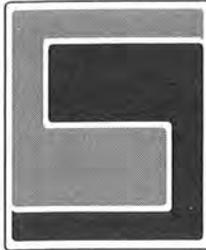


FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

★★★★ Association, Inc.



VOLUME 57, NO. 2

www.69th-infantry-division.com

JANUARY — FEBRUARY — MARCH — APRIL
2004

"THE THREE B'S"
BOLTE'S BIVOUCKING BASTARDS

P.O. BOX 4069
NEW KENSINGTON, PA 15068-4069
724/335-9980

bulletin

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*Deceased

69th Division Commander Major General Emil F. Reinhardt

The Fighting 69th
Infantry Division Assn., Inc.
was organized under
the leadership of
General Reinhardt



Above: General Reinhardt seen with a Red Cross nurse, donating blood.

Left: At the Leipzig sign, Brigadier General Robert V. Maraist, Major General Emil F. Reinhardt. Others not identified.

Below: General Reinhardt, Captain Louie Rodgers, Sergeant Bill O'Neil. Other man not identified.





*Dottie and Paul are quite happy to say
We plan to wed the First day of May
Although this is known as the day of distress
We know you will wish us much happiness.*

Since **Dottie Witzleb** and **Paul Shadle** are being wed on the first day of May, we would like to let you know that the new address for the **69th Infantry Division** is changed to read:

**P. O. Box 4069
New Kensington, PA 15068-4069
Telephone: 724/335-9980**

Please send all correspondence to this address. This includes all articles for the bulletin, address changes, and death notifications. As it has been in the past, all pictures for the bulletin will be returned. We hope to continue doing the same job in the future as we have done in the past.

THE MAIL BOX

By **Dottie Witzleb, Editor**



**P. O. Box 4069
New Kensington, PA 15068-4069
Telephone: 724/335-9980**

Henry Goodman, 10395 Utopia Circle East, Boynton Beach, Florida 33437 — Co. M, 273rd: Just received my copy of the Bulletin, and wow, it is terrific. I read it cover to cover and again it helps restore some memories that have been in storage all these years.

My compliments to you for the excellent job in putting everything together. I know how difficult a task it can be, and my sincere thanks.

I have heard from a few folks from my outfit, M Company, 273rd Regiment and it is really a delight to hear from them.

I have relayed the information on to them about what happened to me after leaving the 69th but there is a small period of time when somehow I got assigned to an outfit in Esslingen, Germany which is near Stuttgart. From there a whole new career started.

From there I was sort of drafted by a lieutenant who was taking over the job of PX officer of an ordnance group and I was to be his assistant. Shortly after we arrived in Mannheim he more or less disappeared and I sort of ran the operation. I got promoted a few times but since we were our own detachment, I guess I could have promoted myself. I didn't realize that until many years later. It was such a good deal I almost did not want to go home but finally did in April of 1946.

From the PX experience and being a photo hobbyist I opened a camera shop in Caldwell, NJ and retired in 1986 after operating a small chain of stores. My wife of 55 years and I are now living in Florida and enjoying every minute of it. Again, my thanks to you for a great job.

Earl Reese, 134 Saint Clair Avenue, Pottsville, Pennsylvania 17901-8604 — Co. C, 271st: I was drafted into the U.S. army on May 1, 1944 and sent to Camp Croft, South Carolina. There I received 17 weeks of Infantry Basic Training. In September 1944, I was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi and assigned to Company C, 271st Infantry Regiment. I was injured (sprained ankle) on maneuvers and sent to Division Headquarters where I was assigned to 69th Division Headquarters Combat Platoon.

In October of 1944, I was sent to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey and left New York on a troop ship for England. I was stationed outside of Winchester. In December 1944 I went to France on an LST, then to Belgium. In March 1945 I went to Germany until the end of the war (Leipzig). I was transferred to Bremein, Germany then to Berlin, Germany. In May 1945 I returned to the states and was discharged on May 30th.

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 15068-4069

Please allow six weeks advance notice.

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



Membership is on the downward trend. From December until March we have had a large number in Taps as you can see. We have also received a large number of address changes. If you move **please** let us know your new address **ASAP** so that we can change our records accordingly. We have received 28 bulletins back from the post office for various reasons. These names will be deleted until we are notified of the correct address. If you have the correct address for any of these members, please let us know and they will be re-instated.

The names that have been deleted are:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Irwin Buchman | George Magura |
| James E. Bunker | Yvonne Mullins |
| John Connolly | Frank P. Niedermyer |
| Henry G. David | Mrs. Frances Pursey |
| John B. Felty | Helen Puterbaugh |
| Fidel Ferrer, Jr. | Stanley Rubenstein |
| Rt. Rev. A. Fiedorczyk | Robert W. Sanders |
| Samuel B. Hackney | Mrs. U.F. Sherman |
| Grant Head | Francis Smith |
| Harold Holzinger | Harold Soloman |
| George Iwamoto | William Sosnowy |
| John Kelly | Sol Tinanoff |
| Everett H. Kiefer | John Vergot |
| Dorothy Kondus | Daniel Zimmerman |

Thank you for all your help and hopefully we will meet at the reunion from August 22nd thru 29th at the Sheraton Stamford Hotel in Stamford, Connecticut.

If you can not make it for the entire week, come and visit for as long as possible.

P.S. Dottie Witzleb, the Bulletin Editor a fine woman and friend, and I will be united in marriage on May 1, 2004. We will both continue with our duties and will do our jobs to the best of our ability.

Do You Remember?

- | | |
|---|---|
| They missed the turn
Car was whizz'n
Fault was her'n
Funeral his'n.
Burma-Shave | She kissed the hairbrush
By mistake
Thought it was
her husband Jake,
Burma-Shave |
| Don't stick your elbow
Out so far
It might go home
in another car.
Burma-Shave | When Junior takes
your ties and car
It's time to buy
Another jar.
Burma-Shave |
| Life is sweet
But oh how bitter
To love a gal
And then not git 'er.
Burma-Shave | If hugging on highways
is your sport
Trade in your car
for a davenport.
Burma-Shave |

A Note from Dottie, Your Bulletin Editor

Note New Address

P. O. Box 4069

New Kensington, PA 15068-4069

Telephone: 724/335-9980

Well spring has finally arrived? Here in the mountains of Western Pennsylvania we have had our share of snow and cold weather. The ski areas have done a good business and we are all ready for a nice spring and summer. My experience for the winter was a trip to Alberta, Edmonton, Canada. I thought it was cold here but minus 40 degrees (-40°) is a little too much. The week I was there it never went above minus 8 (-8°). I had always wanted to go to Antarctica but after that experience, I have definitely changed my mind.

As you will probably read in the bulletin, I am getting married to a fine man by the name of **Paul Shadle**, yes the Membership Chairman. I picked May 1st, 2004 as the day and Paul reminded me that was **MAY-DAY**. The address for all material will now be changed to read P.O. Box 4069, New Kensington, PA 15068-4069. I will still continue to do the bulletin so if you have any material to be put into it, please mail it to the above address. Remember, we are always looking for cover photos, so if you have anything that you think would make a good cover, get it in to us. We will return it to you immediately.

I hope to see you all at the reunion in Stamford Connecticut in August.

Message from the President



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

As I look out at the mountains of snow outside my windows, it is difficult to write a message that will be read in the Spring. I know that many of our members live in areas that were hit heavily by storms, and I hope that all of you came through the Winter with no harm.

I have secured a couple of new members by putting notices in some publications. If any of you are members of associations which print free notices (veteran's organizations, etc.) write a notice and list **Paul Shadle**, our Membership Chairman's, address. He will respond to any inquires by sending membership material.

It looks like we should have a great reunion, in a nice part of the country with good weather (**Bob Pierce** guarantees it!). **Edith** and I look forward to seeing you there.

Correction

Lee Wilson wrote to us to let us know that his area code was incorrect on the last printing of the bulletin which listed all new officers and boards for the next two years. Please make a note of it.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Term expiring in year 2006)

Lee Wilson, *Cannon Company, 273rd Infantry*
207 East Downs Street, Stockton, California 95204-2005
Telephone: 209/463-6689

New Men Relocated Since Our Last Bulletin

Richard A. Alletto - Company C, 661st Tank Destroyers
05045 Pleasant Hill Road, Wheaton, Illinois 60187

George Branch - Company I, 271st Infantry
2478 Ellendale Drive, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17602

Irwin Fox (*Reinstate*) - Company H, 271st Infantry
725 Ashbourne Road
Elkins Park, Pennsylvania 19027

Santos G. Gonzales - Company H, 271st Infantry
11960 Highway 50, Las Animas, Colorado 80154

Henry Goodman - Company M, 273rd Infantry
10395 Utopia Circle E.
Boynton Beach, Florida 33437-5544

George W. Griggs - Service Company, 272nd Infantry
115 York Avenue, Kannapolis, North Carolina 28083

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

Earl Reese - Company C, 271st Infantry
134 Saint Clair Avenue
Pottsville, Pennsylvania 17901-8640

**HAVE YOU
PAID YOUR DUES!
DUES YEAR 2003-2004
August 1, 2003 to July 31, 2004
Get your dues in today.**

Regular Membership \$10.00
Ladies' Auxiliary \$ 5.00
Bulletin Donation Up To You
**Keep the Bulletin Coming.
Send Your Dues in Today!
We need your support.**

Send Your Dues To:
WILLIAM RUEBSAMEN, TREASURER
Post Office Box 146
Sun City, California 92586-0146
Telephone: 909/301-9360

Do not send dues to Dottie Witzleb.

**DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR NEXT BULLETIN IS
MAY 31st, 2004 • Volume 57, No. 3
May, June, July, August 2004
Get Your Material In On Time! Write those stories!**

The Perils of Basic Training

Mr. Lloyd B. Roth

Company A, H&S Company, 269th Engineers
108 Muskingum Drive, Marietta, Ohio 45750-1638

Following orders, the good soldier checked the company bulletin board daily. He soon learned the Monday through Friday routines, but was that Saturday morning inspection stuff simply harassment? In civilian life he had Saturday off, at least the afternoons.

Early on, those who passed the Saturday morning inspections spent the afternoon in some light training or testing on some facet of the previous "week days" training subjects. Those who got the big "gigs" on inspection day morning spent the afternoon on a nasty work detail or further tough training by some disgruntled platoon sergeant.

But one Saturday in late June or early July that changed for we poor "G.I.s" of the Engineers Battalion. We were told to fall out at 1300 in fatigues. The whistle blew, we were loaded on trucks and soon had a view of countless warehouses, huts of the poor Infantry guys and more pine trees. What a tour.

Shortly we were out of Camp Shelby proper, wondering where we were going, happy that we were riding and not marching under that hot Mississippi sun. Then the trucks turned off the nice paved road and stopped at the edge of a clearing in the pine forest. We all got off the trucks.

Relaxing in the shade of the trees we were told that in combat we might have to "dig in" and hold our position against enemy infantry, artillery and armor. That was done by digging many "fox holes," both one-man and two-man. If they can't see you, they can't kill you.

We spent the rest of that Saturday afternoon digging in that flinty red clay dirt under that hot Mississippi sun with lots of sweating, cursing and finishing off the last drop of water in our canteens. Some finished digging their holes to the required size and depth and many more didn't. As I recall we returned a few days later and finished the job.

One day the weekly training schedule stated that on a certain date we would spend the day practicing defense against enemy armor "tanks that is."

The big day finally came. Again we were loaded on trucks and taken to the site where we had dug all those holes. What the heck, "we've been here before, big deal."

An officer then explained how the training exercise would be carried out. Everyone would get into a hole with his weapon and watch for approaching enemy tanks. Small arms won't stop a tank so just get down in your hole and let him pass over.

We all got into position and soon a light tank comes roaring onto the field, going into many directions and sharply turning and twisting its cleated tracks when

over a fox hole. That would cause the earth around the top of the hole to crumble and fall onto the crouching occupant. Quite a thrill but it proved that you could survive if well dug in.

Promptly at 1200 hours the tank left, the whistle blew and we broke for chow in the field. Brushing dirt off our helmets, fatigues and weapons, we were ready to eat and relax.

As I remember all three line companies took part in the exercise and we were bunched close together for chow. The hour was about up when one of the nearby soldiers from B Company said to his buddies, lounging nearby, "Where is Frankie?" (name assumed). The usual bantering answers, "I don't know, I'm not his wet nurse, I'm not the chaplain, he's asleep someplace." One of his more persistent platoon mates asked if anyone had seen him in the chow line. The answer was no. Then one man piped up and said, "He was in the fox hole next to me, that's the last time I saw him. Let's go check it out."

They returned to the designated fox hole. There was Frankie, crouched at the very bottom and completely covered by a mass of loosened earth. Yes, he was dead.

Is there anyone still around, besides myself, who remembers that tragic event? Did the 69th have more than this one training fatality? I would expect that it did.

Norm Belanger Writes ...

Company D, 271st Infantry
9737 W. Rockwood Drive, Peoria, Arizona 85382

After reading the last bulletin I noticed in "Taps" that my dear friend **Edward Tackacs** was listed as Unit Unknown. I want to tell you that **Ed** was a great soldier and a brave person, he was in my squad, Third Platoon, Company D, 271st Infantry.



Ed Tackacs and S/Sgt. Norman Belanger

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 Chairman

Robert L. 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.

Connecticut's Coastal Fairfield County

This Southwest region is composed of three principal cities of Stamford, Norwalk, and Bridgeport. The area is 25 miles stretching along the shores of Long Island Sound and sheltered from the ocean air by Long Island. The area abounds with Early American, Revolutionary, Civil War, and Maritime history.

Stamford Region

This region is 35 miles from Manhattan. Stamford's downtown is the center for nightlife, cultural activities, Performing Arts, Museums and fine dining. There are

five Broadway - quality productions and musicals. Among the city's unique architectural features are a fish-shaped church renowned for its stained glass. At the City Gateway is the largest free-standing stained glass structure in the world.

Norwalk Region

Norwalk, a native American word for seafood, has remained true to its name as one of the largest producers of Blue Point Oysters in the world. A short boat ride from Norwalk is Sheffield Island and its historic lighthouse. The neighborhood of Westport is rich in rural settings, history and celebrities such as: Martha Stewart, Phil Donahue, Michael Bolton and Paul Newman who call this area home.

Bridgeport Region

Bridgeport is Connecticut's largest city, built primarily by P. T. Barnum. The showman and Mayor turned this port city into a major manufacturing center in the 1800's. Here Connecticut and Long Island are connected by the Bridgeport and Fort Jefferson Steamboat Ferries, started by P. T. Barnum over a century ago.

SCHEDULED TOURS AND EVENTS

There is just too much to see in the short five days in Stamford, considering travel time and other scheduled events. We have selected a cross section of the most interesting and accessible to group participation. NYC has been limited to a one-day tour because of schedule constraints, cost, travel time, and traffic into/out of the city. There is an abundance of opportunities to experience on your own such as: local theaters, bay boat cruises for sightseeing or dinner, lighthouse visits, magnificent water fronts, Yankee Stadium Museum, or a side trip to Times Square.

Bridgeport Tour

The P. T. Barnum Museum depicts this man's extraordinary life and founder of "The Greatest Show on Earth." There is a complete scale model of "The Three Ring Circus," videos of his life and times; Victorian Art, architectural interior designs; and a special exhibits wing.

We will visit the Beardsley Zoo and Carousel Museum. The 33 acre park is dedicated to the rare animals of North and South America. Special features include an indoor rain forest, New England Farmyard, Greenhouse and the beautiful Carousel Museum.

Next stop is Captains Cove Seaport, a maritime and activities center with seafood restaurants, quaint shops, dockside-guided tours of the historic lightship, Nantucket, the largest last operational lightship afloat. Enjoy lunch on your own.

(Continued on Page 7)

57th ANNUAL REUNION - STAMFORD, CT

(Continued from Page 00)

West Point Military Academy Picture ID Required to Enter

This is the oldest Army Post in America, dating to 1778. Our first stop will be at the old Cadet Chapel in the West Point Cemetery where we will hold a Memorial Ceremony with a Color Guard and an organist, Chaplain, Firing Party, Bugler, and Speaker. The service will have Co-Chaplains, a West Point Chaplain, and the Association's Chaplain, **Bill Snidow**. A perusal of the Cemetery will surely be interesting to many members.

From the Chapel we will go to the West Point Club for a buffet lunch (included). West Point tour guides will then join the busses for a narrated tour of West Point with the last stop at the Visitors Center, Gift Shop, and Museum. The Museum contains six exhibition galleries of military history and contributions made by the Army in building our nation.

In order to go on the West Point tour you will need to supply Bob Pierce with your date of birth and what type of picture ID you will be using. This information must also accompany the registration. It is important that this information be received at least 10 days before the planned trip to West Point. If you do not supply this information, you will not be permitted to visit West Point. Bob Pierce's address is: 144 Nashua Court, San Jose, California 95139-1236.

Norwalk/New Canaan Tour

We will visit the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum, a magnificent 62 room Palatial Residence built in 1868 and considered the finest Second Empire style country home ever built in the United States. The home is called "America's First Chateau," and is listed as a National Historic Landmark, as an American Castle. After lunch on your own in South Norwalk, we go to New Canaan to visit the New Canaan Historical Society, a community of seven museums in five buildings. Highlites are a 1764 center chimney saltbox home; Red Rock one-room school house built in 1799; a tool museum, a John Rogers studio and museum from 1878 displaying Rogers collection of statuary; the 1825 Town House and Library; and the Cody Drug Store with original furnishings from 1845.

Last stop is the WPA Murals, the most important collection of Depression Art comprised of 26 very large canvases depicting life in the 1930's and early forties. Other important art are "Mark Twain Illustrations," "The Voyage of Marco Polo" and "The Purchase of Norwalk 1640."

New York City Tour

This tour is planned as a round-robin sighting tour of Manhattan to at least a drive-by of the most significant tourist attractions. It will also be a long day because of the NYC traffic. There will be at least two

stops with ample time to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Big Apple.

The plan is to drive directly to the farthest point, the World Trade Center Ground Zero location. This is the first stop with time to see the site. Heading back towards mid-town Manhattan, we will pass through China Town, Little Italy, SOHO and Greenwich Village. We will go by Madison Square Garden, Macy's, the Empire State Building, and the United Nations. With a swing back through Time Square, the busses will drop us off at Rockefeller Center with enough time to explore the numerous sights such as a tour of Rockefeller Center, Radio Center Music Hall, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Broadway and 42nd Streets, the theater district, and some cozy deli or restaurant for lunch on your own. Return to Rockefeller Center to board the busses for a pass-by of Lincoln Center and across Central Park to head for Stamford.

