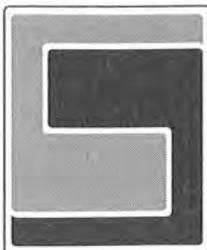


# FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

## ★★★★ Association, Inc.



VOLUME 57, NO. 1

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SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER – NOVEMBER – DECEMBER  
2003

“THE THREE B’S”  
BOLTE’S BIVOUACKING BASTARDS

P.O. BOX 69  
CHAMPION, PA 15622-0069  
724/455-2901

# bulletin

## Company M, 271st Infantry Regiment



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Bernard Zaffern, <i>President</i> 22555 Halcroft Trail Southfield, MI 48034-2011 .....	272
Paul N. Shadle, <i>Vice President</i> P.O. Box 4069 New Kensington, PA 15068-1799 .....	271
Joseph F. Huber, <i>Secretary</i> 1341 Evergreen Street West Bend, WI 53095 .....	272
William Ruebsamen, <i>Treasurer</i> P.O. Box 146 Sun City, CA 92586-2266 .....	724
Paul N. Shadle, <i>Membership Chairman</i> P.O. Box 4069 New Kensington, PA 15068-1799 .....	271
Edward Lucci, <i>Auditor</i> .....	273
William Snidow, <i>Chaplain</i> .....	661
Dottie Witzleb, <i>Editor</i> .....	273
Bernard Zaffern, <i>Legal Advisor</i> .....	272

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Frederick Butenhoff .....	272
James Brooks .....	273
William E. Snidow .....	661
George Vasil .....	881
<b>Term Expiring 2005</b>	
Paul N. Shadle .....	271
Joseph F. Huber .....	272
Robert L. Pierce .....	273
Charles Yannul .....	661
Howard S. Hawk .....	724
<b>Term Expiring 2006</b>	
Noble Goode .....	271
David Theobald .....	272
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Gilbert Rocco .....	881

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*Harold Ruck, TN .....	272
*Raymond Sansouey, MA .....	272

\*Deceased

I am not sure if this is just the Mortar Platoon of Company M, 271st Infantry or all of the Company. Left rear: **Lt. Lovejoy**. Right Rear: **Pfc. Burns**. Picture taken in Germany 1945.

Several more photos from Robert Burns appear elsewhere in the Bulletin.

Submitted By: **Robert L. Burns**, *Company M, 271st Infantry, Mortar Platoon*  
18 Highland Terrace, Prescott, Arizona 86305

**Past  
Presidents  
of the  
Fighting  
69th  
Infantry  
Division  
Association**

By: Chet Yastrzemski  
Company E, 272nd  
251A North Main Street  
Southampton, New York  
11968-3313



*2001-2003*  
**Raymond Sansoucy**



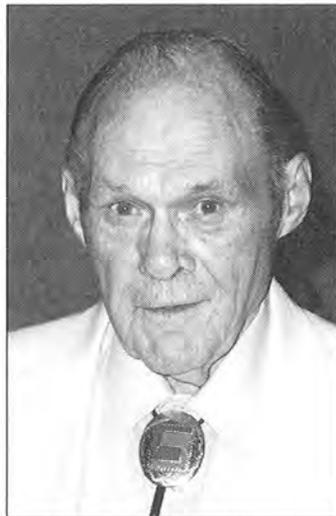
*1999-2001*  
**Harold Ruck**



*1997-1999*  
**James Boris**



*1995-1997*  
**Robert Pierce**



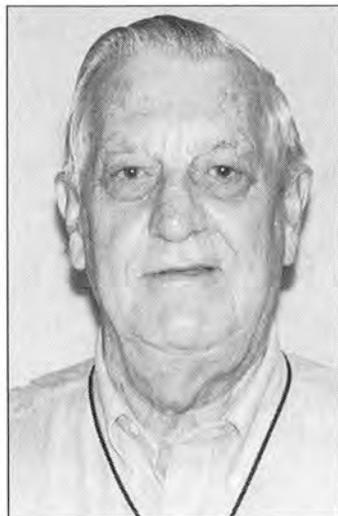
*1993-1995*  
**Welcos "Dutch" Hawn**



*1989-1991*  
**Earl Witzleb**



*1987-1989*  
**William Foster**



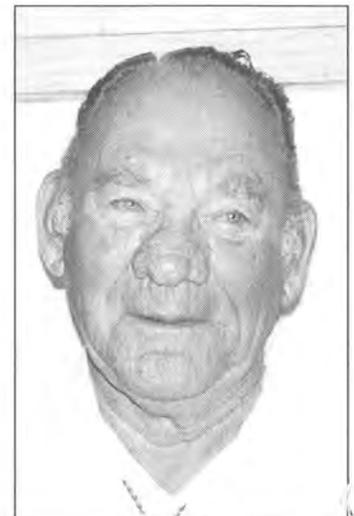
*1985-1987*  
**William Beswick**



*1983-1985*  
**George Gallagher**



*1981-1983*  
**Walter Doernbach**



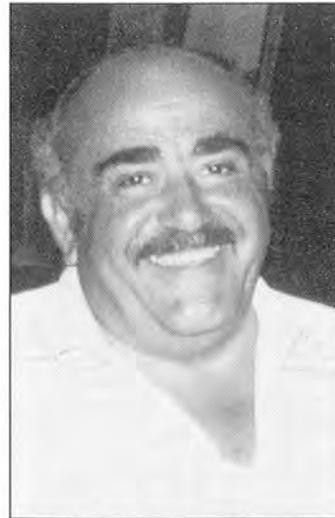
*1979-1981*  
**Robert Myers**



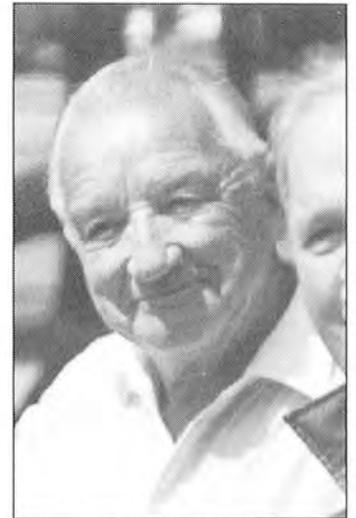
*1977-1979*  
**John Moriarty**



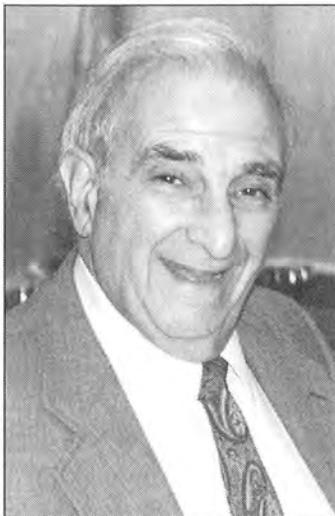
*1975-1977*  
**Stanley Olszewski**



*1973-1975*  
**Albert Carbonari**



*1971-1973*  
**George Phillips**



*1969-1971*  
**Sam Woolf**



*1967-1969*  
**William Matlach**



**Loar Quickle**



**Harold Starry**

***8 Past Presidents at one reunion:***

*Left to right are*  
*George Phillips*  
*George Gallagher*  
*William Matlach*  
*Sam Woolf*  
*Albert Carbonari*  
*Robert Myers*  
*Walter Doernbach*  
*William Beswick*



# THE MAIL BOX

By **Dottie Witzleb**, Editor



*Company E, 273rd Infantry Regiment*  
P.O. Box 69  
Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069  
Telephone: 724/455-2901  
E-Mail: danne@lhtc.net

**Ray "Archie" Naylor**, 1748 Castlerock Road, Tampa, Florida 33610, E-Mail: polnay@juno.com — I&R Platoon, 272nd: When the war with Iraq began, I was reminded of all the similarities of ambushing and fighting that occurred just as it did to us in WWII. We advanced so quickly and captured so many prisoners that we could hardly keep pace, the main difference in Iraq of course, is the weather and the terrain.

I was the radio operator for our platoon and in April, 1945, during two I&R Patrol actions, we were ambushed just before entering the city of Naumberg, Germany. One of our men was captured and one was wounded. We went into the city and freed the man captured. As it turned out, I find this to be a very small world because back in 1995, our complex welcomed a new neighbor. While visiting with her and her husband, we found that she is from Naumberg and was a 12 year old girl living there when we entered the city.

I served with the same guys for about two years and my wife and I have only attended a few of the 69th Reunions but found that no one from our group attended. Maybe next year in New York. I remember quite a few of our group lived in that area. Hope to see some of them next year.

**Franklin V. Haught**, 27277 N. Lake Pleasant Road, Peoria, Arizona 85382-9724 — Co. A, 271st: I'm writing in response to **Hubert K. Porter's** letter in the last bulletin regarding information to obtain the Bronze Star.

**Mr. Porter** can have his buddy **Mr. Taylor** contact the National Personnel Records Center for a list of his awards. There will be about a three month wait. When he receives this, have him contact the D.A.V. Service office at the nearest Veterans Hospital. They are great people ready to serve.

Good luck to you, Mr. Porter and your buddy Mr. Taylor, and all the 69ers who might need this service.

**Military Personnel Records**  
9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5100

**Robert Weinstock**, 3600 N. 5th Avenue, #202, Phoenix, Arizona 85013-3737 — Co. H-1, 273rd: I'd like to express my appreciation to you for allowing my submission, "The 69th - 10 Years Later" to appear in full in The Fighting Sixty Ninth Bulletin.

In writing it I attempted a kind of total recall to what seemed to me to have been interesting about my service, and to nail down the facts and express my reactions, then and now, to those events. In writing about my time in service beyond the 69th, I guess you could say I was just committing a little vanity to paper; really hoping you would want to print it all.

I was pleasantly shocked a few months back when one of our members, **Jay Lowenthal**, called and said he'd really enjoyed what he'd read. Shocked isn't too strong a word and I was kind of tongue tied and wish now I'd spent more time discussing his experiences.

Little bits and pieces - events or reactions, connected to my service keep surfacing and I have notes in my computer. Maybe sometime next year I'll pass it along and it might make good filler here and there in the bulletin - and just when you felt ready to take off your editor's visor and lay down your blue pencil!

Well, thanks to you Dottie, and thanks to all those boys and men who kept America free, and the women, too, such as my mom who served on the hospital ship Wisteria, July-November 1944.

Finally, it is pretty nifty, you getting P.O. Box 69, but acquiring a zip code ending in 69 - you must have done something really honorable, like bribing your congressman!

**Nathan J. Fullmer**, 2802 Lancaster Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah 84108-2536, E-Mail: fullmer@haaga.com — Co. C, 272nd: I want to thank you again for publishing my article in the bulletin last May. I have received several responses (three e-mail and one snail mail) from people who were complete strangers, but who read and enjoyed the article. One was a letter from **Gus R. Wiemann** who stayed in Europe for several years and was on the staff of *Stars and Stripes*. It amazed me to learn that he was familiar with the German contact lens shop in Stuttgart that I had written about!

Closer to me were contacts from relatives of two members of my Squad. **Patrick Wegelin** (a son of Squad member **Herb Wegelin**, now deceased) has been a real tiger in putting me in touch with the only two surviving members of the Squad and I have enjoyed telephone calls and letters from each of them.

I have also had a telephone conversation with my platoon leader, **Lt. Morris Assael**, who was impressed by my article.

The responses I have received have been very rewarding to me, all resulting from the great job you are doing with the Bulletin.

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## THE MAIL BOX

(Continued from Page 4)

**Armando W. DeRogatis**, 8013 Silver Spur Drive, Arlington, Texas 76001 — Co. F, 271st: My date of birth is March 6, 1926. I entered the service on April 28th, 1944 and was sent to Camp Upton. There I received my Army uniform and injections. Then I was sent to Camp Wheeler, Georgia for 17 weeks of Basic Training. I was in the 17th Infantry Training Battalion, Company B, 2nd Platoon. My training ended on September 12, 1944. After 14 days leave and 3 days extension, I reported to Camp Shelby, Mississippi on September 29, 1944 where I joined the 69th Infantry Division, 271st Infantry, Company F. I joined on the training field.

We went overseas to England, and we stayed in a camp in Westminster, England. When the Battle of the Bulge broke out, all the privates were shipped out as replacements and I believe only the non-coms were kept. I finally reached the front line and I joined the 83rd Infantry Division in Belgium. I was assigned to the 329th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Company L and I had a choice of handling a BAR or being a First Scout of which I accepted the First Scout position. I was pinned down in an open field of deep snow in zero weather when we attacked Petite Langlir on January 10th, and ended up with frozen feet and hands. I was sent back and finally was in a hospital in England. I then was sent back to Germany to rejoin my outfit but I never reached them again and was sent back to the hospital and finally was sent home on a hospital ship, the Frances Slanger. I was discharged on May 1, 1946. I was married to my childhood sweetheart Rosanna on October 6, 1946 and last year we celebrated our 56th Anniversary. So life has it's good side and it's bad side and life goes on, thank God.

**John P. Stern**, 11719 S.E. 173rd Lane Road, Summerfield, Florida 33391, Telephone: 352/245-4433 — Div. Hq. Co.: I would like to join the 69th Infantry Division Association. I was in the 69th from start to finish. I was a sergeant in Division Headquarters Company, Finance Department. If anyone has any questions, or remembers me, please call or write.

**George Burrows**, 1538 Pine Ridge Drive, Roxboro, North Carolina 27573-4160 — Co. B, 271st: Your note and copies of the bulletin arrived the very day that I was writing you, asking how to get more copies, when lo and behold, there they were in my mail box. Thank you so much. The boys will cherish them with there memories of that week.

I want to thank you again for your dedication to the association and your hard, hard work for so long and I am quite sure all of my comrades join me in words of praise, "Thank God for Dottie" and I say amen to that.

**Thomas C. Elliott**, 1301 Spring #6D, Seattle, Washington 98104 — I would like to obtain information on the whereabouts or fate of **Louis A. Weller** who served with Service Battery, 879th Field Artillery. His home was Baltimore and he had a brother whose name was Tom. Please send information to my address above or call me at 206/328-8444. Thank you.

**Douglas George**, 1012 Jay Court, Loveland, Colorado 80537 — Hq. Co., 273rd: I recently read a book that had a different slant on our link up with the Russians. The book is titled "When We Were One," stories of World War II by W.C. Heinz, who was a war correspondent for the N.Y. Sun. The chapter is "The Day we met the Russians," page 187 - covers a few pages. He tells how the correspondents were making book on what Division-Regiment-Battalion-Company would have the honor of being selected by the hierarchy to meet the Russians, and no one had their money on the 69th.

The book is published by Da Capo Press. Information can be obtained at the Perseus Books Group, 11 Cambridge Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142 or call 800/255-1514.

About 6 weeks ago Larry King was interviewing John Eisenhower. He asked John if he saw any combat. He replied, "No one wanted me!" In other words, no general would want to be responsible for his death if it occurred. Finally he was sent to Europe and the division immediately sent him to Bradley, who then sent him on special assignments. One was the day after we met the Russians. He got to go to the meeting of the brass.

