



In celebration of Flag Day, the Simon Wiesenthal Center is proud to share the Mauthausen Flag, secretly sewn by inmates of the Mauthausen concentration camp in

anticipation of their liberation by American forces. Inmates used a sewing machine in a workshop where prisoners had previously been forced to sew Nazi uniforms. They obtained sheets from the SS laundry for the background panel and used Nazi banners as the material for the red stripes. Not knowing the exact number of stars to affix, they sewed on 56 and waited for the American soldiers who, they prayed, might save them. On May 5, 1945, their prayers were answered as U.S. military forces liberated Mauthausen and the inmates' unique American flag was presented to their liberator, U.S. Army Colonel Richard Seibel of Defiance, Ohio. Seibel flew that flag over the liberated camp.

Colonel Seibel's son, Peter, presented the flag – which he had kept for nearly 4 decades – to the Wiesenthal Center, thus preserving the legacy of the unbounded spirit of the inmates of Mauthausen.



Pictured L-R: Clarence Matsumura, who fought his way across Europe with the famed 42nd Battalion and helped liberate Dachau, Simon Wiesenthal, Colonel Richard Seibel, and his son, Peter Seibel.

The Mauthausen Flag is on permanent display in "The Greatest Generation" case in the Museum of Tolerance.



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