HOTEL AND REUNION REGISTRATION CUT-OFF DATES AND CANCELLATION POLICY

Hotel Registration cut-off date, to receive the reduced rate of \$74 + 12% tax, is **August 8, 2004**. After that date the rooms blocked for our Association will be released for open occupancy at the regular price. Hotel cancellations will be accepted without penalty up to 48 hours prior to the arrival date.

Reunion Registration deadline is **July 24, 2004**. Please note, this date is different than the hotel registration date! Registration forms received after July 24 will be recorded in order of date received and assigned to tours on a space available/standby basis. These forms will also be used by the Registration Chairman to issue tickets available from cancellations/changes. Tour cancellation tickets we are unable to sell will not be refunded because they are also non-refundable by the tour company.

Hotel food service (EB Buffet & Banquet) deadline is also July 24th for Unit seating assignments. After July 24th, Unit seating will be on a space availability or open seating. Food Cancellations for Buffet, Banquet, Breakfast will be accepted by contacting **Bob Pierce** or **Bill Ruebsamen** no later than 4:00 p.m., Monday, August 23rd, 2004. After that date, tickets not sold to stand-by members will not be refunded. Emergency Reunion cancellations will receive a full refund, less dues. No-Shows will not receive a refund.

Banquet Dinner Entree choices are not marked 35% of the time, the policy has been to assign the "Beef" choice. If you cannot eat Beef or Chicken, please staple a note on your Registration form. As an exception, it may be possible for a limited number of persons to get Fish or a Vegetable meal. This is not a choice! For a third entree choice, an additional cost of \$2 will be added to all entrees. Please, use this option if it is a health problem.

**WE STILL NEED HELP FOR
REGISTRATION, SOUVENIR SALES,
AND ESPECIALLY, THE HOSPITALITY ROOM!!**

2003 St. Louis Reunion

Submitted By: Marshall C. Mussay

Company H, 272nd Infantry Regiment

936 Raleigh Road, Glenview, Illinois 60025-4330

E-Mail: marshmussay@aol.com

I eagerly look forward to receiving each issue of the bulletin and then go through it several times. The letters and war tales get more interesting each issue. Many thanks to you and your continued efforts to keep the Bulletin alive and well. You are doing a fantastic job and we all (our 69th Buddies and I) sincerely appreciate your dedication



Company H, 272nd: Sula and Veto DiPento



Company H, 272nd James and Lillian Falin



880th Field Artillery: Stan and Georgia Bratt



Company H, 272nd: Top - Veto DiPento and Marsh Mussay. Bottom - Bob Kasmarick and Jim Falin



Company H, 272nd: Marsh and June Mussay



John O'Connor, 880th, with his niece, Bridget O'Malley

Lester Hart Writes . . .

Battery C, 881st Field Artillery

197 Carefree Lane

Leesburg, Florida 34748

The enclosed article is about the older vets that volunteered as honor guards at the National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida.

They don't know the soldier, just the name. I'm beginning to wonder who will do this for them?

I have been out to Bushnell twice to watch them do this. Sometimes two services are going on at the same time (different parts of the park). The headquarters has to tell you what time the funeral of your loved one will be. They are very good at this and furnish a tent and folding chairs for the service. The cemetery is laid out so the graves are together and the cremations are together. Similar to what you would find in Arlington, Virginia. It's the same type of service. The government bought more land in Bushnell because it was filling up fast. The greenskeepers are busy during the summer to keep the cemetery looking nice. At 78 I'm one of the younger ones. **Stephen J. Rojewicz** Headquarters, 880th, is 90 years old.

Honor guard wonders 'Who will bury me?'

They buried two of their own this month.

It's starting to get to them, even though they exist to send World War II veterans to their eternal rest with military honors, including a 21-gun salute and a folded American flag.

Now, 20 Lake County vets who provide this last service for their comrades are starting to ask themselves: Who will bury me?

Consider that on Tuesday the Lake County War Veterans Honor Guard served at five burials at the Florida National Cemetery.

"These guys were tuckered out," said Ken Every, who at 69 is one of the youngest members. "One guy on a cane, he's wobbly, but he's up there every day. Another guy's in a walker.

"One amputee, he wants to help, and we're trying to bring him up in a wheelchair."

What they really want, however, is young blood.

Most of these fellows are World War II veterans, and they are vanishing.

Across the country, more than 3 million World War II veterans have died. Last year, the government estimated that they were passing on at a rate of 1,100 a day. Today, the estimate stands at 1,500 a day.

One in eight of your neighbors - about 24,600 men and women in Lake - has served in the military, but the honor guard can't find young veterans who see this corner of their life as important. The older gents joke about "shaming" the Vietnam or Korean era vets into helping out. There's some truth to it, but there is more of a yearning, a desire to pass on this commitment.

Bill Welker became the unit's commander after the January 5th death of Leesburg resident Bob Dugan, who faithfully buried his comrades for 11 years. Welker, 77, said he often finds "a little animosity yet" from Vietnam vets he has asked to join the group.

For them, he has this message: "Put that aside and join us, because we need you."

Anyone who steps forward shouldn't expect a clubhouse full of jolly veterans up-ending brewskis and telling war stories. Expect to hook up with men whose commitment to country runs deep and strong, through a lifetime.

George Jerue of Mount Dora, who helped found the honor guard in May 1988, served four years before getting "knocked out" by the Japanese. He has never been the same since mortar shrapnel hit him in the head. He gets horrendous headaches; he's dizzy when he looks up.

Jerue used to lead some of the services but now he gets too nervous, so he is part of the crew on the firing line for the 21-gun salute.

"Let's be truthful about it: I know what I am. I do what I can," the 81-year-old Marine said. "We don't know who we bury - just the name - but he's still one of us. He deserves a last tribute."

A time is coming quickly when the vets in the honor guard won't be able to make it anymore.

Millard B. Parker, one of the unit's founders, lives in a Leesburg nursing home. The 87-year-old tells Jerue that he may come to the cemetery next month.

"He says, 'I may not be able to walk, but maybe I can get there with you.'

"He's just hoping."

America's Lost Vets

A fire at a St. Louis, warehouse in 1973 destroyed 18 million records, affecting U.S. Army veterans who served between 1912 and 1960, and U.S. Air Force veterans from 1947 to 1964 who have the last name of Hubbard through the end of the alphabet.

Visit Us
On
The
Web
at



www.69th-infantry-division.com

or contact

annejoelip@earthlink.net

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

**69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 2004
57th ANNUAL REUNION
461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN.
Sheraton Stamford Hotel • Stamford, Connecticut
AUGUST 22nd thru AUGUST 29th, 2004**

SEND THIS RESERVATION FORM TO:

ATTENTION: RESERVATIONS

SHERATON STAMFORD HOTEL

2701 Summer Street, Stamford, CT 06905

Telephone: 203/359-1300 • Fax: 203/978-5606

SHERATON CENTRAL RESERVATION: 1-800-325-3535

Please reserve one of the following:

Single _____ Double _____ Price Single or Double - \$74.00 per night plus 12% Tax

Print full names of ALL persons sharing room: _____

NOTE: Special accommodations required: (if available)

HANDICAPPED EQUIPPED _____ NON-SMOKING _____

ONE KING SIZE BED _____ or TWO QUEEN SIZE BEDS _____

I / We plan to arrive (day) _____, August _____, 2004. (Check in after 3:00 p.m.)

I / We plan to depart (day) _____, August _____, 2004. (Check out by 12:00 noon)

I / We will be bringing guest(s) _____ Adults _____ Children

If possible, I/We wish to be quartered near other guests from the same Unit (Specify) _____

Send Confirmation to: (Please Type or Print)

Name: _____

Street / R.D. / P.O. Box: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Telephone / Area Code: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

IN ORDER TO CONFIRM RESERVATIONS, One of the following *MUST* accompany this form:

Check or Money Order (one night's lodging plus tax) payable to the SHERATON STAMFORD HOTEL, or
Major Credit Card and Date of Expiration. The following Credit Cards are accepted:

American Express Master Card VISA Diner's Club Discover

Credit Card Name _____ Number _____ Expires _____

I, (your signature) _____ authorize the Sheraton Stamford Hotel

to make charges on my credit card. Date: _____

If this form has been filled out by anyone other than the person for whom this reservation has been made, give name, address and telephone number of the person filling out this form. _____

Reservations must be received not later than **AUGUST 8, 2004**. After this date the group's blocked rooms will be released for immediate resale. Reservations requested after this date will be on a space available basis at the regular rate. Group rates will be honored for three (3) days prior to and after the reunion, based upon availability at the time of the original reservation. If a particular type of room is unavailable, the next most suitable room will be assigned. No particular room, room type, or location can be guaranteed. Deposit returnable only on 48-hour cancellation notice prior to your arrival date.