As a switchboard operator for the 273rd Regiment, Headquarters Company, we were stationed on the 2nd floor of a house across the street from **Col. Adams'** headquarters and observed all the comings and goings. We heard many phone conversations and could see all the media and brass congregating, but of course, we didn't realize that John Eisenhower was there.

**Alfonse D. Rocci**, 56 Frederick Avenue, Medford, Massachusetts 02155 — 661st T.D.: I was born 4/28/17 in Boston, Massachusetts. I was in Public Relations with the Boston Braves, Boston Red Sox and Boston, New England Patriots. I was drafted into the army, 3/21/42 to Ft. Devens, Massachusetts. I married in the service on 8/21/43 to Josephine. I received training at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina and Camp Hood, Texas. Left for overseas on January 10, 1945 from New York. Arrived in France on January 21, 1945.

I served in France, Belgium and Germany. I served as Platoon Sergeant Acting Personnel Sergeant and Company Clerk. I left from France on January 30, 1945, and arrived in Boston on July 6, 1945. I was discharged from Camp Shelby, Mississippi on November 23, 1945. On behalf of all G.I.s, we thank you for all your time and dedication you have given.



**Alfonse Rocci**

## THE MAIL BOX

(Continued from Page 5)

**Gordon K. Kjos**, 2222 Langsdorf Avenue, Red Wing, Minnesota 55066 — Div. Hq.: Thanks for sending me the Camp Shelby booklet. I thought this might be interesting as I will never have a chance to visit the camp again. I spent one and one half years there from April 1943 to the end of November 1944. I was part of the Cadre for the 69th - coming down from the 96th Division from Camp Adair, Oregon. I helped start the 96th as well as the 69th - all the while in the Finance Section of Division Headquarters. I came to Camp Adair from Basic Training at Camp Roberts, California, the place where I got started with Army life. I was sworn in on January 5th, 1942 at Ft. Snelling, Minnesota. By the end of the week I was in Camp Roberts. From April 1942 through July 1942, those of us with the Cadre for the 96th were attached to the 7th Motorized Division in San Louis O'Bisbo, California, where we more or less chose what we wanted to get into. My background was accounting so I chose the Finance Section.

Thanks again for sending the Camp Shelby booklet. May you and yours have a good Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

**David Jenkins**, Lot 384, 3150 N.E. 36th Avenue, Ocala, Florida 34479 — Co. E, 271st: Enclosed please find my membership application. I was not aware of the association until seeing an ad in the Legion Magazine. The photograph in the center of the last bulletin is a copy of one on my bedroom wall. I am in the second row right behind **Lt. Sharpe**, next to **John Rath**. It sure has been a long time since Camp Kilmer. All the best to all.

**Dr. Fred Hauser**, 1255 N. Gulfstream Avenue, Suite 1004, Sarasota, Florida 34236-8948, Telephone: 941/955-5056 — Co. E, 271st: Does anyone know of a photo of Company E, 271st Infantry taken at Shelby just prior to being shipped overseas? This is prompted by the photo in the last issue of the 69th. I was pulled out and kept at Shelby - just one day before you guys went to Kilmer. Reason? To be given a direct commission as a psychologist. Naturally, that never happened. In any event, I was Squad Leader in Company E and would love to find out if I can identify any of my old buddies who got a much tougher deal than I did.

*Happy Holidays  
to  
69ers  
and Best Wishes  
in the  
New Year!*



## A Note from Dottie, Your Bulletin Editor

Before I attended the reunion in St. Louis in August, I took a trip to Branson, Missouri with 3 of my friends and had a great time. We were told a few times that "you 4 people should not be having such a good time." We even had a few people join us and we enjoyed them also. The area is for all kinds of music lovers, not just country and western. This was a surprise to me, as I expected more of a country western motif. We had seen 8 shows in 3 days and enjoyed every one of them. We are planning to return and enjoy ourselves once again.

The reunion in St. Louis is over and was a good one. The attendance was down a bit, but this year we had the Recon Troop with us. We hope they enjoyed their time with us and look forward to seeing them again. We would like other attached units to attend one of our reunions.

The next reunion will be held in Stamford, Connecticut. The plan is to visit New York City and see Ground Zero and other interesting sights. Please plan to attend this reunion. It is to be held in August 2004.

I wish every one of you a happy holiday season and a happy and healthy new year.

### Bulletin Reduced in Size

The bulletin has been reduced in size from 60 pages to 40 pages for economic reasons. Please continue to send in your stories and photos, as we are not receiving as much material as in the past.

We continue to be in need of good cover photos. Please do not send digital print-outs from your computer printer. The poor quality of these photos is not what we want for the cover. We will return your original photos to you. If you absolutely do not want to send your photos, send them on disk.

Thank You

### Printer E-Mail Address Change

**If you would like to e-mail your photos or articles to the Bulletin, you can send them directly to our printer at:**

**[inthewoods@buhlbrothersprinting.com](mailto:inthewoods@buhlbrothersprinting.com)**

Just make sure in the subject line, you include "69th" and the printer will turn it over to Dottie for approval for publication.

**PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR E-MAIL YOUR REGULAR ADDRESS AND UNIT.** We have been receiving some e-mails where you are looking for someone, but leave no regular address or phone number for people to respond. Remember, most of our members are not on the net and they may not be able to respond to an e-mail address.

Thank you

# A Note from your Vice President and Membership Chairman, Paul Shadle

Paul Shadle, *Company E, 271st Infantry*  
Note New Address  
P.O. Box 4069 • New Kensington, PA 15068  
Telephone: 724/335-9980



Well the St. Louis Reunion is now history and I hope everyone had a good time. Plans are now being made for the next reunion in Stamford, Connecticut. I know several attendees are looking forward to the opportunity to visit once again with fellow members of the association. Start saving for this one now and meet some of your old army buddies that you have not seen in a while.

Please don't forget to let us know if you move. The post office does not forward third class mail. Also, if you know of an address change or any other information on other members that will be helpful, drop me a line or call. Keeping the mailing list updated saves our Association money that can be better spent elsewhere.

If you are reporting membership information on the internet - a new member, a deceased member, or a change of address, please also notify me at the above address.

Thank you for your help. Have a safe winter and hope to see you at the next reunion in August 2004 in Connecticut. And of course, I wish you all a great holiday and best to you and your family in the new year.

## New Men Relocated Since Our Last Bulletin

**Howard W. Brewer** - 69th Quartermaster  
2682 Highway 153, Twisp, Washington 48856

**David Jenkins** - Company E, 271st Infantry  
3150 N.E. 36th Avenue, Lot 384  
Ocala, Florida 34479

## Names to be Removed from the 69th Roster

### WE NEED YOUR HELP

We have received bulletins back for various reason from the members listed below. If you have their correct address or know of their whereabouts, please contact **Paul Shadle**, Membership Chairman.

**Frank Andrus** ..... Fossil, Oregon  
**Rex Avery** ..... Jacksonville, North Carolina  
**Marion E. Diefenbach** ..... Pt. St. Lucie, Florida  
**Lamar B. Hill** ..... Cartersville, Georgia  
**Evelyn Karavedas** ..... Baltimore, Maryland  
**Henry Milner** ..... St. Louis, Missouri  
**Zell Olken** ..... Chicago, Illinois  
**Joseph C. Ondrey** ..... Steamwood, Illinois  
**Dominic Ottoviana** ..... N. Tonawanda, New York  
**Mrs. James Peyton** ..... Ocracoke, North Carolina  
**Mary Rivera** ..... Jacksonville, Florida  
**Charles W. Taunton** ..... Greenville, South Carolina  
**Robert Wright** ..... West Valley, Utah

## Do You Remember?

Pull off the road	Train wrecks few
To change a flat	Reason clear
Protect your life	Fireman never
No spare for that!	Hugs engineer.
Burma-Shave	Burma-Shave
She eyed his beard	Cautious driver
and said no dice	To her reckless dear
The wedding's off	Let's have less bull
I'll cook the rice.	And lots more steer.
Burma-Shave	Burma-Shave
Better try less	No matter the price
Speed per mile	No matter how new
That car may have	The best safety device
to last a while.	In your car is you.
Burma-Shave	Burma-Shave

## MOVING

Please print your new address below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form  
and your old address label to:

**PAUL SHADLE**

**P.O. Box 4069**

**New Kensington, PA 15068**

Please allow six weeks advance notice.

# Mortar Platoon, Co. M, 271st Infantry

Submitted By: **Robert L. Burns**  
18 Highland Terrace • Prescott, Arizona 86305

I noted **Lt. Col. Eugene Lovejoy's** name under Taps in the last issue of the Bulletin. He was a lieutenant with the Mortar Platoon of Company M, 271st.

I served over 30 years on active duty retiring May 31st, 1974 retiring as Chief Warrant Officer, CW4.



*Pfc. Robert Burns and Pfc. Raymond Cook  
Eastern zone of Germany, 1945*



*Pfc. Robert Burns and Cpl. Larry Heath  
Somewhere in Germany*

*Note: Someone had been here before us  
as all of the barrels were empty!*

# Alice Dorety writes . . .

**Wife of Jim Dorety, Company B, 271st Infantry**  
2617 Elbridge Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19149

I am writing to you regretfully at this time. Jim my husband passed away on July 17th suddenly. He was sitting in the parlor after dinner, reading the paper. He looked up and his head dropped a little and his face turned red, and that was it. The rescue squad tried for 20 minutes, but it was useless. My daughter and I were shocked. He was such a good guy, a wonderful husband and father. He will be missed by everyone.

We had been married for 58 years. I am sending you a picture Jim painted many years ago and framed it. He just took this photo a couple of weeks before he died.



**Visit Us  
On  
The  
Web  
at**



**[www.69th-infantry-division.com](http://www.69th-infantry-division.com)  
or contact**

**[annejoelip@earthlink.net](mailto:annejoelip@earthlink.net)**

**Visit often to keep up with what's going on!**

# Message from the President



**Bernard H. Zaffern**  
*Company L, 272nd Infantry Regiment*  
22555 Hallcroft Trail  
Southfield, Michigan 48034-2011  
Telephone: 248/357-4611

I want to thank the members of the Association for giving me the honor of being named President. I will do all in my power to merit this honor.

I think we have a great management team with **Paul Shadle** as both VP and Membership Chairman, **Bill Ruebsamen** as Treasurer and **Joe Huber** as Secretary. **Paul** has indicated that his top priority is to clear up discrepancies in our membership roster to make sure all lists agree and he and **Bill** will work hard to accomplish this task.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the fine work of our immediate past president, **Ray Sansoucy** and our retiring secretary, **Ralph Goebel**. And thanks are due, as always, to **Bob Pierce** for his always great job in organizing our reunions. And to **Dottie Witzleb** for the Bulletin. Our Association is blessed with fine people who work hard for the benefit of all of us.

I hope all of you have a happy and healthy holiday season and a great winter.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 2003 Officers

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Unit: Company E, 271st Infantry

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Unit: Anti-Tank Company, 272nd Infantry

**William Ruebsamen, Treasurer**  
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**Paul N. Shadle, Membership Chairman**  
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Unit: Company E, 271st Infantry

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Unit: Company A, 273rd Infantry

**William E. Snidow, Chaplain**  
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(Continued on Page 10)

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(Continued from Page 9)

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Unit: Service Co., 777th Tank Battalion

# St Louis, Missouri 2003 Reunion Report

Submitted By: **Bob and Theresa Pierce**  
**Reunion Committee Chairpersons:**

*Company I, 273rd Infantry*  
144 Nashua Court  
San Jose, California 95139-1236  
Telephone: 408/226-8040

St. Louis proved to be an interesting new place to visit with lots of attractions, historical sites, and a wide variety of ethnic cuisine. Overall, other than the weather, there were fewer complaints than the past two years. The Registration cut-off date really helped to smooth out late registration problems.

All of the Reunion Committee members are to be commended for an outstanding job of managing their respective areas of responsibility.

The Hospitality Room is always a "Help Wanted" problem. This year we had some notable volunteer bartenders.

The saddest event was the passing of **Bob Ross**. Nothing in life is more unexpected or heartbreaking. **Joe Huber** immediately assumed the responsibilities of Souvenir Chairman.

My heartfelt thanks goes out to all of you who pull together to make our get-togethers so enjoyable. The Reunions would never be the success they are without the full cooperation and support of members like yourselves.

Large family or unique groups are normally recognized by the President during the Banquet. We missed a real opportunity this year and I apologize for the oversight.

When **N.C. Harrison** and his wife, Elizabeth, registered for the Reunion, it was for four people. What they did not know was that a family member, Emily Cochran, sent a "Surprise" Guest List of eight more family members; however, four more arrived at the Reunion making the N.C. Harrison (G-271) family the all-time champs with 16 attendees. You may remember N.C. from Nashville, he was on the Hospitality Room Committee.

That's not to slight **Guy and Pauline Steele** (A-272), with 13 family members; or, **Bob and Theresa Pierce's** (I-273), with a small group of only 12 family members.

Reunion attendance held steady this year, by my count. There were 421 registered attendees; Early Bird Buffet-138; PX Beer Party-266; Banquet-361; and Farewell Breakfast-90.

Tour totals were: St. Louis City-130; St. Charles-143, River Boat Dinner-153; Grants Farm-195; and, Brewery-197.

Have a good year and join your buddies and friends next year in Stamford, Connecticut.

# World War II Memorial dedication slated for May 29th

Submitted By: **Michael Kutzmonich**

*Company H, 271st Infantry*

362 St. Johns Road

Wapwallopen, Pennsylvania 18660

America's World War II veterans have waited 57 years for a national memorial commemorating their service and sacrifice.

The American Battle Monuments Commission has announced that the National World War II Memorial will be dedicated in Washington on May 29, 2004.

"This memorial will be a permanent reminder of the service of millions of young men and women - not only those in uniform, but that generation - for the great sacrifice they made," said former Sen. Bob Dole, national chairman of the memorial campaign.

The Memorial Day weekend celebration on the National Mall will culminate an 11-year effort to honor America's World War II generation. The memorial was authorized by Congress in 1993. Construction began in September 2001 after several years of fund-raising and public hearings.

"Veterans are planning reunions in conjunction with the dedication," said ABMC Chairman P.X. Kelley, former commandant of the Marine Corps. "With construction on schedule for completion in spring 2004, we want to give veterans and their families plenty of time to make travel plans.

"Unfortunately, fewer than 4 million of the 16 million Americans who served in uniform during the war are expected to be alive when the memorial is dedicated. We lose 1,100 World War II vets each day, so the dedication cannot come too soon."

Dedication events could include a World War II-themed exhibition on the Mall, a memorial service at the Washington National Cathedral and related activities throughout the city.

