

# 1934 Yearbook Art Editor - Christopher Leo Lawless Jr.

May 2022



## 1934 Christopher Lawless

[1934 Yearbook Drawing - page 4](#) by Christopher Lawless

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Christopher Leo Lawless Jr. was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He lived most of his childhood in Ilion, N.Y. Chris Lawless was the Art Editor of the 1934 yearbook. He competed in many art contests while a student in high school. He was considered by Miss Mae Donnelly, art instructor at Ilion High School, to be her prize pupil. In October 1933, Chris Lawless Jr., was presented with a \$10 gold piece, as an award for painting, the winning poster for the annual poppy drive. In March of 1934, he won second prize in the poster competition, run in connection with an April 6 charity ball, at the State Infantry Armory. The proceeds from the ball went toward the St. Joseph's Infant Home. Soon

after High School graduation, he returned to Bridgeport and began working for Murphy Ink.

## Christopher Lawless

**CHRIS L. LAWLESS**

*"Chris" has brought us great  
renown  
By painting posters for the "Gold  
and Brown."  
We hope he continues his great  
success,  
And becomes a great artist—no  
more—no less.*

Art Club '33, '34; Dramatic Club '34; Latin Club '32; "All the Horrors of Home"; First Prize State American Legion Poster Competition '33; Second Prize at National American Legion Poster Competition at World's Fair '33; First Prize County American Legion Poster Contest '33; First Prize School American Legion Poster Contest '33; First Prize Ilion-Herkimer Football Game Poster Contest '33; Second Prize School Sportsmanship Brotherhood Poster Contest '33; Second Prize State Band and Orchestra Contest '33; Class Artist '34; Senior Annual Staff; Senate '32.




[1934 Christopher Lawless](#)

The fourth page of the 1934 Yearbook contained Christopher Lawless's [drawing](#) and is featured as this month's cover story image. His senior yearbook caption centered on his artistic talents.

"Chris" has brought us great renown  
By painting posters for the "Gold and Brown."  
We hope he continues his great success,  
And becomes a great artist --- no more --- no less..



[Page 25 of the 1934 Yearbook](#) contains another example of Christopher Lawless's art work.

### World War II - The Ghost Army



A Ghost Army soldier with an inflatable M4 Sherman Tank, September 1944, France. (National Archives)

- <https://www.washingtontimes.com/multimedia/image/342226.jpg/>

After Pearl Harbor, Christopher Lawless joined the U.S. Army. He became a Sergeant in the 603rd engineer camouflage battalion now known as the "Ghost Army". The secret soldiers served in Europe until the end of the war.

"The largest of the four sub-units in the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, the 603rd handled visual deception. It was equipped with inflatable tanks, cannons, jeeps, trucks, and airplanes that the men would pump up with air compressors, and then camouflage imperfectly so that enemy air reconnaissance could see them. They could create dummy airfields, motor pools, artillery batteries, and tank formations in a matter of hours."

"Many of the men in the 603rd were artists recruited from New York art schools such as Cooper Union and Pratt. The army recruited them into the unit when it's main mission was conceived as camouflage. When the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops was formed in early 1944, the 603rd was chosen to handle the visual deception." - source

[https://ghostarmy.com/bio/f/Inside\\_the\\_23rd/413](https://ghostarmy.com/bio/f/Inside_the_23rd/413)

A documentary by filmmaker Rick Beyer, "The Ghost Army", premiered on PBS in 2013. It was eight years in the making. The film was awarded a CINE Golden Eagle. This is the official trailer for the documentary film THE GHOST ARMY. It is now available on Netflix and Amazon Prime.

### The Ghost Army Trailer



In 2015, the book "[The Ghost Army of World War II](#)," brought more attention to the little-known unit.

On March 12, 2016, "[The Washington Times](#)" reported the following:

"Seventy years ago, they were masters at innovation, large scale camouflage - and tactical deception. Bipartisan legislation has been introduced to award a Congressional Gold Medal to The Ghost Army - the World War II unit which created intricate battlefield deceptions using hundreds of inflatable tanks and aircraft, sound effects, phony radio transmissions and illusion near the front lines from Normandy to the Rhine River. The creative, meticulous effort was designed to fool the Germans, and fool them it did. The elite group risked their lives, but drew fire away from their fellow GIs."

### Congressional Gold Medal Awarded to WWII's "Ghost Army"



President Joe Biden signs the 'Ghost Army Congressional Gold Medal Act,' Tuesday, February 1, 2022, in the Oval Office. (Official [White House Photo](#) by Adam Schultz)

On February 1, 2022, President Joseph Biden signed the bill awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to WWII's "Ghost Army". The signing was featured on [krdo.com](#). Source - [krdo.com](#)

"With President Biden's signature today, the flesh and blood and brains and courage of the brave men of this unit are finally getting the public recognition they deserve," Democratic Sen. Ed Markey of Massachusetts, the bill's main sponsor, said in a statement Tuesday.

Rep. Annie Kuster, who's introduced the bill in every Congress since 2015, said that "more than 75 years after defeating fascism in Europe, it's time these soldiers receive the highest honor we can award: the Congressional Gold Medal."

"Through their courageous, creative, and innovative tactics, the top-secret Ghost Army outmaneuvered and deceived the Nazis, saving thousands of Allied lives during World War II," the New Hampshire Democrat added.

The Ghost Army's deception operations saved up to an estimated 30,000 Allied soldiers' lives, Kuster's office said in a news release, citing a US Army analysis after WWII.

## Post World War II

In the early 1950's, Chris fulfilled his dream of studying art in Paris France. The December 9, 1954 Ilion Sentinel newspaper reported that he had an art agency in England and was doing rather well. "He was a swell guy in school, with real talent."

He spent his professional career as a commercial Artist and owning his own business in Bridgeport. He retired in 1981. "He loved jazz music, golf, travel, and the beauty of nature, always taking the scenic route. He was a generous soul who accepted everyone and saw good in everything."

Christopher Leo Lawless, age 89, of Trumbull, died Friday, February 16, 2007 at Bridgeport Hospital after a brief illness. Besides his wife, Bessie (Eliopoulos) Lawless, he was predeceased by a sister Mary Symons, three brothers Robert, Leonard and William Lawless and two nephews William and Daniel Symons. He was survived by seven nephews; Michael Ellis of Bridgeport, Constantine Ellis of Milford, Peter Ellis of Stratford, James Ellis of San Diego and Jeffrey and James Williams of Maryland, and four nieces; Marcia Williams of Maryland, Karen Creedon of Georgia, Kathleen Pirion of OK, and Nancy Dobelstein of Maryland and several great nieces and nephews. Interment was in the Lakeview Cemetery, Bridgeport, Fairfield County, Connecticut.

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[Utica NY Observer 1933 - 7555.pdf](#) October 4, 1933 - Newly Elected, Officers Of Ilion Veterans Post And Auxiliary Inducted

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[Christopher Leo Lawless](#) Lakeview Cemetery - Bridgeport, Connecticut - findagrave.com

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#### Ghost Army References:

["The Ghost Army" Film](#) - ghostarmy.com

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[A top secret 'Ghost Army' of artist-soldiers fooled Hitler's troops. One of its last members is living a quiet life in Schaumburg.](#) Nov 12, 2018 - www.chicagotribune.com

[Ghost Army, a World War II Master of Deception, Finally Wins Recognition](#) February 3, 2022 - www.nytimes.com

[Biden signs bill awarding Congressional Gold Medal to WWII's](#)

['Ghost Army'](#) - kdro.com

[Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz](#) commons.wikimedia.org

YouTube - The Ghost Army Trailer YouTube.com

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