69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 57th ANNUAL REUNION

461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN. Sheraton Stamford Hotel • Stamford, Connecticut AUGUST 22nd thru AUGUST 29th, 2004

Registration form to be mailed to: **William Ruebsamen, Treasurer**

P.O. Box 146, Sun City, CA 92586-0146 • Telephone: 909/301-9360

I/we will attend the 69th Infantry Division Association Reunion in Stamford, Connecticut during the week of August 22nd thru August 29th, 2004 and will attend the following activities:

Name: _____ First Timer Second Timer Old Timer

Street / R.D. / P.O. Box: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Telephone / Area Code: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Unit: _____ Wife's Name: _____

Guest(s) Full Name: _____

Daily Events	<u>ALL PRICED EVENTS REQUIRE A TICKET</u>	Per Person	Number Persons	Amount
Registration: Monday thru Friday , 9:00 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.				
Sunday, August 22nd — Early Arrivals on your own.				
Monday, August 23rd — Registration and Hospitality Room Open				
Tuesday, August 24th — BRIDGEPORT TOUR , 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.		\$ 39.00	_____	\$ _____
Wednesday, August 25th — WEST POINT MILITARY ACADEMY , 9 to 4 p.m.		\$ 39.00	_____	\$ _____
IMPORTANT: Type of Photo ID and Birth Date required 10 days prior - See Page 7				
Thursday, August 26th				
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING — 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.				
NORWALK/NEW CANAAN TOUR , 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.		\$ 39.00	_____	\$ _____
EARLY BIRD BUFFET , Cash Bar 6:00 p.m.; Dinner 7:00-9:00 p.m.		\$ 30.00	_____	\$ _____
Friday, August 27th				
NEW YORK CITY TOUR , 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.		\$ 45.00	_____	\$ _____
PX BEER PARTY — 8:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.		\$ 5.00	_____	\$ _____
Saturday, August 28th — COFFEE AND DANISH - 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.				
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP and LADIES AUXILIARY MEETING 9:00 a.m. to Noon				
BANQUET: Cocktail Hour 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.				
MEMORIAL SERVICE — 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.				
DINNER DANCE - 7:30 p.m. to 12:00 Midnight		\$ 32.00	_____	\$ _____
Entrée Choices: Prime Rib <u> / </u> or Chicken Marsala <u> / </u>				
Sunday, August 29th - Farewell Buffet Breakfast - 7:30-9:00 a.m.		\$ 12.00	_____	\$ _____
Replacement Cost for Lost or Broken Permanent Badges		\$ 4.00	_____	\$ _____
SUPPORT YOUR HOSPITALITY ROOM: DONATIONS PLEASE!!!				
			Reunion Sub-Total	\$ _____
DUES — New Dues Year - August 1, 2004 to July 31, 2005				
Regular Membership		\$ 10.00	_____	\$ _____
Ladies Auxiliary		\$ 5.00	_____	\$ _____
Postage and Bulletin Donation (up to you)			_____	\$ _____
			Total Amount Paid	\$ _____

Make Check or Money Order Payable to: **69th Infantry Division Association**
ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY PAYMENT IN FULL — IF NOT — YOUR RESERVATION WILL BE LAID ASIDE UNTIL PAYMENT IS MADE AND THIS COULD RESULT IN YOUR REQUEST FOR SEATING AND FUNCTIONS BEING DENIED. NO CHARGE CARDS ACCEPTED FOR EVENTS. **MAIL IN CUT-OFF IS JULY 24th, 2004.**

If you do not have a plastic badge from earlier Reunions, please check box.
Permanent badges will be made if your request is accompanied by an advance prepaid Reservation. Failure to attend Reunion will result in a \$4.00 charge for each badge ordered, and will be deducted from your refund. Please fill out this form and mail it with your payment in full, no later than thirty (30) days prior to the Reunion. By doing this, it will make our job much easier, and save you time at the Registration Desk.

In Memory of our Dad, "TOPKICK" Knick

Company A, 661st Tank Destroyer

The Thomas Sanford Knick Family

511 Fairview Avenue

Clifton Forge, Virginia 24422

E-Mail: knickknackdirector@yahoo.com



Thomas Sanford (Topkick) Knick passed away on April 29th, 2003. Tom was assigned to Company A, 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion as Staff Sergeant where he served during World War II and the Korean War, receiving the Good Conduct Award and Purple Heart Medal. Tom also received the World War II Victory Medal, 1 Overseas Service Bar, European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with 1 Bronze Service Star, and The American Campaign Medal with 1 Bronze Service Star, and The American Campaign Medal. His last duty assignment and major command was USA Engr Cen & Fort Belvoir-B, 2d USA. In 1964 "Topkick" retired as Master Sergeant E-8 (P). His wife of 57 years, Frances Knick, and his four children, nine grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren survive him. His honor will always remain, but all those who knew and loved him will sadly miss his great knowledge and sense of humor.

In Loving Memory,

The Family of Thomas S. Knick

P.S. If you knew our dad, and would like to share some experiences you had with him, we would enjoy hearing from you. Please write or e-mail us at the above address.

WWII Oral Histories

Stephen Rojcewicz

881st Field Artillery

135 Endicott Street

Worcester, Massachusetts 01610-1944

Telephone: 508/756-3046

Hi, Fellow 69ers. Before we all become individual examples of history, let future generations know about us, up close and personal. If you have not yet done so, prepare that oral history. It is easy and you can do it at home. Here is the way it was done in my case:

The Historical Museum in my city ran ads for a year inviting veterans to come and give their story. My appointment was quickly arranged and no doubt, every town, village, or city in this vast land has a museum or a library willing to help a veteran in this regard.

The head librarian seated me at a table with a microphone facing me. She put me at ease and said she would guide the interview with questions and comments. When the recording started she said, "What is your full name?" and we went on from there with her prepared material. Most of the time it was just me talking for nearly an hour.

Near the end she said the purpose of the oral history was for future generations interested in World War II. At the end she said, "What final thoughts do you have for the generations to come?"

This was my answer: "If you want to be happy for an hour take a nap. If you want to be happy for a day go fishing. If you want to be happy for a week take a vacation. But if you want to be happy all the days of your life serve others."

Let your local authorities have a copy of your oral history. Send one as requested in a recent bulletin to:

The National D-Day Museum
945 Magazine Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

273rd Picture/ Patches Wanted

Mr. Edgar Walls

Company A, 273rd Infantry Regiment

R.R. 1 Box 233, Elnora, Indiana 47529

I was with Company A, 273rd Infantry Regiment, all through the war in Europe. Could someone send me a picture of the 273rd Regiment insignia and a picture of the Fighting 69th Division patch. I want to sew them on my cap.

My buddy here does sewing like that and it sure would be nice to have them on my cap.

Also, if these patches are available, please write to me and let me know.

“Aloha from ‘The Gathering Place’”

William H. Sheavly, Jr.
5301 Weblin Farm Road
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23455

The gentle sun-drenched beach of Waikiki, Oahu, might be considered an unusual place for a 69th “Mini Reunion,” but that’s just what happened recently when **Bill Sheavly, Jr.**, an Associate Member of the Association, met up with long time 69’ers, **Chet** and **Barbara Yastremski** in early January. In December Bill received an e-mail forwarded to him by his father, **Bill Sheavly, Sr.**, from **Chet**, informing all of his 69th buddies of his whereabouts over the approaching months. **Bill Jr.** called the **Yastremskis** to tell them he was coming to Hawaii and wanted to see them. So when **Bill Jr.** called the **Yastremskis** at their Honolulu address, **Barbara** excitedly answered the phone, and said, “Chet is already down at the beach and I’m getting ready to head that way myself...come and join us!” Bill and Barbara met a short time later near a surfer statue off Kalakaua Avenue, the main boulevard in Waikiki, and located a very surprised Chet lying on a beach towel next to a coconut tree enjoying the brilliant 80° sunshine.

For the next two hours, they all talked and laughed about 69th activities, Chet’s “war stories,” the upcoming reunion in Stamford and Bill’s forthcoming book on the 69th. It was a delightful and enjoyable meeting for all three. As the afternoon sunlight began to fade on Oahu, known as “The Gathering Place,” Bill thanked them both for a wonderful few hours of 69th reminiscing and left the sandy beach headed back to his hotel anticipating their next visit together. Sure enough, a few days later they all met for a second time at their condo for some group pictures of all three of them enjoying the warm breezes and tropical paradise of Hawaii. Aloha and Mahalo!



Chet and Barbara Yastremski with Bill Sheavly, Jr. at their condo. In the background is the lush tropical Koolawae Mountain Range in central Oahu.

Status of the Upcoming “69th Stories of War”

Written by William Sheavly, Jr.

Where we stand on the 69th Book:

- As of this writing, it is about 90% done.
- The total word count is right at 95,000 words with about another 5-10,000 to go.
- There are over 20 separate stories in the book and that number should be closer to 225 when done.
- Over 75 separate contributors have been cited.
- There are 17 photographs that will be spread out through the book.
- It will be available by early summer and will most likely be a laminated hard back only and will be in the \$25.00-\$30.00 range.
- It includes a Glossary in the back of Army and WWII terms.
- I got approval from the US Army Division of Heraldry to use the 69th Insignia that will be used throughout the book as well.

Contact Bill Sheavly, Jr.

at the address on the left for more information.