Event details will be available as they are confirmed on the memorial's web site at [www.wwiimemorial.com](http://www.wwiimemorial.com) or by calling (800) 639-4992. Lodging and travel information will be available through the Web site courtesy of the Washington Convention and Tourism Corporation.

The memorial is being funded primarily by private donations and has received nearly \$189 million in cash pledges. It is being built on the Mall between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument.

## Bill Beswick on the World War II Memorial

**William R. Beswick**

*Battery B, 661st Tank Battalion*

Box 576, West Point, Virginia 23181

Telephone: 804/843-2696

Did you receive an invitation to attend, from the Memorial Committee? If you did not and want to attend without any problems, please let me know. I am a Charter Member and as of this writing, I plan to attend and will register your name as a guest of mine.

Let's plan to attend and we can meet on the Northeast corner of 17th Streets and Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C. Please let me know of your intentions. Of course, if you received an invitation, that's great and we can still meet on that corner.

I already have a couple of fellows that are planning to meet with me: **Dillard Powell, Bud Parsons** and **Hilton Spokony, Hilton** and I have been making plans since the dedication of the ground sight.

Be sure to wear your 69th hat and jacket. Let 'em all know who we are. Get yourself a map of the Washington, D.C. area and do not get lost.

I told Jo, my wife that I would go, even in a wheel chair if I have to, which could be possible. If so, I may need someone to push me.

*President Bill Clinton and other officials at the Ground Breaking ceremony of the WWII Memorial. 11-11-02*

Photo submitted by:  
**Mike Kutzmonich**



# Soldiers by force, friends by choice

From the News Journal

October 13, 2003

Submitted By: **Harold R. Sprang**

Company E, 273rd Infantry

192 State Route 603 W., Shiloh, Ohio 44878

Written by Ron Simon

It has been 60 years since **Lowell McFarlin** of Jeromesville and **Bob Williams** of Lorain first ran into each other at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

They only wish their buddy, **Wayne Murphy** of Mansfield, were still alive to share the joys of a long and loving friendship.

Wars can come and go, but the friendships men forge in training and combat tend to last a lifetime.

**McFarlin**, 79, who still runs his own upholstery business behind his home in Jeromesville, was a young man living in Noble Country in 1943 when his draft notice arrived.

"My father (Lowell) was a Methodist minister and we traveled a lot," McFarlin said.

**Williams**, 81, of Lorain worked for the telephone company when his notice arrived.

**Murphy's** mail contained the same notice. So the three Ohio men joined up and met at Camp Shelby, where the 64th Infantry Division was being formed.

"I thought we were headed for the infantry. Oh no," Bob Williams recalled.

Instead, the three new friends were placed in the 69th's artillery arm, the 880th Field Artillery Battalion where they would stay in C Battery until the war was over.

"Wayne was a radio man," McFarlin said. "Bob laid lines for field telephones. I was a driver on a gun truck that hauled a 105 howitzer."

"We would lay the wire from our switchboard to wherever the front line was," Williams said.

McFarlin said he, Murphy and Williams became so close that while they were in the United States they would go on furloughs together.

"We came to each other's weddings and would get together three or four times a year," he said.

Murphy, who worked at Mansfield Reformatory and Ideal Electric after the war, died in 1990.

"I still can't believe Wayne's been gone so long," McFarlin said.

"We miss him," Williams said.

At the end of 1944, the 69th Infantry and the 880th Field Artillery were transported to England and then to France and Belgium. McFarlin said the Battle of the Bulge made things move faster.

One of the 880th's first stops was Malmedy, Belgium, where Germans had massacred an American artillery unit not long before.



*Veterans Bob Williams, Lowell McFarlin and Wayne Murphy built a lasting friendship that continues to this day. Williams and McFarlin expanded their reunions to include more of their division after Murphy died in 1990. All three men were assigned to Battery C, 880th Field Artillery,*

McFarlin remembers the mud. "I backed my gun up into position once and it just sank in that mud. We had an awful time getting it out of there," he said.

Williams remembers the terrible cold weather of that last winter of the war. He was miserable working outside and wondering if he would ever get home.

Both remember the bodies.

"We had to move them to one side to place the guns," McFarlin recalled.

The unit fired its guns in combat for the first time at Mirringen, Belgium, on February 11th, 1945. On February 27th, McFarlin said, one lieutenant named **Zimmerman** was killed by enemy fire. He was, McFarlin said, the 880th's only casualty.

Somewhere in Belgium, Williams earned the Bronze Star, laying his telephone lines on a chilly winter night.

"We were taking lines up to the front and the reels were squeaking, drawing mortar fire. We used chewing gum to quiet them down," he said. "Sometimes we found our lines cut. We knew the Germans had done it but we didn't know where they were. So we'd drag the lines into the nearest woods and repair them."

The Bronze Star Williams was given for that night's work is part of a display shown at every C Battery reunion.

Both men remember liberating prisoner-of-war camps.

"Nasty places. Just nasty," McFarlin said.

They recall crossing the Rhine River in April and entering a German fortress on the east shore.

"The Germans were going out the back door as we came in the front," McFarlin said.

*(Continued on Page 13)*

## SOLDIERS BY FORCE, FRIENDS BY CHOICE

(Continued from Page 12)

For the souvenir hunters, there was a huge stock of German uniforms, weapons and insignia, not to mention huge stocks of Rhenish and Moselle wines.

McFarlin remembers the beer in the glasses was still cold.

The 69th Infantry moved across Germany and on April 25th, it met Russian forces on the Elbe River.

"As far as we were concerned, that meant the war was over," McFarlin said.

Ten days later, the war was over and the 69th Infantry was moved to the North Sea area to help occupy a defeated and divided Germany.

"The 69th was broken up in August," McFarlin said. So were the three buddies.

McFarlin wound up in Berlin with the 78th Infantry Division and stayed on for six months.

Williams left earlier and went to Fort Logan, Colorado to join the forces that would invade Japan. "Then they dropped the bombs and boy was I relieved," Williams said. "I was really scared about being in that invasion."

Murphy was stationed in France.

All three got out of the service in mid-1946. They came home to start their civilian lives and found they all lived within a short drive of each other.

There were weddings and children to celebrate. About 1980, McFarlin said they decided to expand into reunions.

"We got the names of 25 members of C Battery of the 880th and invited them to a reunion. The first one was pretty small but they grew and we've held them every year since. The last two were in Sugarcreek. The men who come are mostly from Ohio, Indiana, New Jersey and in that area."



Bob Williams, 81, and Lowell McFarlin, 79, find their old infantry in the *Fighting 69th Infantry* book.

(PHOTO BY DANIEL MELOGRANA, NEWS JOURNAL)

To keep things going, McFarlin edits a C Battery newsletter three times a year.

Williams said C Battery started out with 125 men and more than 200 men filtered through as the war went on.

"We know 82 are gone now," he said.

That includes Wayne Murphy, of course. Williams said the widows of departed veterans often come to the reunions.

Friendships last and so do marriages. Bob and Irene Williams have been married for 58 years. Lowell and Marjorie McFarlin have celebrated 55 anniversaries.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The News Journal of Mansfield, Ohio states that every day this nation loses thousands of its veterans from World War II and the Korean war, men and women who put aside their duties here to serve their country. Each Monday, the News Journal profiles a veteran of either war in an effort to tell the stories of these average north central Ohioans whose extraordinary efforts preserved freedom for us all. They are to be commended.)

\*\*\*\*\*

## 69ers celebrate at their 60th High School Reunion



Two old members of the 69th got together for a 60th High School reunion in Hamburg, New York.

Pictured are **Leon Ebert**, Company I, 272nd and **Gordon Mohr**, Company D, 273rd.

Submitted By: **Seth Mohr**

260 Fairway Drive, Midland C.C.

Pinehurst, North Carolina 28374

**Gordon** apologizes for missing the reunion and sends his best to all the gang.

# Battle for Eilenburg Still a Vivid Memory

Submitted By: **John Tounger**  
Company D, 271st Infantry  
1 Pine Hills Court  
Oakland, California 94611-1530

*Mr. Tounger had written this letter to a Thomas Troemel who resides in Eilenburg, Germany today.*

I remember the battle at Eilenburg very vividly. It was the battle before the meeting at Torgau on the Elbe River. I was a machine gunner with the 271st Infantry Regiment of the 69th Infantry Division. We were in the lead column on a mounted machine gun jeep. We were stopped some distance before entering Eilenburg. We could hear our Battalion Commander, **Major Dunlap**, talking to the recon - 6 x 6 Officer who had just returned from the town of Eilenburg telling him there were white flags outside the windows. I heard him say, "Let's move ahead and set up in this town for rest and food." We had not slept or had any hot food for three days. Our battalion had surrounded the Monument of Nations in Leipzig.

As we started our move towards the town of Eilenburg, the German Army began firing on us. We bailed out of our jeep with our machine gun under fire since our lead tank had been knocked out. Our second tank knocked out the German 88 cannon, which we discovered was in the graveyard of the town. We crawled to the house across the street from the graveyard and set up our machine gun in the upstairs bedroom window.

For a little while things were quiet when all of a sudden the German soldiers started their counter attack coming over the fence into the back yard and entered the first floor of the house we were in. We could hear them talking. Our squad sergeant shouted to the six of us to empty our pockets and he would negotiate a surrender. Within minutes a rifle squad who was retreating threw two hand grenades through the lower window and blew them out. We then retreated about one mile outside the town of Eilenburg and dug in.

Later that evening our artillery started their bombardment which lasted all night. The next morning we just walked into the town. We saw dead bodies, both German and American soldiers all over the place. A site never to be forgotten. All I could think of was this could have been avoided if the Germans had abided by the white flags in the window.



*John Tounger on the 88 which was in the graveyard on the outskirts of Eilenburg shooting at us point blank.*



*John Tounger on a recent trip to Eilenburg pointing out that same graveyard barrier.*



*John Tounger - Eilenburg after being shelled*

**69th Infantry Division  
Association  
57th Annual Reunion  
STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT**

**August 22nd thru 29th, 2004  
SHERATON STAMFORD HOTEL  
2701 Summer Street  
Stamford, Connecticut 06905**

**Reunion Committee Chairpersons:**

**Bob and Theresa Pierce**  
*Company I, 273rd Infantry*  
144 Nashua Court  
San Jose, California 95139-1236  
Telephone: 408/226-8040

The Sheraton Stamford Hotel is a deluxe 445-room hotel with all the special amenities; such as, coffee makers, hair dryers, etc. The lobby is a large beautiful atrium, there is a health club, indoor pool, and tennis court. The rate is single/double \$74.00 plus 12% hotel tax. This is a full service hotel with a restaurant and lounge.

The Sheraton is convenient to both I-95 and the Merrit Parkway and parking is free to 69ers. The hotel is only 200 yards from the Ridgeway Shopping Center with restaurants, shopping and services. A few blocks away in downtown is the Stamford Town Center featuring Sak's Fifth Avenue, Macy's, Filene's and 130 other stores. The hotel shuttle can be used for short, around-town rides.

New York Metro-North Railroad from Grand Central Station is only 44 minutes to the Stamford Transportation Center. The hotel shuttle will pick up at the Station.

There are several modes of transportation from LaGuardia, Kennedy, or Newark Airports. The closest airport to Stamford is Westchester in White Plains, New York, about 15 miles away. Westchester is served by airlines such as American, Delta, United and US Airways with 84 flights daily. Commercial shuttle service is available from Westchester Airport to Stamford.

Tours and attractions are still in the planning stage, but the main thrust is to do as much of "Big Apple" as we can: Rockefeller Center, Radio City, Broadway, Manhattan slumming, a drive through Central Park, World Trade Center "Ground Zero," United Nations Building, 69th Regimental Armory, Statue of Liberty, and Ellis Island. This is ambitious (probably 2 days) and they could be expensive tours, so start saving your money.

We are planning to arrange a visit to the West Point Military Academy, similar to the Air Force Academy visit during the Denver Reunion.

There are an abundance of local choices, such as the P.T. Barnum Museum, Mark Twain House/Theater, FDR House and Museum, the Lockwood-Mathews 62-room Mansion, a local Broadway-type Theater, visits to the Gold Coast of Long Island, and maybe a Bay Boat Tour to visit a lighthouse or two. There are numerous museums, antique shops and haunted houses to visit on your own. The New England climate in August is perfect with a maximum high of 83 and a low of 61 and the Connecticut shore is protected from the cool ocean air by Long Island.

I am considering a New England Clam Bake; however, the price is sky-high, about \$75. If at least 100 people are interested I will substitute the Clambake for the Early Bird Dinner. The menu is New England Clam Chowder, chilled Clams; Oysters and Shrimp; Steamed Clams and Mussels; carved Prime Rib; Maine Lobster; Salads, Corn on the Cob, Dessert and Coffee.

Please send me a card or call if you are willing to spend the money for a typical New England treat. I must know before the end of January 2004 in order to make the arrangements.

As always, we are looking for committee members and volunteers. Please write or call and let us know if you are interested in helping out.

The last visit to New York City was in 1958.

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**Do not send dues to Dottie Witzleb.**

# Motor Pool, Company M, 273rd Infantry Regiment

Submitted By: **Henry (Warren) Goodman**

10395 Utopia Circle East, Boynton Beach, Florida 33437

Telephone: 561/737-4954 • E-Mail: bikeship@gate.net

Just returned from Europe and found my first copy of the bulletin waiting for me. What a pleasure to read the news of the 69th.

I ran across the enclosed photos in my archives. The single is one of me in my jeep and the other are the men of the motor pool of M Company, 273rd regiment. I honestly cannot remember the names of any of the folks in the photo. I remember names but cannot put them with any of those pictured. I do not remember where it was taken, but it was after we met the Russians.

To give you some history of me, I am just about to celebrate my 80th birthday and am lucky enough to be quite active. My wife and I have been running motorcycle tours of the alps for over 30 years.

To get a chuckle or so, check out our website: [www.worldmotorcycletours.com](http://www.worldmotorcycletours.com)

Since joining the organization I have heard from a few folks that picked up my e-mail address from the website. It really is great as I said before.



*Henry "Warren" Goodman  
in Jeep #15, Polenz - June 1945*



**DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR NEXT BULLETIN IS  
JANUARY 31st, 2004 • Volume 57, No. 2  
January, February, March, April 2004  
*Get Your Material In On Time! Write those stories!***

\*\*\*\*\*

# Division Association Chapters, Units, Companies, and Group Mini-Weekends Across the United States

\*\*\*\*\*

We are interested in all news from Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, Units, T.D.'s and minis for this column. Mail your date(s), location, banquet cost, activities and room rates, plus a good write-up to **Fighting 69th Division Bulletin, P.O. Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or 183 Pineslope Road, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606**, as early as possible. Then follow through with a write-up immediately after the event(s).

\*\*\*\*\*

## Mid-West Group

**Fran and Zita Enright, News Reporters**  
7304 West Georgia Avenue  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53220

### Report on the 2003 Spring Meeting

The Mid-West Group met at the Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center in Northern Illinois from May 15th through May 17th, 2003. Fourteen people were present, about the same as last year. The Lodge was a good base to explore the area under the direction of **Gene and Marilyn Mischke**.

