but she mentions the other states that were involved too.

I would have never guessed that German POWs were stationed 3 blocks from my house in 1944. The site is now a gymnasium for a prep Academy. I thank the author for bringing this story forward. I have had many enjoyable conversations with my older acquaintances who remember going to see the prisoners when they were growing up were in Beaver Dam.

The author has done her research. I have not seen the former camps in Wisconsin but I have seen several in Colorado, Indiana and Texas. Many are quite similar because the Corp of Engineer Plan was used for those that were constructed. The book is full of good facts about the camps and some anecdotes as well, some humorous and others which remind us of the fanaticism of our former enemies.

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