

## **A journey of the heart**

*Pacifican Julie Whitman Jones brings to life The Last Farewell, her late stepfather's own touching, love story set during the Italian campaign of World War II*

*I've been working for the past two years with my writing partner, Thomas J. Sullivan, Jr. to fulfill a promise I made to my late stepfather, Edmund Burke O'Connell, an Army combat newsreel photographer to publish The Last Farewell – A Journey of the Heart, a touching, true love story set during the Italian campaign of World War II which he wrote in 1975.*



*Tom and I have added new historical detail Burke to which didn't have access at the time he prepared his manuscript and have included five sections of photographs to better tell his remarkable story.*

An unlikely luncheon date during the summer 1944 liberation of Florence, Italy leads Edmund Burke O'Connell, an Army motion picture photographer with the 196th Signal Photo Company to meet an attractive English-speaking Florentine, Tina Calamai.

Their friendship steadily blossoms into love as her family's 15th century Medici villa, the Villa Calamai, soon becomes his wartime base of operations.

The end of the war in Europe draws near and Burke O'Connell and his unit prepare for redeployment to the United States where they will film the remaining months of the Pacific War. Burke faces immediate separation from his beloved Tina, and is challenged to determine how he can return to the woman he now truly loves.

Burke, depicted in the photo at right, returned to Italy at war's end to resume his courtship of Tina Calamai and marry her. They made their home at their Villa Calamai outside of Florence until her death in 1972.

His return to the U.S. in late 1972 for the first time in 25 years to the city of Santa Monica, California leads to a new whirlwind romance. He marries Jan Whitman, and introduces co-author Julie Whitman Jones, 15, to her beloved "Irish pop", a stepfather who would leave her with a lifetime of cherished memories.

**The Last Farewell** balances bittersweet recollections of close calls in combat and situations of Divine intervention, against the unique opportunities of American military photographers to capture and experience the rich cultural history of Italy during wartime. The 275-page personal memoir features five sections of selected former Army Signal Corps and personal photos. The book also includes a unit history and personnel roster of the Army's 196<sup>th</sup> Signal Photo Company which sought to document the Italian campaign through the eyes of the soldiers who fought there.

**To purchase either a signed paperback or hardcover copy of The Last Farewell directly from the author(s), email: [the\\_last\\_farewell@mail.com](mailto:the_last_farewell@mail.com) to place your order. California residents add 7.25% sales tax. Contact the author(s) directly for applicable U.S. Postal Service shipping costs to your ZIP code. Our book is also directly available for sale on eBay: <http://stores.ebay.com/JULIES-GOOD-OLD-STUFF>. Make personal checks, money orders and PayPal payable to Julie Whitman Jones. Visit the author(s) web page at:**

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**The Last Farewell**  
**Julie Whitman Jones**  
904 Crespi Drive  
Pacifica, CA 94044

Email: [the\\_last\\_farewell@mail.com](mailto:the_last_farewell@mail.com)  
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