Those who attended were: **Gaylord and Ruth Thomas, Fred Butenhoff and Nancy Eisenreich, Eugene and Ethel Pierron, Richard and Marge Bichler, John Barrette, Fran and Zita Enright Eugene and Marilyn Mischke, Thora Miller**



*Left to right are: Thora Miller, Ruth Thomas, Gaylord Thomas, Gene Mischke, Marilyn Mischke, Nancy Eisenreich and Fred Butenhoff*

\*\*\*\*\*

## 661st Tank Destroyers

**Charles J. Yannul, News Reporter**  
7674 Rawley Pike  
Hinton, Virginia 22831-2017  
Telephone: 540/867-5155

The 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion held its annual reunion in historic York, Pennsylvania on October 9th to the 12th, 2003. Our hostess was **Ruth Mellinger**, widow of **Millard**, and her wonderful family. Their experience at having held quite a few reunions previous made itself known at this one.

We are always amazed at the number of members who show up early and this was no exception. It always has the feeling of a "family reunion." Including our host, we had four families of deceased members attending. It must be mentioned that through the 69th's website, one of those families only learned of the reunion less than a week previous. Their deceased family member had never known of the reunions and it was quite exciting to be able to fill in a gap in that life that they always so wondered about. There was even a member of the very crew that he had been part of attending the reunion.

In attendance were:

- Mike and Dorothy Kotnick** ..... Elyria, OH
- Chuck and Frances Yannul** ..... Hinton, VA
- John and Eva Golden** ..... Greenbrook, NJ
- John and Leora Sherlock** ..... Pawtucket, RI
- Bill and Mary Wahl** ..... Chagrin Falls, OH
- Dick and Thelma McKinnon** ..... East Jordan, MI
- Harold and Peggy Hicks** ..... Hatboro, PA  
and son, **Bruce**
- Bill and Ellen Snidow** ..... Pembroke, VA  
and grandson, **Nathan**
- Stanley and Olga Flak** ..... Lewisville, TX  
and about 11 of their family from the area - Great!
- Warren and Dot Mitchell** ..... Redwood City
- Jim Binder and son** ..... Bethlehem, PA
- Nelson and Betty Leaman** ..... Lancaster, PA
- Marcel and Carol Pugsley** ..... Nokomis, FL  
and daughters, **Cindy and Shelly**
- Pete and Carolyn Baskett** ..... Moscow, PA  
and daughter, **Laurie**
- Ralph and Vera Chase** ..... Hatboro, PA
- Stanley and Gertrude Green** ..... Battle Creek, MI  
and son, **Gary**
- George and Helen Ringer** ..... Hopedale, OH  
daughter **Debbie** and son-in-law, **Tom**
- Bill and Margaret Dawson** ..... Nathalie, VA
- Lou and Flo Molinko** ..... Canonsburg, PA  
brother and sister, **Joe and Pauline**
- Gene and Evelyn Bernardini** ..... Colledgeville, PA
- Sam and Gertrude Goldberg** ..... Pembroke Pines, FL
- Earl Repman** ..... York, PA
- Charles Rodgers and wife** ..... James Creek, PA
- Ellen Levie** ..... Bel Air, MD  
daughter **Michelle**, and granddaughter **Laura**

*(Continued on Page 18)*

**DIVISION ASSOCIATION CHAPTERS, UNITS,  
COMPANIES AND GROUP MINI-WEEKENDS  
ACROSS THE UNITED STATES**

*(Continued from Page 17)*

**Pat Slopek** and son, **Tommy**..... Tallmadge, OH  
**Ricky** and **Nadine Alletto** ..... Wheaton, IL  
son, **Anthony** and daughter, **Gina**

And our hostess, **Ruth Mellinger**, daughters **Dawn**,  
**Hope** and **Karen**, and son, **Marlin** and families.

The next reunion was determined to be held in  
Salem, Virginia by the gracious volunteering of **Bill**  
and **Ellen Snidow**. We are all looking forward to  
another "family reunion" in 2004.

\*\*\*\*\*

**69th Cavalry Recon Troop**

**Harold and Jeanne Gardner**, *News Reporters*  
2929 Mason Avenue  
Independence, Missouri 64052-2962  
Telephone: 816-254-4816  
E-Mail: RCNTROOP@aol.com

Our 52nd annual reunion was held at the Marriott  
Airport Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri in conjunction  
with the division's reunion.

The Marriott is a very nice large hotel and the rooms  
were very comfortable. Although we had a pretty small  
group of Troopers attending, we enjoyed ourselves and  
I believe that some of the folks got a glimpse of the St.  
Louis arch. Snacks were available in some of the rooms  
and a group of folks got together in **Harold** and  
**Jeanne Gardner's** room for snacks furnished by **Bob**  
and **Mable Schueler**, **Patti** and **Laura McGuire** and  
**Gardners**.

On Thursday evening the troopers and their ladies  
went to dinner as a group at a very nice Italian restau-  
rant. Then on Friday evening we all went out for a  
delicious bar-b-que dinner. It was good to be together  
as a group.



*69th Recon Troopers: Bob Schueler, Mabel Schueler, Gordon Ewing, Jeanne Gardner, Harold Gardner, Mike Moscaritolo, Mary Moscaritolo, Eileene Norman, Herb Norman, Frank Veazey. Not at picture taking: Morris Kaiserman*

Answering the Roll-Call at St. Louis were:

**Gordon Ewing** ..... Florida  
**Harold and Jeanne Gardner** ..... Missouri  
Guests: **Patti** and **Laura McGuire** ..... Missouri  
**Morris Kaiserman** ..... Illinois  
**Herb and Eileene Norman** ..... Colorado  
**Bob and Mable Schueler** ..... Ohio  
**Frank Veazey** ..... Ohio  
Guest: **Debra McGinness**  
**Nancy Lou Riccio** ..... Connecticut  
Guests: **Rebecca, Rachel**  
and **Lesta Fletcher** ..... Toronto, Canada

It was very good to have **Frank Veazey** with us this  
year. Hadn't seen Frank since Dayton in 1991. Frank's  
daughter **Debra McGinness** came with him. Don't  
make it so long till the next time Frank and bring that  
wonderful daughter with you. She is a joy to be around.

It was good to see **Nancy Lou Riccio (Makris)** this  
year and also her daughter and granddaughters from  
Canada. Bring them again Nancy Lou.

**Patti** and **Laura McGuire**, daughter and grand-  
daughter of **Harold** and **Jeanne Gardner**, said they  
really enjoyed being with our group. They had heard  
us talk about our reunions and now they were there.

On Saturday afternoon, **Herb Norman** and **Harold Gardner** were sitting in the hotel lobby having a wonderful conversation and who walks in but **Helen** and **Dave Zimmerman**, daughter and son-in-law of **Gardners**. They drove in from Springfield, Missouri just for the afternoon. **Dave** is the fella that had a heart transplant 9/30/02. He wanted to thank the folks for all the prayers that were said on his behalf. It was a great surprise that they came in. We did not expect them to be there. *(Thanks kids - Mom and Pop)*

We went up to our room and had a great visit with  
some of the Troopers. I think there was some money  
that changed hands to start a "computer fund" for  
**Moscaritolo** and **Schueler**.

Although it was a small turnout it was a  
very enjoyable reunion for the troopers. We  
had an abbreviated meeting of those Troopers  
present and information will be furnished at a  
later date in our Recon newsletter on general  
topics of discussion.

We had a telephone call from **Charles** and  
**Barbara Fox** at the hotel. They again  
expressed their regrets for not being able to be  
with us and hoped that we were having a good  
time. Charles was able to catch Mike in his  
room and was able to talk with him. They left  
voice messages on some of the other room  
phones.

**Morris**, we're sorry you were not at the  
banquet when we took pictures of the group.

**NOTE:** It was sure nice to have the 69th  
Recons join us at the reunion in St. Louis. We  
hope you enjoyed yourself and plan to attend  
next year also.

**Paul Shadle and Dottie Witzleb**

**DIVISION ASSOCIATION CHAPTERS, UNITS,  
COMPANIES AND GROUP MINI-WEEKENDS  
ACROSS THE UNITED STATES**

*(Continued from Page 18)*

## **Company D, 273rd Infantry**

**Kenneth Sawyer, News Reporter**

2311 Skywind Circle

Melbourne, Florida 32935-1460

Telephone: 321/254-7175

A sizeable group, representing Company D, 273rd Infantry, gathered at the Marriott Airport Hotel in St. Louis in August for the annual reunion of the 69th Infantry Division. Temperatures in the high nineties were ignored as we savored the offerings of the St. Louis area and enjoyed each others company. Thankful that many of us are still able to attend, we gave thought to those no longer able to join us. Many will try to make it to the New York area next August for the 2004 reunion. Perhaps others will show up.

Our attendance pretty well bracketed the country - Oregon to Florida. Pennsylvania was tops with six attendees: **Ed and Mary Case, Michelle Jacobs** (daughter of **Betty Jo McCarty**) and her two boys, **Cody and Tyler**, and my granddaughter, **Holly Mace. Roland and Jan Hendrickson** were in from Oregon. **George and Barbara Johnson** came from Virginia. **Betty Jo McCarty** made it from Texas. **Betty Jo's** two sons attended: **Russell** from Kentucky and **Dodd** from Alabama. If you're counting, you can see that **Betty Jo** had five members of her family with her. I came from Florida to make it a total of fourteen. We can not expect to see the days again when we have over twenty-five in our group, but let's see if we can keep it over a dozen for a while longer.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Battery C**

### **880th Field Artillery**

**Lowell McFarlin, News Reporter**

89 North High Street, Box 236

Jeromesville, Ohio 44840

Telephone: 419/368-7363

E-Mail: lowmarmcf@bright.net

#### **2003 C Battery, 880th Reunion Sugar Creek, Ohio**

Members and friends arrived at the Dutch Host Inn for our 24th annual reunion on Wednesday, September 10th. The weather was perfect and added to the festive gathering as each new group arrived.

When all the 30 members and guests finally arrived, we met in our spacious hospitality room for a group meal prepared and furnished by "Charlie's Angels." The food was good and the fellowship was wonderful.

After the business meeting Thursday morning, we went to the Inn at Honey Run for a delicious lunch. The Inn is a lovely resort in a wooded area in the heart of Amish Country. Shopping, visiting, and snacking was enjoyed in the afternoon. We all gathered again in the hospitality room for a "make it yourself sundae with all the toppings." The rest of the evening we were entertained by humorous readings and more visiting.

Friday morning we journeyed to Berlin to a new restaurant, "The Homestead," for brunch. After returning, many enjoyed an interesting narrated bus tour around the homes of the Amish people. Our banquet was held at the Dutch Valley Restaurant which was very near our motel. Group pictures were taken in the hospitality room upon returning, and then our "white elephant" game was our entertainment for the evening.

A catered farewell breakfast was held in our hospitality room before leaving for home. "Hope to see you next year" was echoed throughout the remainder of the morning. We were very happy to have **Lucille Abbe** of Charlotte, North Carolina, **Bettie Bartholomew** of Rossmore, California, and **Mary O'Brien** of Bethesda, Maryland with us representing their deceased husbands.

Those attending were: **Lew and Fern Pugh** of Cadiz, OH; **Marvin and Mary Reber** of Reading, PA; **Lee and Betty Meyer** of St. Marys, PA; **Enrico and Anne D'Angelo** of Saltsburg, PA; **Bob and Irene Williams** of Lorain, OH; **Cliff and Katherine Eley** of Howard, OH; **LeRoy Goetz and Bernice Vander-Heiden** of Slinger, WI; **Al and Marge Kormas** of Lakewood, OH; **Frank and Marie Habay** of Pittsburgh, PA; **Bob and Vivian Kurtzman** of Wilmot, OH; **Lowell and Marjorie McFarlin** of Jeromesville, OH; and guests, **Jean Dolan** (Mary O'Brien's sister) of Reston, VA; and members of the 69th Division; **Cecil and Alene Cottle** of Portsmouth, OH and **Pat and Janice Lushbaugh** of Funkstown, MD.



*Lew Pugh, Mary Reber, Betty Meyer and Marvin Reber, relaxing in the hospitality room.*

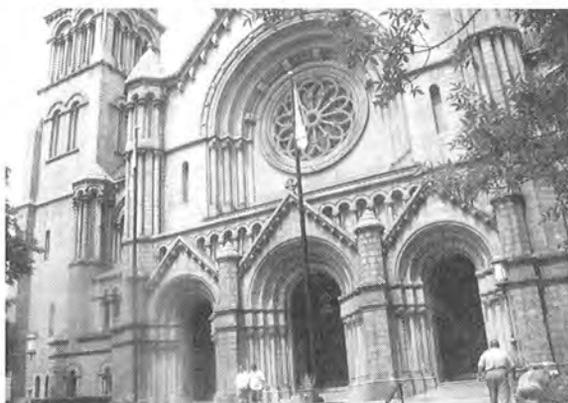
# The 56th Annual Reunion, St. Louis, Missouri



*the 630-foot Gateway Arch, St. Louis*



*Scene from the Gateway Arch*



*Cathedral Basilica, St. Louis*



*Riverboat and Old Bridge*



*69ers at the Arch*



*McCarty and Jacobs Family*



*Ed Lucci and Jane Matlach*



*Raymond Smith*



*Gene and Marilyn Mischke*

# The 56th Annual Reunion, St. Louis, Missouri



273rd Men: Front - Jim Ezell, Gene Mischke, Bob Rosane  
Back - Bill Nettles, Bob Shaw and Ed Lucci



Dottie Witzleb, Paul Shadle and Mae Smith in front



Charles Rice and Bob Shaw claim they haven't changed a bit since they last saw each other in 1945! Right guys!



Wilf, our Mascot at Registration



Wilf and Ed Hill



John and Michael Havey

Majority of photos by  
**Chet Yaztrzemski**

**Bob Shaw**  
273rd pictures  
**Connie Smith**  
daughter of  
Mae Smith  
contributed  
Wilf Pictures  
and top right pix



Jerry and Dick Hadley



Museum of Westward Expansion



Old Log Cabin



Tier Garden

# THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE

by - **Dottie Witzleb**  
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 Telephone: 408/226-8040



**Edith Zaffern, Sunshine Lady**  
 22555 Hallcroft Trail  
 Southfield, Michigan 48034-2011  
 Telephone: 248/357-4611

**Jennie Ambrose, Secretary**  
 803 Tenth Street  
 McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania 15136

**Ellen McCann, Chaplain**  
 39 Mayflower Road  
 Woburn, Massachusetts 01801

\*\*\*\*\*

## A Message from your Auxiliary President, Theresa Pierce

Dear Ladies,

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all the members of the Ladies Auxiliary who elected me as their President for the next two years. I will do my utmost to do a job worthy of your trust and confidence in me.