“My Father’s War”

William H. Sheavly, son of **William C. Sheavly**, Co. M, 271st, has just completed a book of his father’s World War II experiences. The laminated hardback book, published by Cork Hill Press in Indianapolis, Indiana, and entitled: “My Father’s War: The World War II Diary of PFC William C. Sheavly Fighting 69th Infantry Division” was compiled over a four-year period and encompassed his experiences from basic training, through ASTP, Camp Shelby and the 69th, and concludes with his time at the 29th Infantry and the Seventh Army Visitor’s Bureau in Heidelberg.

The core of the 450-page book is a collection of 486 personal and V-Mail letters home from his induction on May 1, 1943 until his discharge on April 1, 1946. In addition to the letters, Bill Jr. also taped his father to get more detailed information about actual events. He also traveled several times to the National Archives, Archives II, in Silver Spring, Maryland to secure additional pictures and unit history information, all of which are blended together to form the story. Bill Jr. called it “a labor of love and a great project to work on with Dad.” Other items included in the book are copies of newspaper clippings about his dad, travel orders, ASTP graduation certificate, ration book stamps and even a blank V-Mail form. Bill Jr. even included a Glossary in the back for readers with non-military backgrounds.

“I wrote the book primarily for our family” Bill said, “but the more involved I got in it the more I realized that it was an interesting story about the day to day experiences of a typical GI in World War II and that it might appeal to a larger audience.” The book is available at www.corkhillpress.com.

The 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion

Submitted By: Dick Davis

Company C, 661st Tank Destroyers

1717 N. Country Road, 175E

Sullivan, Indiana 47882-8352



The 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion has a proud history. The Battalion came into being as an urgent demand of the United States Army for a fighting element equipped and trained to effectively combat and destroy the Panzer Korps of the Wehrmacht of Adolph Hitler's Germany.

On April 17th, 1943, the newly activated 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion was activated and organized at Camp Bowie, Texas. Men from almost every state in the Union were recruited to form its ranks, and in due time they embarked on a rigid training program centered around Camp Hood, Texas, home of the Tank Destroyer Center. Through long, hot weeks under the scorching sun of the Lone Star State, the training progressed from Basic to Advanced. The Battalion met all standards required by the U.S. Army Ground Forces. The Advanced Training emerged successfully, then entered seven weeks of rigorous maneuvers at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. Confidence in field operations was further strengthened by additional training at Camp Swift, Texas. Combined operations with armored forces at Camp Bowie, Texas and Camp Chaffee, Arkansas, rapidly brought the Battalion to the climax of its training phase. The esprit de corps was high and the desire to face the combat test was great. It was soon to come.

On December 22nd, 1944, the 661st entrained for Camp Shanks, New York, and on January 9th, 1945, embarked for the European Theatre of Operations aboard the USS Sea Owl. Early on the morning of January 23rd, 1945 at Le Havre, France, the Battalion set foot on foreign soil for the first time. Hard pressed by higher authorities, the men of the 661st turned stevedores in order to unload their equipment and vehicles off the ship. The vehicles included 36 Tank Destroyers which was a self-propelled, armored, full track with a 9 cylinder radial engine, top speed about 68mph and weighing about 30 ton with a crew of five. Mounted on the turret was a 76mm cannon and a 50 caliber machine gun.

On February 9th, after two weeks of preparations at various points along the Normandy coast, the 661st began a long, arduous march from the interior of France to the combat zone near Bullingen, Belgium, over 350 miles. Through snow and rain, the long convoy forged ahead, arriving safely at its destination late Sunday afternoon on February 11th. It was five days later that the grim test of combat came. The Battalion

entered the front line in the vicinity of Krinkelt and Rocherath, Belgium, in the support of the 69th Infantry Division of the First U.S. Army. In their initial encounter with the enemy on February 16th, the men of the 661st were impressively successful. Machine gun nests were destroyed, pillboxes neutralized and prisoners captured. Followed by a swift advance through the Siegfried Line, and early in March, the Battalion was well inside Germany at Schmidtheim.

On March 23rd, after a few days' rest, the 661st moved on line again, supporting the 69th Infantry's spearhead offensive on to the Rhine River, and on March 27th, the Battalion crossed the historic water barrier to unleash a series of onslaughts that toppled such famous landmarks as Bad Ems, Ehrenbreitstein and Nieder-Lahnstein. Many other towns and villages fell such as Giessen, Wetzlar, Fritzlar and Naumberg as the First U.S. Army made a drive to link-up with the Ninth U.S. Army on April 1st at Paderborn. From the Naumberg sector, an eastward drive was launched on to Kassel and the Werra River area.

Over extremely hilly terrain, and against constantly stiffening opposition, the Battalion closely supported the 69th Infantry's advance until the all objectives were attained in the crossing of the Werra River on April 9th. The 661st with other Armored Forces and the 69th Infantry, launched a drive on toward the heart of the Reich. Heilingenstadt fell, then Dinglestadt, Freyburg, Schlotheim, Kolleda and Weissenfels, where the famous old castle became a fortress for fanatical youths of the Hitler Jugend and Volkstrumers. Then Pagau, on the high road to Leipzig, was taken.

On April 18th, 1945, at 2:00 p.m., the 661st and the 69th Infantry launched their attack on the historic city of Leipzig, Germany and met with intense opposition. German flak batteries roared into action in a frantic attempt to check our advances. Constant air bursts made it difficult for the destroyers to maneuver into suitable gun positions and engage their targets. Nevertheless, flak batteries and enemy strongholds met destruction from the Battalion's guns as the assault of the city proper entered its final stages. Some elements of the 661st were engaged in striking to the heart of the beleaguered metropolis. Under heavy bombardment, the City Hall, nerve center of Leipzig's defense, capitulated. Other elements of the 661st systematically eliminated the strong resistance at the railroad terminal and "Battle of the Nations" monument. Many of the Nazi defenders who fanatically resisted were destroyed. The battle raged on, many prisoners were captured and casualties were heavy. However, about 10:30 a.m. on April 19th, 1945, the Nazi forces waved the white flag.

(Continued on Page 15)

THE 661st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

(Continued from Page 14)

On April 24th, the 661st spearheaded a drive east for the historic link-up of United States and Russian forces on April 25th, 1945 at the Elbe River near Torgau, Germany.

As of April 25th, 1945, the 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion had taken 727 prisoners, destroyed or neutralized many heavy artillery weapons, 130 dual purpose anti-aircraft guns, machine gun nests, one tank and marched across Germany over 1200 miles.

It was evident victory over Hitler's Regime was eminent and on May 8th, 1945, the German forces surrendered. The 661st spent the next few weeks patrolling roads and picking up stragglers. About June 20th, the 661st was ordered to return to the United States.

The 661st sailed out of Le Havre, France on July 1st aboard the USS Wakefield and arrived in the United States on July 5th via Boston, Massachusetts Port of Debarkation. The personnel were given a 30 day leave with orders to report to Camp Shelby, Mississippi and make preparations for further combat duty in the Pacific Theatre of Operations. The 661st was to sail out of San Francisco, California on September 9th, 1945. However, on September 2nd, the Japanese forces surrendered and WWII was over and our overseas orders were cancelled. In the next few months, many of the personnel were discharged from military service and returned to civilian life. Later on February 10th, 1946, the 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion was deactivated at Camp Hood, Texas.

* * *

The Coat of Arms of the 661st

Tank Destroyer Battalion

Superimposed upon a shield of yellow are symbols indicative of the Battalion's service in World War II. Across the top of the shield is a pillbox and dragon teeth representing the Siegfried Line of the Western Front, where the Battalion fought in February 1945. At the bottom of the shield is a church steeple indicative of the battles of the Battalion from the Siegfried Line to the Rhine River and through such towns as Dickersheid, Rescheid and Oberrefferchied. The curved band with the waving line represents the Rhine River, which the Battalion crossed in March 1945. The monument at the top of the shield is a silhouette of the Monument of Nations in Leipzig, Germany. It symbolizes the actions of the Battalion, which spearheaded the drive of the First U.S. Army into Leipzig in its campaign to the East and meeting with the Russian Army on April 25th, 1945 near Torgau, Germany on the Elbe River.



A Proud Display

Submitted By: **Johnnie G. Howell**

Company I, 273rd Infantry

P.O. Box 296, Pikesville, North Carolina 27863

I enjoy the bulletin very much and the photos look so much like the ones I have from my tour in Germany. It is good to hear about the experiences we all shared as soldiers and it brings back many vivid memories.

As soon as I found out my state of North Carolina offered World War II license plates for the vets, I ordered one. I proudly display the plate on my pick-up. Keep up the good work.



Elbe River 60th Anniversary

My name is Matthew Threadgold. I am writing on behalf of Ms. Susan Eisenhower of the Eisenhower Institute. The Eisenhower Institute has been contacted by the Russian Association of Ground Forces Veterans who hope to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the 69th Infantry Division's meeting with Russian troops at Torgau, Germany, on the Elbe River, April 25, 1945, with an event on April 25, 2005. Few details have been decided upon. Ms Eisenhower and her staff hope to gain a sense of whether or not an interest for such an event exists. The Eisenhower Institute is aware of your Memorials established at Torgau and Strehla on the Elbe River commemorating the meetings of the two armies and the 69th's group and individual visits in prior years. If you would be interested in taking part in a 60th Anniversary visit, please write me. Your affirmative reply would not be a commitment but give The Eisenhower Institute an idea of interest or not.