Congratulations to the newly elected officers of the Ladies Auxiliary who I will be working with: **Jane Matlach, Vice President; Jennie Ambrose, Secretary, Edith Zaffern, Sunshine Lady; and Ellen McCann, Chaplain.** A special thanks is always in order for our Editor, **Dottie Witzleb.** She has strived year after year to assure the Auxiliary Page is maintained at an interesting and professional level for our ladies.

When I recall the great ladies who were past Presidents of the Auxiliary, I feel a special honor to be associated with such a fine group. Standing among the best of those who have served is **Ethel Ruck.** She is to be commended for an outstanding job not only as President but for her dedication and leadership.

I promise to maintain the fine standards established by those who served before me.

Don't forget the items we need to present to the local Veterans Volunteer Service: crocheted lap robes, bibs, booties, and shawls; personal toiletries from hotels; and, packages of solicitation greeting cards.

\*\*\*\*\*

## A Message from your Immediate Past President, Ethel Ruck

Dear Ladies of the 69th Auxiliary,

Another great Reunion has come and gone!!!

St. Louis was the perfect place for our latest gathering. All the history connected with the Lewis & Clark Expedition added a lot of excitement to our time spent there. Although the Lewis & Clark Museum in St. Charles was not fully completed, we were able to view, in miniature, their entire trip from beginning to end with much in between. Without Sacagawea, they probably could not have made a successful journey to the Pacific. (So you see women are very important.)

(Continued on Page 23)

## THE AUXILIARY PAGE

(Continued from Page 22)

I hope no one lost too much money at the Ameristar Casino. It was fun to watch the players win. It was also a fun ride to the top of the Arch, and its construction film was most interesting.

The food and music were wonderful on the Riverboat Dinner Dance Cruise, as well as our Early Bird Dinner and Banquet. Those of you who could not join us missed another terrific experience in seeing all those beautiful mosaics in the Basilica.

The animals at Grant's Farm and Forest Park were special, too. However, my favorite stop was the Anheuser-Busch Brewery. Those Clydesdale horses were magnificent! Not to mention the cold beer and treats at the end of our tour on a very hot day.

Although our ladies' meeting was well attended, we were down a little. We were 87 as compared to 116 at Hampton. We missed our special friends, and hope and pray that all the health problems clear up, and we all can be together again next time.

**Marcena Gunter**, from the Local VA Medical Center told of her duties and received the 17 lap robes, 3 pairs of slippers, many greeting cards, and our check of \$500.00 for our veteran's personal care items.

Our entertainment was a real surprise! The "Strutters" were an inspiration to all of us in the over 50 age group. If they can dance that way, why can't we????

My term as president has ended, but I hope to continue to be helpful in some way at our meetings. I thank all the committee members, my officers and past officers for jobs well done. I humbly thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president of the 69th Infantry Division Association Auxiliary.

Love to you all and God Bless,  
**Ethel Ruck**, Auxiliary Past President



*The Strutters, Auxiliary entertainment at the St. Louis Reunion. Members range from 50 to 70.*



*Alice Wolthoff, Past President, Ellen Snidow, Past President, Jane Matlach, Past President and current Vice President, and Ellen McCann, Past President and current Chaplain.*



*Ethel Ruck, President, presenting a check for \$500.00 to Marcena Gunter, VA Representative for the St. Louis Medical Center.*



*Jennie Ambrose, our new Secretary, presenting the lap robes to Marcena Gunter.*

# Annual Meeting of the Ladies' Auxiliary 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN. AUGUST 23RD, 2003 ST. LOUIS MARRIOTT HOTEL ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

**President Ethel Ruck** called the 52nd Annual Meeting of the 69th Infantry Division Ladies' Auxiliary to order at 9:10 a.m. She asked us to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and remain standing for the opening prayer. **Chaplain Ellen McCann** gave the opening prayer.

**President Ruck** introduced the officers: **Vice President Theresa Pierce**, **Chaplain Ellen McCann** and **Sunshine Lady Edith Zaffern**. **Secretary Jeanne Mason** was not present. Last year her husband was very ill and she could not attend and he passed away about 3 weeks ago. **Ursula Goebel** is Acting Secretary.

**Acting Secretary Ursula Goebel** read the minutes of the last meeting which was held in Hampton, Virginia. They were accepted as read. She then read two thank you letters from the Department of Veterans' Affairs for gifts received last year. Also a letter from **Bob** and **Vivian Kurtzman** who were unable to attend because of Bob's health. She said it would be the first meeting they missed since 1967. The last letter read was from **Ed Combs**, son of **Ruth Combs** who is in a nursing home. She appreciates mail and, for those who would like to write her, her address is Manor Care, Room #259, 2722 N. Decatur Road, Decatur, Georgia 30033.

**President Ruck** expressed sympathy at the sudden death of **Bob Ross**. He and **Jean** have been in charge of souvenirs.

**President Ruck** said that **Barbara Brooks** was unable to attend because of her health and that there was a card on the table in the back for all to sign. She also announced that there were flyers about the 69th Infantry web site on the table in the rear. Also we had hoped for a sequel to last year's "69th Infantry Division Living History" program but apparently it was canceled due to insufficient funds collected.

**Sunshine Lady Edith Zaffern** reported that she sent 2,000 birthday and anniversary cards during the past year. Cost of postage was \$383.50 and cost of printing new cards was \$526.44.

**President Ruck** announced that there would be no golf report. It was an extremely hot day and the golfers didn't play 18 holes so there were no prizes.

**President Ruck** introduced **Theresa Pierce** who gave a report on the next reunion. It will be held at the Sheraton Stamford Hotel in Stamford, Connecticut, August 22-29, 2004. This is about an hour's ride into New York City and at least one trip is planned for there.

Eighty-seven attended, including 3 first timers and two guests.

**President Ruck** presented the slate of new officers: **Theresa Pierce**, President; **Jane Matlach**, Vice President; and **Jennie Ambrose**, Secretary. **Ellen McCann**, Chaplain and **Edith Zaffern**, Sunshine Lady will remain in their positions. She asked for nominations from the floor. Since there were none the slate was approved by acclamation.

**President Ruck** announced there were 17 lap robes, 3 pairs of booties, and many boxes of greeting cards to be donated by the ladies to the St. Louis VA Medical Center. She presented them to **Marcena Gunter**, Chief, Voluntary Service, who spoke about their operation. They have two hospitals, one located in the inner city. She stressed the importance of their volunteers and groups like ours which contribute to the well-being of the veterans. **President Ruck** then presented Ms. Gunter with a \$500 check to be used for personal care items for the veterans.

**President Ruck** thanked all the volunteers and committee members who participated in arrangements for our meeting, especially **Bob** and **Theresa Pierce**. She encouraged ladies to sign the "Officers and Candidates for Ladies Auxiliary" sheet on the table in the back of the room, pointing out that this was for future volunteers to run our organization.

Men's 69th Infantry **Vice President Bernard Zaffern** addressed the group. He said, while the amendment to the Constitution concerning surviving spouse active membership in the organization was voted down, this did not mean that the Auxiliary was not a valuable asset to the 69th Division and the organization.

**Chaplain McCann** led the meeting in prayer in remembrance of the 31 ladies of the auxiliary who died during the past year. A candle was lit in their honor.

**President Ruck** said that she enjoyed being president and thanked the group for the opportunity. Meeting was closed at 9:50 a.m.

Gifts were distributed and entertainment was by the St. Louis Strutters. This is a group of talented ladies ranging in age from 50 to 70 who, among other honors, have represented the USA as senior goodwill ambassadors in Russia and Australia.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Ursula Goebel**  
Acting Secretary

# Annual Meeting of Officers and Board of Directors

## 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN.

### AUGUST 21ST, 2003

#### ST. LOUIS MARRIOTT HOTEL ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

**Call to order:** President **Raymond Sansoucy** called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. The invocation was given by **Chaplain Snidow** and the Pledge of Allegiance was made by the entire group.

**Secretary's Report:** Secretary **Ralph Goebel** said that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of September 26th, 2002 had been published in the bulletin for September-October-November-December 2002. Motion was made and seconded that the minutes be accepted. Motion carried. **Secretary Goebel** reported that floral wreaths were substituted for individual flowers at the two principal cemeteries, namely Netherlands American at Margraten and Henri-Chapelle American. Memorial services were held at each of the four cemeteries around Memorial Day (May 24, 25 or 26 depending on cemetery) with prayers, volleys, taps and flyovers, etc. Total cost of the decorations for this year is \$206 (\$100 at each of the two principal cemeteries and \$3 at each of the other two cemeteries) compared with last year's cost of \$477. Motion was made and seconded to accept the Secretary's report relative to the overseas floral decorations. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer **William Ruebsamen** submitted two reports. The first report covered the period January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002. The second report covered the period from January 1, 2003 to July 31, 2003. Motion was made and seconded to accept the reports as presented. Motion carried. However, both reports were in preliminary form and were not audited. Final reports should be submitted as soon as possible.

**Membership Report:** Membership Chairman **Paul Shadle** reported that the membership roster was 4,015 including 345 widows. There were 135 deaths from last August to this August.

**Nominating Committee:** The Nominating Committee consists of Directors of the Class of 2003. Its Chairman, **Walter Haag**, presented the nominations:

#### For the Board of Directors, Class of 2006:

271st Infantry ..... **Noble Goode**  
 272nd Infantry ..... **David Theobald**  
 273rd Infantry ..... **Lee Wilson**  
 777th Tank Battalion ..... **Charles White**  
 881st Field Artillery ..... **Gilbert Rocco**

**Nomination of Officers for two-year terms are as follows:**

President ..... **Bernard Zaffern**  
 Vice President ..... **Paul Shadle**  
 Treasurer ..... **William Ruebsamen**  
 Secretary ..... **Joseph Huber**

The motion was made to accept the recommendations of the Nominating Committee. Motion seconded and carried. These recommendations will then be submitted for ratification at the meeting of the General Membership. The Secretary notes that the Nominating Committee in the year 2004 will consist of the members of the Directors of the Class of 2004.

**Future Reunion Sites:** **Bob Pierce** said he's always being asked about attendance figures so he gave a rundown on them (*see Minutes of General Meeting for specifics*). He said the next Reunion will be held at the Sheraton Stamford Hotel from August 22nd to August 29th. The room rate is \$74 per night plus 12% tax. Rate is good for 3 days before and 3 days after the reunion. Parking fees are waived. Prices of food per plate for banquets, etc. in the Stamford area are very expensive but, by showing the Sheraton people this year's contract at the Marriott, he was able to get them to meet this year's prices. Time required to go to various points of interest is one and a half hours or less. He is looking at tours to downtown New York, including Radio City, Broadway, Times Square, Ground Zero, World Trade Center, United Nations Building, 69th Regimental Armory (where the Association started) and early American cemeteries. Also of interest are the many mansions and lighthouses on the National Historic Register and the possibility of having a memorial service at West Point. He stated that he has to have everything set for all of the tours by Thanksgiving in order to have the information ready for the January bulletin.

**Web Site:** In a discussion on the Web Site, members objected to the posting of a sale of patches and the solicitation of memberships which required Board approval. **Bernard Zaffern** indicated that the Site must conform to the Constitution and By-laws of the Association.

**Rationale for reunion dates:** The plan is to stay away from the holidays. **Bob Pierce** also eliminates the week before and the week after Labor Day. The reunions start on a weekend and end on a weekend. He determines whether the city to be chosen is a convention city or a holiday city. For the year 2005 he is thinking about California and he has been looking at San Diego, in particular.

**Honorary Membership:** Motion was made and seconded to deny an application for honorary membership. After discussion, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at about 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Ralph H. Goebel, Secretary**

# Annual Meeting of the General Membership 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN. AUGUST 23RD, 2003 ST. LOUIS MARRIOTT HOTEL ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

**Call to order:** President Raymond Sansoucy called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The invocation was given by Chaplain Snidow and the Pledge of Allegiance was made by the entire group. President Sansoucy asked that a moment of silence be observed for Robert Ross who had passed away earlier in the week at the Reunion.

**Secretary's Report:** Secretary Ralph Goebel said that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of September 28th, 2002 had been published in the bulletin for September-October-November-December 2002. Motion was made and seconded that the minutes be accepted. Motion carried. Secretary Goebel reported that floral wreaths were substituted for individual flowers at the two principal cemeteries, namely Netherlands American at Margraten and Henri-Chapelle American. Memorial services were held at each of the four cemeteries around Memorial Day (May 24, 25 or 26 depending on cemetery) with prayers, volleys, taps, flyovers, etc. Total cost of the decorations for this year is \$206 (\$100 per wreath at each of the two principal cemeteries and \$3 for a flower on each of the two graves at the other two cemeteries) compared with last year's cost of \$477. Motion was made and seconded to accept the Secretary's report relative to the overseas floral decorations. Motion carried. Someone asked whether we had the home addresses of any of our fallen comrades. He was told that home addresses could be obtained by contacting the cemetery where the individual was buried.

**Membership Report:** Membership Chairman Paul Shadle reported that the membership was 4,015 including 345 widows. The average change in address per bulletin is anywhere from 25 to 40.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer William Ruebsamen submitted two reports. The first report covered the period January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002. The second report covered the period from January 1, 2003 to July 31, 2003. With respect to the "Equity" sections of the two reports, he noted that very little interest is paid because interest rates in general are very low. He said the Association is incorporated in New York and the bank accounts are kept in New York. This means he has additional postage expense since he sends all deposits to the New York bank by certified mail with return receipt requested. Someone suggested it would be more secure to use Fed-Ex in place of certified mail and the cost should not be prohibitive. Treasurer Ruebsamen said he would follow up on this suggestion.

In response to a question the Treasurer noted that over 4,000 bulletins are sent out three times a year while dues are paid by less than 2,000 members. There being no more questions or comments, motion was made and seconded to accept the reports as presented. Motion carried. However, both reports were in preliminary form and were not audited. Final reports should be submitted as soon as possible for publication in the bulletin.

**First Timer:** Only one first-timer stood up to be recognized. He was from I Company, 272nd. He was welcomed "aboard."

**Proposed Amendment to the Constitution of the 69th Division:** Approval of this amendment would enable spouses and others to be eligible to become active members of the Association upon the death of the Active Member. President Sansoucy said he had 7 proxies in favor of the amendment and one opposed. Several members pointed out that we have an active women's organization that should take care of the wives. Quite a bit of opposition was expressed by Bob Pierce and others. He said that from the beginning the intent was that the organization was for veterans of the 69th Division. No committee had considered the pluses and minuses and whether or not the change would conflict with our corporate structure. Several comments were made that the organization was not meant to exist in perpetuity and it should cease to exist when the last 69er dies. After extensive discussion, the proposed amendment was put to a voice vote. There were no audible votes in favor of the amendment and an overwhelming vote against it by the several hundred members present at the meeting.

**Nominating Committee:** The Nominating Committee consists of Directors of the Class of 2003. Its Chairman, Walter Haag, presented the nominations that had been approved at the Board of Directors meeting on August 21, 2003 for recommendation to the General Membership.

**For the Board of Directors, Class of 2006:**

271st Infantry .....	Noble Goode
272nd Infantry .....	David Theobald
273rd Infantry .....	Lee Wilson
777th Tank Battalion .....	Charles White
881st Field Artillery .....	Gilbert Rocco

**Nomination of Officers for two-year terms are as follows:**

President .....	Bernard Zaffern
Vice President .....	Paul Shadle
Treasurer .....	William Ruebsamen
Secretary .....	Joseph Huber

The motion was made to accept the recommendations of the Board of Directors. Motion seconded and carried. The Secretary then noted that the Nominating Committee in the year 2004 will consist of the Directors of the Class of 2004.

**Auditor's Report:** There was no report.

(Continued on Page 27)

## ANNUAL MEETING OF GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

(Continued from Page 26)

**Reunion Committee Chairman: Chairman Robert Pierce** said that preliminary attendance figures for the St. Louis Meeting are as follows: 421 people registered in total with 130 people on the St. Louis Discovery Tour, 143 on St. Charles and casino, 195 on Grant's farm, 139 for Early Bird, 197 for Brewery and Forest Park, 266 at the PX Beer Party, 355 people at the banquet, and 87 at the breakfast. Next year's meeting will be at the Sheraton Stamford Hotel August 22nd to August 29th. It will thus be the last full week before Labor Day weekend. He also said that we have two classes of cities - tourist cities and convention cities. We also have seasons - school kids and business - and he tries to work around the Jewish holidays so that we do not conflict with them. The Sheraton Stamford Hotel is located right off Interstate 95, about 40 miles from the New York airports and about 15 miles from White Plains airport. Room rates are \$74 per night, double or single. Tentative plans envision two days in New York City, the first day being a visit to Rockefeller Center, etc. and Ground Zero and the second day visiting the United Nations building. He hopes we can go to West Point. West Point has a program where a Division can present its history to the commandant of West Point. He also mentioned some of the old homes in the Stamford area and the possibility of having **Jane Matlach** conduct a tour of some of the mansions on Long Island. Also, he mentioned how interesting the old cemeteries are.

**World War II Monument:** Dedication will be on May 29, 2004.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business: Bret Everson** said that during the summer he was talking with his congressman. **Bret** told him about the fuss that the Russians have made over their troops that linked up with Americans at Torgau and he was wondering about giving him information about the 69th. **Bernard Zaffern** then responded that, God willing, we will have some sort of recognition or ceremony at the 60th. He asked that we not do anything independently but that anyone who had an idea please get in touch with him. The ceremony would probably not take place until the year 2006.

**President Sansoucy** said that **Bill Sheavly, Jr's.** book should be available in 2 or 3 months, also that we will not see the Ohio children this year due to lack of funding. He also commented that complaints were made about lack of service by the VA and suggested we write to our congressmen about this matter and to the Veterans Service office or any veteran's association and register a complaint. There was a discussion on the location of the Division's Colors - every year they will be in the registration room.

A hand was given to the new board members. The group also acknowledged the work of **Ralph Goebel** who is retiring as secretary.

The meeting adjourned at about 10:40 a.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
**Ralph H. Goebel, Secretary**

## Another Great Reunion

Submitted By: **LeVerne Loveland**

*Company G, 271st Infantry*

517 Rosewood Terrace, Linden, New Jersey 07036-5832

The 56th Annual Reunion of the 69th Infantry Division Association is now history and it was a great success. That was the result of careful and detailed planning by the reunion committee and they deserve a big "Thank You" for a job well done!

Reports that I heard were that 421 people had attended and 355 were at the banquet. As usual, the memorial ceremony was very solemn and touched our hearts and memories.

The many tours were well attended, very interesting and enjoyable, and the visit to the famous Arch and view from the top was a memorable experience for me.

The PX Beer Party (not just beer) was the opportunity for everyone to gather with their friends for sociability. And to our pleasant surprise, **Emil Matys**, Battery B, 881 F.A. Battalion joined the band and entertained us with his saxophone talent and received a standing ovation.

I was one of those who received the Bulletin for many years, enjoyed reading it and often discovered the names of my old Camp Shelby buddies. Finally, my conscience bothered me so I became a dues paying member and eventually started to attend the annual reunions. I enjoyed my first reunion and was reunited with a few of my old buddies and met their families, children and grandchildren, as well as so many other later members of my company. Right then and there I decided to attend all future reunions and to keep in touch with my old and new buddies and friends. Like all of our veterans, I often wonder what became of those many tens of thousands of men who received their basic training at Camp Shelby and ended up in some other unit.

Now I am enjoying being a member of the hospitality committee as a volunteer and it is a great pleasure meeting so many fine people.

It was announced that the 57th reunion will be August 22-29, 2004 at the Sheraton Hotel, Stamford, Connecticut, easily accessible to New York City. Hope to see many more "first timers" there!

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## ~ In Memoriam ~ **Robert Webster Ross**

*Company A, 271st Infantry*

Robert W. Ross passed away peacefully in his sleep Tuesday, August 19th, 2003 in St. Louis, Missouri. He was attending the 69th Infantry Division Association Annual Reunion with his beloved wife of 54 years, Jean F. Ross. Bob was a very active member of the Association having served as a Director, and our very dedicated Souvenir Sales Committee Chairman.

Our sympathy is with his wife, Jean F. Ross and the Ross family. Rest in everlasting peace with God!

# World War II Campaign Ribbons

Submitted By: **Raymond Smith**, *569th Signal Company*  
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## RHINELAND 1945

**February 23 - March 24, 1945**

The Allies advance into the Rhineland consisted of three major operations: Grenade, Lumberjack and Undertone. "Operation Grenade" was launched February 23rd at 2:45 a.m., by the U.S. Ninth Army. Grenade called for the crossing of the Roer River, the last water barrier between the Allies and the Rhine River. The first wave of infantry began to cross after 45 minutes of continuous artillery barrage and, by the end of the first day, 28 battalions had crossed the river. This early crossing surprised the Germans and Hitler reluctantly authorized a withdrawal February 28th. The Ninth Army linked up with the British near Geldern March 3. "Operation Lumberjack" called for the First Army to drive southeast toward the point where the Ahr River flows into the Rhine. The First then turned south to meet with the U.S. Third Army. "Operation Undertone" called for the American Third and Seventh armies to break through the West Wall and clear the Saar-Palatinate triangle within the confines of the Rhine, Moselle and Lauter-Saare. The Allies had reached the Rhine in several areas, however, crossing proved difficult since the bridges had been destroyed. The Allies finally crossed the Rhine at Remagen March 7, at the Ludendorff Railroad Bridge. The capture of the bridge dealt a severe blow to the German morale and by March 24, the Allies held the west bank of the Rhine from Switzerland to the English Channel. More than a quarter million Germans were captured and about 60,000 were killed or wounded.

## CENTRAL EUROPE 1945

**March 29 - April 30, 1945**

With Allied forces streaming across the Rhine, General Eisenhower reassessed the strategic situation and made a decision to shift the main effort from the north to the center. In Eisenhower's view, weighting the drive through central Germany would not only end the war quickly, but would preserve maximum strength for speedy redeployment to Japan. The western Allies made rapid progress from March 29 to April 4, in their implementation of Eisenhower's new directive. The German defense was so disorganized that the Allies used existing telephone lines to call from town to town demanding surrender. The Allies completed the encirclement of the Ruhr River April 1. By April 4, the French took Karlsruhe and, on April 11, the 2nd Armored Division reached the Elbe. By the end of April 18, there was little of Germany left under Hitler's nominal control, except Bavaria. By April 30, Hitler realized the end was near and committed suicide. Within 24 hours, news had reached the field and resistance virtually ceased.

## WORLD WAR II 1941-1945

**50th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration**

This bookmark depicts the World War II Victory Ribbon which was presented to all World War II Veterans honorably discharged at the end of the war. The two-fold purpose of the World War II commemoration was to thank and honor the veterans, their families, and those who served on the home front, and to develop programs and activities that provide a greater understanding and appreciation of the lessons, technological contributions and history of World War II.

# V-E DAY 1945

**May 8, 1945**

April 1945, signaled the beginning of the end for the Third Reich. Allied Forces encircled Berlin and slowly began to close in on Hitler's command bunker. Knowing that his forces were fighting a losing battle, Adolf Hitler committed suicide to avoid capture by the Allies. To avoid complete destruction, Hitler's military staff made plans to surrender their forces. The documents of capitulation were signed in Eisenhower's War Room in Reims, France, by Field Marshal Alfred Jodl, chief of the German General Staff. These documents effectively ended all hostilities in Europe. With the acceptance of Germany's unconditional surrender, May 7, 1945, President Dwight D. Eisenhower designated May 8, 1945, as Victory in Europe (V-E) Day.

# V-J DAY 1945

**September 2, 1945**

The dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima, August 6, 1945, and Nagasaki three days later, signaled the end of World War II. When informed that each city was completely destroyed by a single bomb, Emperor Hirohito stated, "We must put an end to the war as speedily as possible so that this tragedy will not be repeated." On August 15, 1945, the Emperor informed his people that Japan would surrender to Allied Forces. It was not until September 2, 1945, however, when Gen. Douglas MacArthur, along with Admirals Nimitz and Halsey, accepted the signing of the Instruments of Surrender by Japanese Forces. The surrender took place aboard the battleship *USS Missouri*, which was anchored in Tokyo Bay, Japan. Much of the world considers August 15, 1945, to be Victory over Japan (V-J) Day. In the United States, however, September 2, 1945, the day Japan signed the Instruments of Surrender, is officially recognized as V-J Day.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Smith sent these in as bookmarks. For additional information, write to:  
Department of Defense, 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemoration Committee  
HQDA, SACC, Room 3E524 Pentagon, Washington DC 20310-0107

**NEWS MATERIAL AND PICTURES  
FOR THE BULLETIN SHOULD BE MAILED TO:  
DOTTIE WITZLEB**

**FIGHTING 69th BULLETIN, P.O. Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**ADDRESS CHANGES, NEW MEN AND TAPS SHOULD BE  
MAILED TO OUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN**

**PAUL SHADLE**

**P.O. Box 4069, New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**DUES SHOULD BE SENT TO OUR TREASURER:**

**WILLIAM RUEBSAMEN**

**P.O. Box 146, Sun City, California 92586-0146**

**DO NOT SEND DUES TO DOTTIE OR PAUL!!  
DUES GO TO OUR TREASURER ONLY.**

# With the 777th Tank Bn., Hq. Co. Assault Gun Platoon

Submitted By: **Gaylord W. Thomas**  
432 Doty Street, Waupun, Wisconsin 53963  
Telephone: 920/324-4064

I was drafted in March of 1943 and took basic training in Fort Knox where I attended radio school. Then I joined up with Company A, 777th Tank Battalion. This made it very easy to go home on weekends. Some times it was more fun going to the Seelbach Hotel in Louisville. After basic training we were testing out new equipment and arduous experiments conducted by the Medical Research Laboratory. Because of this, I used to go with the Assault Gun Platoon every chance I could. **Lt. Hoff** got me transferred to the Assault Gun Platoon. I was assigned to the 3rd tank crew as the gunner. After many field problems we were on our way to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. We loaded on the S.S. Explorer at 1700 on December 16th, 1944. We spent Christmas Day on board and we had two submarine alerts. We dropped anchor in a blighty fog in the bay off Liverpool on December 27th. I set foot on English soil on December 29th. I was assigned guard duty on New Year's eve.

At 0930, January 4, 1945 we entrained at Liverpool and traveled by Continental Railroad to Wimborne Minister, Dorset, England. We had two weeks of vigorous training and preparing the tanks and vehicles. We learned how to use pounds, shillings, and ha'pence, to order bitters, mild, and 'alf and 'alf.

At 0500, February 5, 1945, the Battalion departed in a convoy for Portland. We loaded on L.S.T.'s for a trip across the English Channel. I got so sea sick, I thought I wouldn't make it. We debarked at 1300, February 6th, at LeHavre. The streets were stacks of brick, no buildings. On the ride to Camp Twenty Grand, we heard lot of cheers.

I was assigned to First Army Hq. Co. I left camp at 0700 on February 18th and traveled through France into Belgium-Namur: Liege. It was 305 miles, arriving



*The Nazi flag captured in the city of Leipzig*

at Camp Twenty Grand at 1600 February 20. On February 28th we were attached to the 28th Infantry Division and passed through Louveigne and Eupen where we were cheered until we entered Germany.

We entered a section of the Monschau forest, where we experienced our first taste of combat. We found ourselves cold, wet and knee deep in mud. We saw what our artillery had done to the Germans. They left us their equipment and souvenirs. The battalion was split up and the tanks had to help the 28th infantry through mud and mines to Schleiden, Sistig, Muldenhausen. The battalion moved on to Zingsheim, where

we stayed in a house from March 8th to 17th. We then moved in convoy to Etteingen and the next day to Wassenach. While there we were detached from the 28th and attached to the 69th Infantry Division. From March 19th to 27th, our tanks were used as artillery by raising them on ramps. The morning of March 27th we crossed the Rhine on the Victor Bridge. It was 1,372 feet in length. We stayed at Bendorf. The Battalion was reassembled and Dausenau, Nassau, and Weinahr were taken easily. We moved on to Neidertiefenback where we were split up. A Company went with the 271st Infantry where we cleared Wetzlar taking 12 POWs. April 2nd, we departed for Geisen. One tank fell through the bridge, but we had no casualties.

On April 5th we were with Company B of the 273rd with Infantry on tanks billeted at Betenhausen. On April 7th we became part of the Task Force Zweibel and assembled at Geisleden, and on April 10 we moved to Dashrieden. On April 13th we were with the 2nd Battalion of the 271st Infantry. Our tanks engaged machine gun and small arms fire and discovered that the Germans were in a military barracks. We gathered in



*Gaylord Thomas holding the flag signed by members of 777th Tank Battalion. Picture was taken May 6, 2003 and Gay can still get into his WWII uniform.*

*(Continued on Page 31)*

**WITH THE 777th TANK BATTALION,  
HQ. CO. ASSAULT GUN PLATOON**

*(Continued from Page 30)*

Weisenfels until morning. Then we attacked the barracks and a German Captain surrendered with 400 men. On April 15th we departed Weisenfels and took the towns of Burgwerden, Schkortleebeben, Kriechen and received information of a strong point ahead. Thirty-two 88mm guns and 400 POWs were taken prisoners. On April 16th Task Force Zweibel was dissolved and a new one formed on April 17th. On April 18th at 1800 we headed into Leipzig with all weapons firing. There were heavy casualties and the 4th tank was knocked out and taken prisoners at the Monument. The other three continued on, overshooting city hall, and we took shelter in basement of a house. Normally our tank would have been in the #4 spot but was moved to #1 at the last minute. The next morning we attacked city hall at point blank range. At 0910 a German officer accepted unconditional surrender. There were 175 enlisted men, one Major General, and 13 Gestapo Police. This all happened along side of our tank. Our crew was the first to enter city hall where we found the Burgomeister, his assistant and his nurse had committed suicide by poison. **Lt. Hoff** took a souvenir watch, **Clifford Acuff** picked up a pocket watch and there was an imprint of a German Luger on his desk. A picture of this is in Life magazine dated April 19th, 1945.