Eisenhower Institute - Matthew Threadgold

915 Fifteenth St. NW, Eighth Floor

Washington, DC 20005-2311

Telephone Number (202) 628-4444

E-Mail: mtreadgold@eisenhowerinstitute.org

Battle of the Bulge

Submitted By: **Park M. Fellers**

Service Company, 272nd Infantry

P.O. Box 396, Hillsboro, Illinois 62049

The following story was written by **Goldie Campbell**. Goldie was one of my radiomen in 2nd Battalion and Regimental Headquarters.

I was in the radio section of 2nd Battalion, Hq. Co., 110th Regiment, 28th Infantry Division. For a short time before December 16th, 1944, we were located in the small town of Donnange, Luxembourg. I remember that we slept in a house where an old lady was actually operating a spinning wheel. We felt that we were far removed from the action of the war. In fact, one of our sergeants walked a girl home a couple of miles across open ground after a dance the night of December 15th. On the morning of December 16th, we heard the sound of German artillery fire. On this particular morning, I can remember a little girl who lived in the house where we were staying, ate and ate and ate bread with some spreading honey I had received from my uncle Burt Reynolds from Red Wing, Minnesota. She really liked that honey. On the night of December 16th, we were playing cards in a house across and down the street from a cafe in Donnange. A runner came in and told us the Colonel wanted a radio operator to report to what they called the War Room. The section chief, Frank Shetley, of Syracuse, New York told me to go. I remember I had just been dealt a hand with two queens in it. I threw the hand away, without drawing to the queens, picked up my rifle, put on my helmet and took off with the runner.

The War Room was a room in the upstairs of the Catholic school in the town. It was called the War Room because this was where several area maps were displayed, and where the officers were conferring. I sat on the floor in this War Room until about 2:00 a.m. on December 17th, when it was announced we were moving.

Four of us were in the jeep. Col. James Hughes, acting as 2nd Battalion Commander, was in the front seat with the driver, Ellsworth Milton. Col. Henbest and I were in the back seat. I was to act as the radio operator for Col. Hughes. While going from Donnange to Clervaux, Luxembourg, in pitch darkness, we saw huge beams of light shooting up in the night sky. I asked what they were, and Col. Hughes said that they had learned that the Germans sometimes mounted searchlights on their tanks for the psychological purpose of instilling a feeling of fear from the unusual. I can assure you they accomplished their purpose with me.

We were told that there was a small German counter attack in the making (if ever there was a misplaced word, it was the word small in this case), and early in the morning of December 17th, 2nd Battalion

infantry line company men moved out with the intent of repulsing the so called small counter attack. I ended up in a barn on Reuler Hill between the towns of Reuler and Clervaux. Col. Hughes was headquartered in this barn so I was a witness to much of the activity and decisions of this hectic day. Our infantrymen were stopped. Tank men who tried to repulse the Germans came back to the barn on foot, if they got away alive, telling of the strength of the Germans in the general area of the nearby town of Marnoch. I could see a steady stream of German vehicles on a road called Skyline Drive - so steady that they reminded me of rural people coming in to the Pierce County Fair in my hometown of Ellsworth, Wisconsin, back in the days when I looked upon the County Fair as the big event of the year. It struck me as odd that these vehicles, right out in the open, were not being shelled by our artillery. I learned later that our artillery had already been overrun or put out of commission. I remember seeing columns of German infantry walk from the area of Skyline Drive to a triangular piece of woods out in front of our barn like they were on an extended training march, and not being bothered by any artillery or mortar fire, which was in direct contrast from what I had observed in the fighting in which we had engaged from the Normandy hedgerows to our present position in Luxembourg.

Around 11:00 a.m. I felt hungry, and I opened a C-ration can of spaghetti and meatballs. I had eaten about half of this, when a German shell came in and splattered me and my spaghetti and meatballs with a generous shower of dirt. I can remember Col. Hughes saying, "Help the radio man. He is hit." I got up and shook off the dirt, examined my unfinished lunch, determined it was now inedible, and then assured Col. Hughes I was O.K.

As the afternoon wore on, more and more men came back under cover of the roof of the barn for safety. When I looked at the hay in one section of the barn, and thought of what could happen with one shell landing in it, I knew we were all experiencing a false sense of safety. It was obvious that no one wanted to move out of the barn at that particular time. Lt. Holstein, a forward artillery observer, and in my opinion, one of the finest soldiers with whom I served throughout Europe, said to Col. Hughes, "I'll go sir, and perhaps some of the men will follow me." He took off out of the barn and followed a stone wall which ran out from the side of the barn. When he came to the end of the wall, he stopped, and not one man had moved to follow him. At this time, Col. Hughes turned to me, and said, "Will you go?" Believe me, I'm no hero, but when I again thought of the result of one shell landing in the hay in the barn, I said, "Yes sir, I'll go." And I went. When I got to the end of the wall, Lt. Holstein was still there. He looked back and said to me, "It doesn't look like

(Continued on Page 17)

BATTLE OF THE BULGE

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anybody is coming. We might as well take off." The two of us went over the ridge of the hill and started down the other side. We came to some manure piles, familiar to that farming area, and we got behind one of these. After ten or fifteen minutes the others started streaming back over the top of the hill toward where we were. While this was happening, two German artillery shells came in. They hit the ground, and instead of exploding, they slid and bounced between our guys. The shells were duds - and if they were duds because of the efforts of some captured slave laborers in a German munitions factory, "Bless those laborers!"

I remember, so vividly, Col. Hughes coming back behind the manure piles where many of our men had gathered and he (as senior officer) pulled his pistol out of his holster and said, "Here is where we make our stand. No Germans will ever drive us off this hill." He was very emotional, and when he finished (I was standing right next to him) he looked at me as I was looking into his eyes, and said, "You don't believe that, do you?" I said to him (quietly I hope), "I didn't say anything, Colonel. I was just admiring your tenacity." So many times in life since then I have thought, when you say something in high emotion, and you are really not convinced yourself, you question whether your listeners believe it, or you. I think it taught me, that when later I made inspirational talks to my players when I was coaching, or to my students when I was teaching, there must be a true ring of reality and possibility of achievement in what I said.

Needless to say, we did not make a stand behind the manure piles on the side hill, but started to filter down the hill. Lt. Holstein and I went down together, and on the way down he said that he thought we should go to the right where there was a rocky quarry, which seemed like a very safe place. For some reason, I decided not to go with him, telling him that my overcoat was on our radio jeep down near the intersection, and I wanted to go there to get it. Lt. Holstein and I parted company - he to the right to the relative safety of the rock quarry, and I, intent on getting my coat from the jeep. (Was it an Irony of War - or is there a Master Plan? I heard later that Lt. Holstein was captured and later killed).

As I went down the hill alone, I was stopped by Captain Dana Sperr (Spur), who happened to be there. In all the time I was in the service, I could never remember him stopping me for conversation. While we were standing there talking in the gathering darkness, German tanks with infantry riding on them pulled up to the intersection where our jeeps were, (and where I was headed to get my coat), and took all of the guys prisoners, wounded or killed them. (Irony of War - or Master Plan)?

I then left Captain Sperr, turned left, and started walking down the edge of the clearing. I made enough noise walking that someone heard me and said, from his slit trench, "What is going on?" He was a soldier I knew, "Kid" Kessler. I said, "Come on. We are surrounded by the Germans." He got out of his slit trench, and the two of us started walking, and of all people, we ran into Col. Hughes and Col. Henbest. I said to Col. Hughes, "How do we get out of here?" He said, "We are not going out of here. I have a battalion of men back up on the hill, and we are going back up there." I thought of all the people to run into, why would it be Col. Hughes, and now we are going right back up on the hill from which we escaped this afternoon, instead of trying to get out the other way - away from the Germans. As it turned out, it was the best thing that could have happened, because I have no doubt that trying to get out on our own, Kid Kessler and I would have stumbled right into the Germans and would have been captured or killed.

Col. Hughes was right. There were hundreds of men still up on Reuler Hill when we got there. Some were milling around. Some were sitting or lying on the ground. I put my rifle flat on the ground, and I lay on it in an attempt to keep off the cold ground as much as possible. What seemed like a rather strange thing happened. With all of the uncertainty and wonder of the unknown that prevailed, I went sound asleep! Years later when I was studying for a Masters Degree at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, I was reading a book on psychology. I read a passage which said, "Sleep is a release from fear." I reread the passage, and my mind went back to December 17th, 1944, when I feel asleep - and judged the statement in that book to be correct.

I have often wondered if matters are determined by coincidence which might be called irony of war, or by some Master Plan. I was awakened by some very loud snoring. For the last couple of years I had been in training and in combat with a sergeant named Jim Williams from Franklinton, Pennsylvania. When I awoke, I thought to myself, "There is only one person in the U.S. Army who snores like that, and that is Jim Williams." I reached over and shook the sleeping soldier awake, and said, "Jim." Sure enough, it was Jim Williams. Later on that night, Jim saved my life. Why, of the hundreds of guys who were on the hill that night, did Jim Williams happen to pick a spot to sleep close enough to me that he woke me with his snoring, and consequently we were together when later we tried to get out from behind the German lines?

Later, the higher ranking sergeants and the officers in our area held a meeting. When it was over, they came back and told us, "Here is the plan. We are going to try and get through the German lines in small groups. No one needs to go if he doesn't want to go.