The City Hall and city Nazi flag was turned over by **Lt. Col. Zweibel** to the Commanding General, 69th Infantry Division and the American flag was raised. The Task Force was dissolved and there was very little tank usage from then on. 0800 the 15th of June, we departed from Leipzig in 40 and 8s.

We crossed the Rhine on the Roosevelt Memorial Bridge and arrived at Camp Twenty Grand on June 19th. We departed on June 28th by trucks to Le Havre and boarded the U.S.S. Wakefield. July 6th at 1530, I arrived at Boston's port of embarkation.

After 30 days of home life, we reassembled and headed for Camp San Luis Obispo. While we were having lunch in the middle of Kansas, a dry state, (I never saw so many bottles of booze) it was reported that Japan had given up. I was called home because of the death of my father. I was discharged at Camp Grant on December 6th, 1945.

Some of the thing that come to mind are: time spent at the Sealback Hotel in Louisville; the night forced march in Knox; the 14 days crossing to England, then spending New Years on guard duty; how sea sick I got while crossing the English Channel; the night I fell coming down the front of the tank and landed ahead of the tank and went into the house ahead rather than the one next to our tank, which was hit at the same time our tank was hit causing injuries and damage to our tank so it couldn't be used. The time we were going through a small wooded area and a German shot at the last tank with a small weapon. We were in the lead and our tank stopped and waited. We walked ahead and spotted three German 88 tanks setting between two houses about 500 yards away. The air force was called in and took them out. Crossing the Rhine on the floating bridge; lining up to go into Leipzig when our tank was moved from #4 to #1 and #4 was taken prisoners; and being the first crew into the city hall.

The 1st tank commander was so "chicken" he would not look out and was removed and was never near until we were packing to come home. He came to the tank, still had sergeant stripes and started to give orders. He lasted about 30 seconds and he took off.

We had a hard time trying to protect **Lt. Hoff**. He went after some German he saw go into a hiding place with just his pistol. We got the tank between him and them. On the ride into Leipzig he wouldn't button up until a bullet hit the front of tank and pieces of steel hit him in the face.

*Photo below: Leipzig city hall is in background. This is Gay Thomas' tank when they were firing at city hall.*



# Miracle of the Cloud

Submitted By: "Howitzer" Al Kormas

Headquarters, 879th Field Artillery

12500 Edgewater 503 • Lakewood, Ohio 44107

*(This story is not about a member of our division, but it is certainly worth reading.)*

**Written by Spencer January**

It was a morning in early March 1945, a clear and sunny day. I was 24 years old, and a member of the U.S. Army's 35th Infantry Division, 137th Infantry, Company I. Along with several other companies of American troops, we were making our way through dense woods in the German Rhineland. Our objective was to reach and take the town of Ossenburg, where a factory was producing products that were being used in the war.

For hours we pressed through an unrelenting thicket. Shortly after midday, word was passed that there was a clearing ahead. At last, we thought the going would be easier. But, then we approached a large stone house, behind which huddled a handful of wounded, bleeding soldiers who had tried to cross the clearing and failed.

Before us stretched at least 200 yards of open ground, bordered on the far side by more thick woods. As the first of us appeared on the edge of the clearing, there was an angry rat-tat-tat, and a ferocious volley of bullets sent soil spinning as far as we could see.

Three nests of German machine guns, spaced 50 yards apart and protected by the crest of a small hill to the left, were firing at the field. As we got our bearings, it was determined the machine guns were so well placed that our weapons could not reach them.

To cross that field meant suicide. Yet, we had no choice. The Germans had blockaded every other route into the town. In order to move on and secure a victory, we had to move forward.

I slumped against a tree, appalled at the grim situation. I thought of home, of my wife, and my five-month-old son. I had kissed him goodbye just after he was born. I thought I might never see my family again, and that possibility was overwhelming.

I dropped to my knees. "God," I pleaded desperately, "You have got to do something . . . please do something."

Moments later the order was given to advance. Grasping my M-1 rifle, I got to my feet and started forward. After reaching the edge of the clearing, I took a deep breath. But, just before I stepped out from cover, I glanced to the left.

## A Fluffy White Cloud

I stopped and stared in amazement. A white cloud - a long, fluffy white cloud - had appeared out of nowhere. It dropped from over the trees and covered the area. The Germans' line of fire was obscured by the thick, foggy mist.

All of us bolted into the clearing and raced for our lives. The only sounds were of combat boots thudding against the soft earth as men dashed into the clearing, scrambling to reach the safety of the other side before

the mist lifted. With each step, the woods opposite came closer and closer. I was almost across! My pulse pounded in my ears, I lunged into the thicket and threw myself behind a tree.

I turned and watched as other soldiers following me dove frantically into the woods, some carrying and dragging the wounded. This has to be God's doing, I thought. I am going to see what happens now.

The instant the last man reached safety, the cloud vanished! The day was again clear and bright. I could hardly believe it.

## Blown To Bits!

The enemy, apparently thinking we were still pinned down behind the stone house on the other side, must have radioed their artillery. Minutes later, the stone building we had just been at was blown to bits, . . . but our company was safe, and we quickly moved on.

We reached Ossenburg and went on to secure more areas for the Allies, but the image of that cloud was never far from my mind. I had seen the sort of smoke screens that were sometimes set off to obscure troop activity in such a situation. That cloud had been different. It had appeared out of nowhere and saved our lives.

Two weeks later, as we bivouacked in eastern Germany, a letter arrived from my mother back in Dallas. I tore open the envelope eagerly. The letter contained words that sent a shiver down my spine.

"Do you remember Mrs. Tankersly from our church?" my mother wrote. Who could forget her?

I smiled. Everybody called Mrs. Tankersly the prayer warrior. Frankly, I sometimes thought she carried it a bit too far.

"Well," continued my mother, "Mrs. Tankersly telephoned me one morning from the defense plant where she works. She said the Lord had awakened her the night before at one a.m., and told her, 'Spencer January is in serious trouble. Get up now and pray for him!'"

My mother went on to explain that Mrs. Tankersly had interceded for me in prayer until six o'clock the next morning, when she had to go to her job. "She told me that the last thing she prayed before getting off her knees was this," - here, I paused to catch my breath - "Lord, whatever danger Spencer is in, just cover him with a cloud!"

## The Exact Time!

I sat there for a long time holding the letter in my trembling hands. My mind raced, quickly calculating. Yes, the hours Mrs. Tankersly was praying for me would have indeed corresponded to the time we were approaching the clearing.

And 6:00 a.m. ...? With a seven-hour time difference, her prayers for a cloud would have been uttered at one o'clock - just the time Company I was getting ready to make its daring dash.

From that moment on, I intensified my prayer life. For the past 52 years I have gotten up early every morning to pray for others I am convinced there is no substitute for the power of prayer and its ability to comfort and sustain others, even those facing the valley of the shadow of death.

# A Tribute to Sgt. Louis J. Kelly

First Platoon, F, Company, 272nd

From Indiana - Died April 18, 1945

Submitted By: **David J. Theobald**

*Company F, 272nd Infantry*

8401 Moravian Court

Sacramento, California 95826

My wife Jeanne and I were fortunate to have made the trip to the Elbe River in April of 2000 for the 55th Anniversary of our meeting with the Russians. During the two weeks that some 23 of us were together, as we traveled across France, Belgium and Germany, there were many accounts of what happened to us in 1945. As an avid reader of the 69th Infantry Bulletin, I hoped to add my recollections of our experience in Leipzig and at the same time pay a little tribute to **Sgt. Kelly**, who forfeited his life in capture of that city.

When **Louis Kelly** joined F Company of the 272nd Infantry at Camp Shelby, he was **Corporal Kelly**. He was unusual in that regard, in that other than technical personnel like Medics, Rifle Companies had no corporals. (My father was a company commander as a corporal in the Marine Corps in WWI.) He was assigned to the First Platoon and was made Assistant Squad leader. As a member of a different squad, I personally had only casual encounters with **Corporal Kelly**. I just knew him as a good and friendly fellow who did his job.

Flash forward many months, now **Sgt. Kelly** was grouped with the rest of the First Platoon in a small clearing in some forest near the Siegfried line as we were being served a daytime hot meal by our company cooks.

Out of the blue, zipp-wham, an artillery shell landed in the trees above our clearing. The rattling of mess kits as we all hit the ground was nearly as loud and frightening as the explosion. After several moments of taking inventory of equipment and body parts, we found that the first platoon was extremely fortunate. The only damage sustained by the platoon was to **Sgt. Kelly's** rifle. The wooden stock had been severed in two by a piece of shrapnel right near the trigger housing, as the gun hung by its sling on **Sgt. Kelly's** shoulder. We all were amazed. From then on the sergeant was considered "lucky." Nobody was very hungry as we exited the area in the event of an encore performance by the German artillery. Or was it German cannons?, we'll never know.

Fast forward again to April 18, 1945 on the east side of the city of Leipzig. (I'm not able to relate details of geography since I was a Private First Class rifleman and as such was never a member of the before battle briefing with one exception. That was when I was a first scout down a highway, east of Witzenhausen.)



*David Theobald at the gravesite of Louis J. Kelly in Margraten, Netherlands*

The 69th Infantry had been trucked south of and around Leipzig and was assigned the job of advancing westerly through the city to a rendezvous with the 2nd Infantry Division.

The weather was clear and balmy. The order to "saddle-up" and move out was given to F Company. We advanced on a wide boulevard of four lanes of traffic, First Platoon on the left, Second Platoon on the right.

(While I was on the reunion trip in 2000, I wondered if it would be worth the effort to go back someday and try to locate the streets we traversed. I concluded I probably couldn't ever find the places because of the many changes that have taken place over the half century.) I remembered our training of keeping our focus across the street as we approached the inhabited apartments. When we got to the first group of buildings, the towns-people had spilled out on the sidewalks and were welcoming us like heroes. Two reasons for their attitude: one, no more bombing and two, we were Americans, not the dreaded Russians. It kind of reminded me of boy scout days when we pulled the helium filled "Snoopy" balloons in parades back in Bloomington, Illinois.

*(Continued on Page 34)*

## A TRIBUTE TO LOUIS J. KELLY

*(Continued from Page 33)*

Finally it got so crowded with onlookers, we had trouble advancing. We didn't want to hurt any civilians but we were afraid snipers would open on us and there would be civilian casualties. A 6x6 truck with a fifty caliber machine gun mounted over the cab was brought forward, and **Wendel Loomis** jumped into the truck bed and fired off a couple bursts up in the air and down the street. The spectators hurried off to their apartments.

Nothing happened for several blocks. We entered an intersection where two streets joined as they intersected our East-West Avenue on the left with a brick wall on the right side. Another zipp-wham, a panzerfaust rocket whizzed over my head from a second story window, and exploded across the street right into the brick wall. The force glanced off the wall a yard from a GI and spread his body for twenty feet along the sidewalk. The cry of "Medic" was made, but it would have taken a team of surgeons 24 hours to assemble and repair what one blast did in a fraction of a second. The rest of us hit the ground and searched for some cover. I found none but several of us returned fire into the buildings from which the panzerfaust (German version of our Bazooka) emitted. After a while, things quieted down and we moved forward again.

Eventually we arrived at a location where our advance was halted, probably while the brass decided what to do next. We ate rations and the foot soldiers assumed we were through for the day. Dusk was beginning to fall on the city of Leipzig. Six Sherman tanks rolled into our assembly area and the word was passed down for the First Platoon to mount-up on the outside of the six tanks. That meant about six men per tank. Tanks were not built for carrying outside passengers and there is precious little to hang on to. One slip and good luck if you fall in front of the following tank. One good friend died that way. The plan was to take this tank platoon and mounted infantry straight west through town until the platoon met the Second Division in the western portion of the city.

(Authors aside. Who ever thought up this ploy should have been assigned the front seat on the lead tank.)

The problem was that not all the Germans had decided to surrender. By the time we got started darkness had fallen.

(Further aside. The steel tread on Sherman tanks riding over cobblestone causes an unmistakable noise that can be heard for half a mile.) So we rumbled along through a business section on a wide boulevard that boasted a park-like median strip. Thankfully the median strip was landscaped with bushes. The lead tank passed an intersection, I was on the second tank when a panzerfaust hit the lead tank broadside. The rocket had to travel only 25 feet out of the window of the adjacent building. From a second story of the building, a machine gun opened up on the platoon of tanks. The first platoon jumped off the tanks and dove for cover in the median strip. I personally took a bead

on the machine gun protruding window and was about to empty my clip when someone in the dark hit my rifle aside and shouted if you fire, the machine gunner will know where we are. We hunkered down in the shrubs while the tanks backed up a few feet and started firing their cannons and machine guns into the building. Five angry tanks at point blank range made a cacophony of sound and damage on a target only feet away. Ricochets whistled by and the light show was awesome.

After a few minutes we started to take stock of the wounded. **S/Sgt William Steel** had a severe leg wound. He was on the lead tank. **S/Sgt Charles Boyer** and I put a tourniquet on his leg and a bandage on the wound. No medics had been assigned to our fateful mission.

The lieutenant that was the tank commander in the lead tank was wandering among us, without his glasses near blind, and with his Colt 45 pointing at everyone. I'm certain he was dazed. He asked me what he should do. I told him to crouch down beside one of his tanks and if anyone wearing a German helmet came up to him, shoot. I think three feet was all he could see. What happened to the other tankers in the lead tank, I never heard. If they did survive, I would guess they were deaf in ten years.

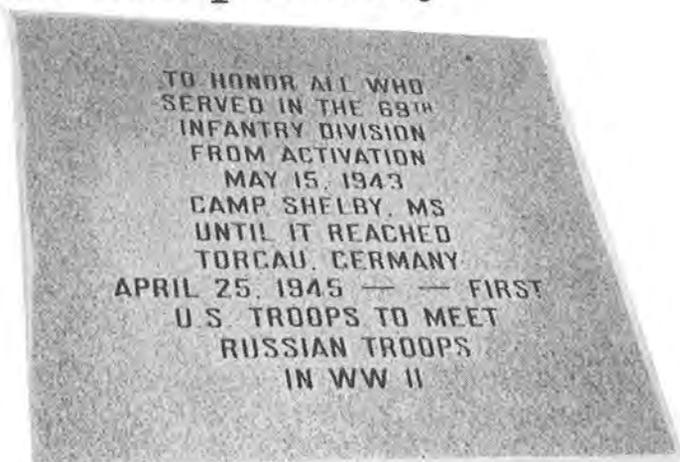
So this is where **S/Sgt Kelly** comes into the picture again. Someone decided **Sgt. Kelly** and **Pfc Oscar Hahn**, a BAR man (Browning Automatic Rifle) were to return to the company to get ambulances and medics for the wounded. My guess is our patrol was over a mile from our starting point. The rest of our platoon was hunkered down in the median strip where we stumbled on a few German infantry in fox holes. I'm sure the tank fusillade convinced all but the most fervent Germans in the vicinity, that surrender was the judicious thing to do.