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BATTLE OF THE BULGE

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If you choose to remain on this hill, we are completely surrounded by the Germans, and the chances are, when dawn comes, you will be taken prisoner and may be unharmed. Anyone who decides to try and get out must understand that if you get hit (wounded) you stay where you fell. Nobody can carry anybody else out of this." I cannot recall having the least doubt in my mind. I decided to go. There were eight in our group. Sgt. Williams, Lt. Bill Gillette, five others and I. The groups were to take off at 10 minute intervals. We were to be the second group to leave. We waited our 10 minutes after the first group left, and then we started. It was pitch dark, and we were in the Ardennes Forest. We had gone only a short distance when we met the first group coming back. They said, "You cannot make it. The woods are full of Germans." We held our own little meeting (the eight of us), and we decided to try and get out. We figured that we were now the first group and that if anyone had the chance for the element of surprise, we did. We also considered that once the Germans became wise to the fact that groups of Americans were trying to slip through, it would be a whole new ball game.

The Germans used what were called vary pistols which fired flares into the air. This really added variety - as the surroundings went from complete darkness to something resembling standing on the 50 yard line at a night football game. In training, we had been taught to "freeze" in place in situations like that. In training many of us thought this was ridiculous and a waste of time, but I am convinced that training saved us that night. One redeeming feature about the vary pistols was that they made a fairly loud, "click" when fired and gave us a chance to freeze and hope we looked like a tree when a flare lit up the area.

In time, we came to the edge of a bank which led down to a road. We were just going to jump down on the road when one of the guys said, "Listen." We listened and heard the sound of German boots on the road. We flattened out on our stomachs, and a whole group of Germans marched right below us on the road. Had we jumped down when we originally planned, we would have landed either in front of, or among the Germans. We waited until they cleared the area, and then, this time, we decided to slide down and cross the road as quietly as possible.

It was necessary for us to get across the Clerf River, so we tried to work our way up to the bridge we had crossed in the morning, but when we got near the bridge, we could hear the Germans already there. We could hear them throwing things around and making racket. This was unusual because they were usually quiet at night fighting. I wondered if they got into some schnapps in the course of that wild night's events.

As we couldn't use the bridge, we moved through the woods to find a place to cross the river. As we moved through the forest that night, we could hear movement all around us, but we didn't seem to be detected. We came to a place where we decided to wade across the river. Six of our guys went out into the water, and kept going. I was the seventh. Jim Williams was the only one left behind me. When I got to the middle of the river, there was a strong current, and I could feel my feet going out from under me. I said to Williams, "Jim, I'm going." He grabbed me and together we made it across. I could not swim and would not have made it alone. Was it a coincidence (irony of war) or Master Plan that caused Jim Williams to go to sleep close enough to me back up on the hill, wake me with his snoring, so that we ended up in the same group?

After we crossed the river we had a steep bluff to climb. About half way up, we all sat down to rest. The water in the river on December 17th did not feel exactly like a heated jacuzzi, and we were somewhat tired and uncomfortable. We hadn't been sitting there long when we heard a squeaking noise in the flat area at the foot of the bluff. We recognized the sound as wire rolling off hand carried drums. The Germans were already laying out wire for communications. We didn't bother them. After a short rest, we climbed (and crawled) to the top of the bluff. When we got to the top, we weren't sure about which way to go to get back to Donnange. Lt. Bill Gillette had a map in a transparent covering, and also a flashlight. We all took off our field jackets and put them over him as he got down on the ground to study the map with the flashlight. After awhile he turned off the flashlight, came out from under the jackets and said, "I think we go this way." Fortunately he thought right, because we took his way, and we found our way to the road leading to Donnange. Part of us got on one side of the road and part on the other. We had a bit of a mystery. There were only three of us on one side of the road and three on the other. Three plus three did not total the eight we started with. To this day I have no idea what happened to the other two. As we got close to Donnange, a soldier jumped out of the ditch and yelled, "Halt!" We were supposed to give the password which changes at midnight. We didn't know it, but Lt. Gillette had the presence of mind to say, "American Soldiers." The soldier on guard was not trigger happy, and he said, "O.K. Go on." If he had a nervous finger twitch, some of us would undoubtedly have suffered from lead poisoning.

In Donnange, before all this action had started, I had slept in a house across from the Church (before I slept in the house where the old lady ran the spinning wheel). The house was handy as we came into town, and I decided I'd go there and sleep. The door was locked, so I banged on it, but no one came. The people had probably taken off. I was disappointed at not

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being able to get in the house. If I did get in, I'd have been sound asleep in there when the Germans came into town. So I went up to the War Room where the other guys were. They had a fire going in a round stove, and we took off our clothes to dry them around the stove. This was at about 6:00 a.m. Somebody had found a loaf of bread. We cut this with our bayonets and ate it. I suppose we were hungry - the last food I had was the half a can of spaghetti and meatballs about 11:00 a.m. the previous day. When we were trapped behind the German lines, we were thinking about staying alive and getting out, and the thought of hunger never entered my mind. We figured we'd get some sleep, but about 7:00 a.m. someone yelled, "The Germans are in town" - and they were - coming right down the same road, with tanks, which we had walked by a short time before.

We were upstairs. I always remember Adam Romanus Meyers of York, Pennsylvania. After the Battle of the Bulge was over and he was talking about it he said, "I had all my clothes on. Goldie didn't have any on, and Goldie beat me downstairs, and he was fully clothed when he got down there." We went up over a hill, out the back part of town, over the fields and into the woods beyond. Odd things do happen even in such situations. One officer was bent over to go through a fence when a German decided to take a shot which passed sideways through the fat part of the officer's seat as it stuck up in the air. It undoubtedly hurt but was not life threatening, and the guys couldn't resist, "Sir, how are you going to explain to your grandchildren in future years what a hero you were in the war when you got shot where you did?" Once in awhile, in the woods, a person would run into someone he knew and there was rejoicing to find each other still alive. We had a meeting of a group of us in the afternoon, and the senior officer said, "We don't have much to operate with, and the best advice I can give you is to take off and every man for himself." This pretty much set the pattern for quite a few days after that.

One night quite a few of us ended up in a house with a large room in it, and most of the guys went to sleep on the floor. Jim Williams was inside the house listening out the back door and I walked back to him. While we were there, a machine gun started firing from a hilly area down in the direction of our house. We listened and knew it was a German machine gun from the speed of the firing. Jim said, "Wake up the men." I did, and we went out in the yard where some of our trucks were. We crawled in the back of one and sat on some cans which seemed to be filled with water. The driver took off, and we got out of there. When light came, we discovered we were sitting on cans filled with gasoline! It is a good thing a shell didn't come in and split one of them, or we might have been the first few infantry men to go into orbit.

Much well deserved acclaim and publicity has been given to the 101st Airborne Division for the heroic job they did at Bastogne, Belgium during the Christmas week of 1944. On the 19th of December some of us made it to Bastogne, passed through the town, and I remember well meeting some of the 101st coming up the road in trucks with big trailers. Most of them were in white for snow camouflage.