An hour passed during which we heard sporadic gun fire including that of German machine pistols. **Pfc. Hahn** limped back out of the darkness to our intersection and informed us **Sgt. Kelly** had been killed by an enemy patrol between us and the rest of F Company. **Pfc. Hahn** who spoke German and was one tough soldier, later questioned the prisoners we had routed from their holes before he passed out from loss of blood. He had been shot five times, but he survived. Jeep "wounded carriers" arrived about a half hour later and transported our wounded to hospitals.

In passing I would like to say that many young men took orders to do some tasks that were extremely dangerous without hesitation. **Sgt. Kelly** is a fitting example of bravery that probably went unheralded. He also is a testament to the fact that the 272nd Infantry Regiment took a major role in the capture of Leipzig.

I'm sure **Sgt. Kelly's** parents are long since gone and he was too young to have a family of his own, but I'm also fairly certain if he had any family back in Indiana, they would welcome this account of his bravery.

## 69th Memorial Stone at Camp Shelby



This photo was taken at the Armed Forces Museum at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. The stone measures 24"x24." Purchase of the stone was made possible through donations requested in the May-August Bulletin in the year 2002. It had been hoped that two stones would be procured, but the response fell short of that goal.

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## Great Job, Registration!

Submitted By: **Edward V. Hill, Jr.**

*Battery B, 881st Field Artillery*

819 Main Street, Hamilton, Ohio 45013-2550

Telephone: 513/863-6851

E-Mail: sgtlou\_24@msn.com (new address)

**To: The Great St. Louis Registration Crew:**

**Connie Brough**

**Gerry Hadley**

**Russell and Betty Koch**

**George and Ruth Ehll**

**Jeanne Hawn**

**Joan Schulz**

Our sincere appreciation to all of you for your contributions to a very successful registration. You could have easily opted to spend this time in the fellowship of your fellow 69ers and friends. All went smoothly with little controversy through the week. The new cut-off dates certainly contributed to the smooth running registration.

We plan to serve as Registrars in Stamford in 2004. We wish you all a safe and satisfying year and hope to see you in Stamford.



*Let's all pray for  
the safe return of  
our many troops  
in the field.*

**KEEP THE FLAGS FLYING!**

## A Special Visitor

Submitted By: **Chet Yastrzemski**

*Company E, 272nd Infantry*

251-A North Main Street

Southampton, New York 11968

Below is a photo of **Rusty Eder** and me taken at my home. **Rusty** is the son of my former squad leader, **S/S James Eder**, then of Elkton, Maryland. We were with the 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, Company E, 272nd Regiment. Rusty arrived at my home on August 6th to show me photos his dad had taken at Camp Shelby and other areas. Rusty resides in Colora, Maryland.

No, I did not shrink, he is 6 ft., 3 inches!



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**These  
69ers  
still fit  
in their  
uniforms**



**Ralph Utermoehlen**

A-273rd (above)

and

**James Carroll**

I-271st (right)

brought their uniforms along to the reunion and modeled for us.

# Bulletin reunites buddies after 59 years

Submitted By: **Robert J. Kasmarick**

*Company H, 272nd Infantry*

364 Concord Drive • Oregon, Wisconsin 53575-3615

Here are a few photos that I have had since the war ended. I went to my first reunion this past August in St. Louis and was reconnected with my buddy **James Fallin** who I first met when assigned to Camp Shelby. We had not seen or spoken to each other since the war ended and the 69th Infantry, 272nd Regiment, Company H was deactivated. When high point men were sent back to the states we were separated into other outfits. When Company H was disbanded, I was away at special guard duty. When I returned a few weeks later, my Company H buddies were gone.

When my name appeared in the Spring issue of the 69th Bulletin, **James Fallin** contacted me and we arranged to meet in St. Louis.

I wish I could remember everyone's names in the photos, but I did the best I could. Hopefully, someone else has a better memory than I do.

I'll share a nice story with you about meeting up with **James Fallin** after 59 years of separation. Both of us had children who came to the reunion with us. While visiting with our families we discovered that James' son was a college instructor and he had previously taught my granddaughter and currently has my grandson in one of his classes. It is pretty remarkable that we could be separated 59 years and yet retained a connection between our families unbeknownst to us.

I had a great time meeting up with my James after all these years. We have kept in touch since and look forward to continuing to remain in touch. I also look forward to another 69th Reunion.



*Bob Kasmarick & James Fallin at the St. Louis Reunion 59 years later.*



*James Fallin (standing) and Bob Kasmarick (kneeling) with 2 Russians after the link-up.*



*Company H2: Bob Kasmarick, James Fallin, Chester Bricker, Browning (standing), unknown (kneeling), unknown, (standing), and Potty. Photo taken just before Company H left Leipzig, Germany*



*Company H Jeep: Browning (with rifle), Chester Bricker, James Fallin, Bill Kasten and Bob Kasmarick (seated on Jeep). Photo was taken while in Dahlem, Germany approximately Spring, 1944.*

**BULLETIN REUNITES BUDDIES AFTER 59 YEARS** (Continued from Page 36)

After the 69th was deactivated and while a member of the occupation forces, I had R&R which took me to Switzerland with other members of the 910 Heavy Automotive Maintenance Ordnance Company.



Switzerland: (left to right) Eversole, Wendell Tanner, Bob Kasmarick, Magnetti. Photo taken at a pub in Rochers DeNaye, Switzerland on March 27, 1946.



Wendall Tanner, Magnetti, Eversole, Bob Kasmarick in Geneva, Switzerland.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 1st Battalion, Company C, 272nd Regiment

Submitted By: **Nancy Eisenstein**  
719 Beaver Road, Glenview, Illinois 60025

My father was **Sergeant Richard J. Fisera** of the 272nd Regiment, 1st Battalion, Company C. Attached is a photo found in my father's album. The back of the picture is marked 1945, Torgau.

We were excited to discover and read about the Fighting 69th from the web site. My father never talked about the war and so we never learned what he went through. My 12 year old son is very interested in military history and in particular World War II. Now both my son and daughter will know more about their grandfather.



Sergeant James M. Garner, Pfc William T. Hambrick, Pfc. Frank F. Van Pelt, Pfc Sam P. Grundy, Jr., Pfc Stanley Kollowski, Pvt. Irvin Jackson, Pvt. Anthony Cucinotta, Pfc. Frank Himes, Pfc. Glenn J. Steele, Pfc Melvin H. Weiss

\*\*\*\*\*

# CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS AND COMMUNICATION SCHEDULE

\*\*\*\*\*

May I just make note to all leaders of Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, and T.D.'s to get your Activities Schedules to **Bulletin Headquarters, Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or 183 Pineslope Road, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606**, as soon as possible. We try to work at least a year ahead, as we only put out three Bulletins a year. When mailing in this information, do send your organization's name, person in charge (Chairman), address, city, state, zip, telephone numbers including area codes, dates, location, and anything else that you feel might be of interest for members to know.

## JANUARY 31st, 2004

**Deadline for news material and pictures for:  
Bulletin Volume 57, Number 2  
January, February, March, April 2004  
Bulletin expected mailing date is late April or  
early May.**

\* \* \* \* \*

## APRIL 25th thru APRIL 29th, 2004

**CALIFORNIA WESTERN CHAPTER  
2004 SPRING ROUNDUP**

**ARROYO GRANDE, CALIFORNIA  
(Pismo Beach)**

**Casa Granda Hotel, A Four Star Resort**  
Drive: U.S. 101. Fly: San Luis Obispo Airport

**Room Rates:** \$59.00-\$75.00  
includes private breakfast buffet in own palatial  
conference hall, heated pool and exercise room.

A no-stair climb visit to spectacular Hearst Castle,  
world-class wineries, gourmet dining, unsurpassed  
Central-Coast climate, Pismo Beach sunsets, shop-  
ping delights. You will want to extend your visit.

### For Further Information Contact:

**Bob and Peg Shaw**  
255 Plancha Way  
Arroyo Grande, California 93420-4611  
Telephone: 805/473-5856  
E-Mail: BobShaw26@aol.com

\* \* \* \* \*

## MAY 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th, 2004

**MIDWEST GROUP SPRING MEETING**

**DODGEVILLE, WISCONSIN**

**Dodgeville Best Western Quiet Inn**

1130 N. John Street  
Dodgeville, Wisconsin 53533  
Telephone: 608/935-7739

**Room Rate:** \$79.00 plus tax less AARP discount.  
Microwave, refrigerator, coffee pot, etc. in each room.  
Free Continental Breakfast. Indoor Pool.  
Mention the 69th when you reserve your room. A  
block of rooms will be held until 30 days before the  
meeting date.

Tuesday: Check in time, 3:00 p.m.  
Hospitality Room

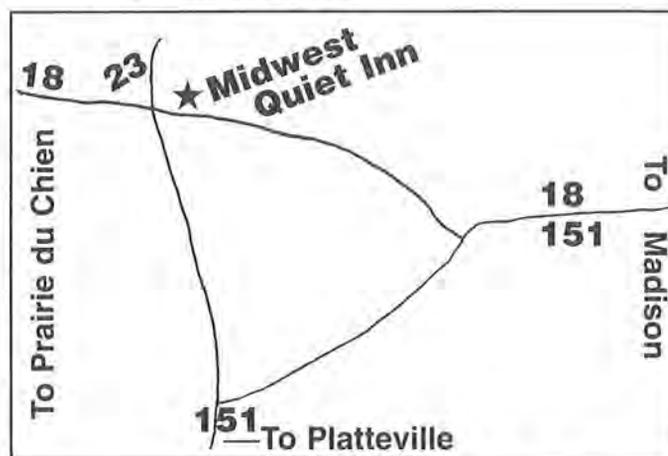
Wednesday: Golf at nearby course.  
Tours for the non-golfers.

Thursday: Tours - Historical area. Many tours to  
choose from.

Friday: Check out.

### For Further Information Contact:

**Gaylord Thomas**  
432 Doty Street  
Waupun, Wisconsin  
Telephone: 920/324-4065



★Hotel on Hwy. 18 and Johns Street

## MAY 31st, 2004

**Deadline for news material and pictures for:  
Bulletin Volume 57, Number 3  
May, June, July, August 2004**

**Bulletin expected mailing date is late June or  
early July.**

\* \* \* \* \*

## AUGUST 22nd thru 29th, 2004

**69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION  
57th ANNUAL REUNION**

**STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT**

**Sheraton Stamford Hotel**

2701 Summer Street • Stamford, Connecticut 06905

### Reunion Committee Chairpersons:

**Bob and Theresa Pierce**

*Company I, 273rd Infantry*

144 Nashua Court

San Jose, California 95139-1236

Telephone: 408/226-8040

**Room Rate:** Single/double \$74.00 plus 12% hotel tax.

Several tours planned to New York City.

For further information, see page 10.



## “Taps”

The melody of TAPS was composed by a non-musical (musician with no formal knowledge) nor the technical names of any of the notes. Union General Daniel Butterfield whistled it for Brigadier General Oliver Norton who wrote the notes on the back of an envelope July 2, 1862. The plaintive bugle notes that bring an involuntary lump to the throat typifies our loss and feelings of these two great buglers.

## THE WORDS TO “TAPS” SAY IT ALL

**Day is done, gone the sun  
From the lakes, from the hills,  
from the skies.  
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.  
Thanks and praise for our days  
'neath the sun, 'neath the stars,  
'neath the sky.  
As we go, this we know. God is nigh.**

### Frank Andrus

P.O. Box 403  
Fossil, Oregon 97830  
Co. L - 271st

### Reggie Bailey

3330 Clear Springs Road  
Mascot, Tennessee 37806  
Co. I - 272nd

### William Beckmann

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Elgin, Illinois 60123  
Hq., 777th T.B.

### Clare Darby

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Monument, Colorado  
80132-2835  
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Hq. - 271st

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### Theodore Honour

Address & Unit Unknown

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288 Belfast Road  
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Delray Beach, Florida 33484  
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### Jerome Kleinsmith

106-H Gwen Drive  
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### Donald Larocque

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02703  
Unit Unknown

### Amos Lewis

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Springfield, Missouri  
65810-2842  
Btry. A - 880th F.A.

### James May

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Atlanta, Georgia 30307  
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### George Milcheck

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15423-1327  
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### William Monagle

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Havertown, Pennsylvania  
19083  
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### Gerald Moore

12323 W. Sonnet Drive  
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### Col. Wallace Moulis

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### Mg. Spurgen Neel

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### Allan J. Plank

638 Birchwood Park Drive  
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11953-2623  
Anti-Tank - 273rd

### Artis Read

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Co. K - 272nd

### Robert Ross

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### Fidel Sanchez

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### John Sankovich

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H2 - 271st Medic

### Murry Schulman

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### Carl Schumaker

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18444-9013  
Co. B - 271st

### Dale Simonton

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54455-9311  
Co. L - 271st

### Martin Smalheiser

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Phoenix, Arizona 85050  
569th Signal Company

### Edward Sturgeon

797 Francis Avenue  
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Unit Unknown

### Clyde Sudderth

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Montezuma, North Carolina  
28653  
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*(Continued on Back Cover)*



*the 69th*  
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## “Taps”

*(Continued from Page 39)*

**Donald Sullivan**  
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**Edward Tackacs**  
 Manassas, Virginia 20110  
 Unit Unknown

**Ira Takle**  
 938 Lombard Avenue  
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 Unit Unknown

**Charles Taunton**  
 22 Buff Street  
 Greenville, South Carolina  
 29609-7306  
 Division Artillery

**Frank Titzer**  
 7300 Bartel Road  
 Evansville, Indiana  
 47710-4710  
 Division Artillery

**Emil Tobias**  
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**John Walker**  
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 Company H, 273rd Infantry

**VIRGINIA E. HOBART**  
 Wife of Daniel J. Hobart  
 Company K, 272nd Infantry

**ERLINE M. HORTON**  
 Wife of Coy Horton  
 Battery C, 724th Field Artillery

**ROSE MAJ**  
 Wife of Bruno Maj  
 Battery B, 881th Field Artillery

**MRS. JAMES PEYTON**  
 Wife of James Peyton

**MARY RIVERA**

**MABEL THOMAS**

**DOROTHY WERTS**  
 Wife of Merrill H. Werts  
 Company I, 271st Infantry