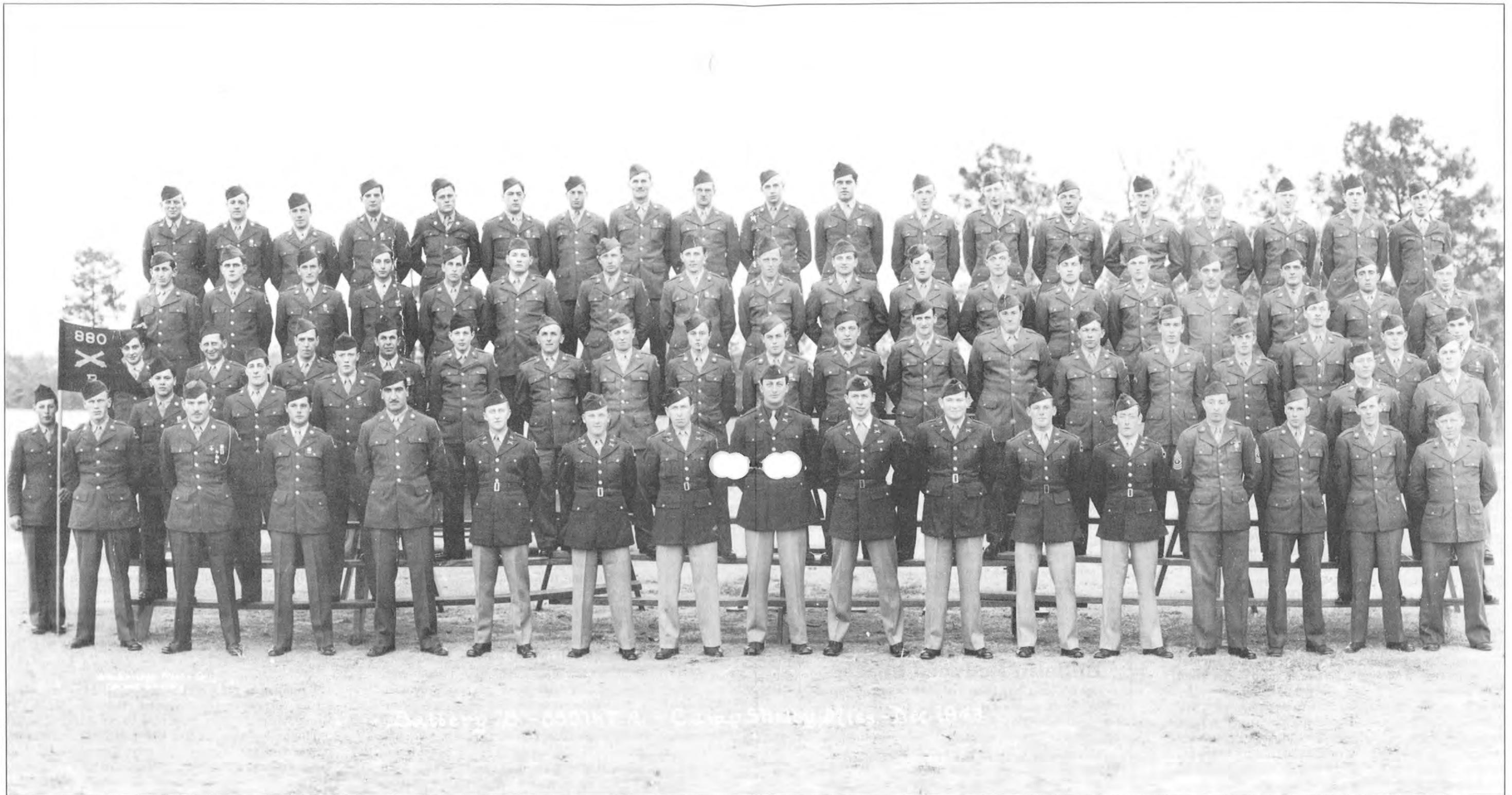
Somehow in our wanderings I got in a group with Joe Daily of Easton, Pennsylvania, and four other guys, two of whom could speak German. We decided to try to stick together and dubbed ourselves the, "Cush boys." If we were in the woods at night or if we couldn't see each other and we heard a noise one guy would say, "Cush," and the other would answer, "Cush" (if he were one of our group!) One evening we knocked on the door of a house. The residents, either Luxembourgers or Belgians, were very cordial to us. They took us in the warm house, gave us warm food, and showed us some real beds where we could sleep that night. After supper the Grandpa and his daughter were standing by a counter in the kitchen. Joe Daily, who was sitting on a chair in the kitchen, decided to check his Tommy Gun. He picked it up and the gun went off. The bullet went right between the two people by the counter, went through the kitchen wall, and into a back shed where we could hear glassware (probably canning jars) breaking. It was a good thing the gun was on single instead of automatic fire. I thought, afterwards, what a tragedy it would have been, if after those people had been so kind to us, the bullets would have killed one or both of them. We had wonderful sleep in the soft beds with real pillows. The next morning, before we left, we learned that the grandpa had a heart attack the night before and was taken to the hospital. This was a small side event in the action of The Battle of the Bulge. It didn't do much to change history, but I remember it.

One day the M.P.s came out scouring the roads looking for survivors and we got a ride back to a town, (Neufchateau in Belgium), and we were done wandering in the woods.

Remembering

I remember on Christmas Eve, 1944, being on a street corner in Neufchateau, Belgium, with Joe Ermalovich, who was reported to have played some freshman football at Duke University before the war. It was chilly, and we didn't have any blankets, and didn't know where we were going to sleep. As we stood there, an American lieutenant, driving alone in a jeep, came up the street and parked in front of a house across the street from us. He got out and went in the house. There was a bed roll of blankets tied to the post on the back part of the jeep. Joe said, "Do you see what I see?" I said, "Joe, do you think it would be right for me to take blankets on Christmas Eve?" Joe said, "Goldie, do you think it would be right for you to freeze

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**Battery B, 880th Field Artillery Battalion, 69th Infantry Division
Camp Shelby, Mississippi • December 1943**

Picture Submitted By: **Walter A. Perry**, 7 Ray Street, Danvers, Massachusetts 01923
Walter would like to hear from anyone who was in his outfit.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE

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on Christmas Eve? I said, "I guess not!" I stood watch while Joe took off across the street and in a very short time returned with the bed roll. Joe and I took off down the side street, knocked on a door, and were invited in by a nice young couple who had a fire going in the fireplace and the lady had Christmas cookies and let us sleep on the floor in front of the fireplace - in our warm bed roll of four blankets. Merry Christmas!

I remember being in a house in a very small town. When I came out of the house to the main road going east, I saw a truck loaded with our guys going up that road. I realized they had left without me and I was alone in the small town. I thought to myself that it was my duty to be with the other guys, and I started east on foot on that road. I have wondered if I would still have that same sense of duty now. I had no idea where or how far I was going to walk. After a mile or so, a jeep came from the west. In it was a Major and his driver. They were connected to the 101st Airborne Division. I rode with them for several miles, and eventually I spotted some of our 28th division guys off the right side of the road. We stopped, and I got out and joined them. Later that night I was stationed in a field facing east to watch for Germans coming from that direction. Joe Daily and Paul Tussey were with me. We were armed with M-1 rifles. We knew what was going to happen when the German tankers and their tanks indicated a desire to occupy our field. Behind us was a line of brush or bushes. When we heard the expected rumble of the tanks, discretion became the better part of valor (after deep consideration of the possibility we had of stopping tanks with the weapons we possessed). Tussey, a barrel chested former football player, broke an opening in the line of bushes, and Joe Daily and I followed his interference. The tanks were safe - and so were we, at least for a while.

I remember one night we were told that trucks would be waiting for us at a predetermined cross roads to take us out if we made it to the trucks. The guys I was with and I headed for the cross roads position and found the trucks waiting. The trucks were partly filled with soldiers trying to get out. We boarded one of the trucks. We learned that we were to cross a bridge over a stream. The engineers had the bridge ready to blow before the Germans could get there and use it, but they were waiting until the last minute so that we could get all of our guys out who could possibly make it. While we were sitting in the trucks waiting, a German plane came over and dropped a flare which lit up the night. Evidently our line of trucks was not spotted because no action resulted. As the flare died out, some of the guys started grumbling because we weren't leaving. Others among us said, "Shut up - How would you like it if you were still out there trying to make it to the trucks before we leave? - and again we were safe, at least for a while.

I remember being on flat ground next to a two or three story school some time in the middle of the day. A kitchen unit must have been there because we were eating from mess kits on the ground when some German planes came over and dropped bombs. (Later, one of the guys talking to me about our abrupt departure said, "I saw a tree fly up over the top of that schoolhouse, and I decided to take off.") Actually, I think it was probably only a big limb of a tree. In any case, we took off from our exposed position on the flat area. We came to a situation where there was a drop off of I assume about 10 feet to get down to a street or road and across this to the shelter of buildings. When I got to the jump down area, the guy in front of me stopped and said (looking down at a soldier lying on the ground), "He broke his leg." I can remember saying, "Either jump, or get the h___(eck?) out of the way!" He waited and I jumped and went across the street into a house where several other soldiers and the lady of the house were. There was a ladder which led from the lower floor to a loft above. The lady climbed the ladder and brought down an infant child. I have reflected upon that experience several times, and realize that I observed that the infant was completely peaceful and unafraid, while we "brave soldiers" with our guns, were seeking protection from the falling bombs in the child's home. It occurred to me that if the simplicity of a child's mind could be substituted for the duplicity of power hungry adult minds, perhaps there would be less fear, terror, and violence in this world.

Long after The Bulge was over, I read that there were 550 of us surrounded on Reuler Hill the night of December 17, 1944, and that at dawn the next day, 66 of us had made it out from behind German lines. That says that 12 out of each 100 made it - and 88 out of each 100 did not make it. When you are one infantryman in the unfamiliar position of being trapped behind enemy lines, statistics don't seem very important to you, but they do make for very interesting reflections at a later date.

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.

Also, we have several wonderful stories sent in that we could not fit in this issue. If you submitted a story, it will appear in a future issue of the bulletin this year. Thank You

THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE

By **Dottie Witzleb**
Ladies Auxiliary Editor

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A Message from your Auxiliary President, Theresa Pierce

Dear Ladies of the 69th Ladies Auxiliary:

With fond memories of the great St. Louis Reunion behind us, we look forward to the excitement of new experiences in the beauty of Connecticut. I suspect everyone has been to New York City at least once, but the thrill of the "Big Apple" always beckons you back.

Of interest to the Ladies, between Stamford and Bridgeport (25 miles), there are 11 shopping districts, 16 antique shops, 14 Off-Broadway type theaters, 28 Performing Arts Groups, and 11 harbor-sighting cruise companies.

Meeting new members is always exciting. As a reminder, Officers and Past Presidents are requested to bring extra gifts. These will be given to First Timers and guests not aware of the program. All other attendees should also bring an exchange gift of about \$5.00.

Finally don't forget our Veterans. There is always a need for knitted or crocheted lap robes (36 x 45), bibs, tote bags, playing cards, greeting cards and toiletries.

Also, please consider volunteering to assist your Officers by working at the Event Tables. We will need at least seven ladies to assist during the Auxiliary Meeting.

Entertainment is not finalized; however, it's always more pleasant to be surprised.

I hope to see all of you at our 57th Annual Reunion in Stamford.

A Note from our Sunshine Lady, Edith Zaffern

Unfortunately, I do not receive notice of the death of our members or their wives until I receive the "Bulletin" listing their names. As a result, there have been instances where I have sent out birthday and anniversary cards some time after the deaths.

I am sure these greetings received after the death of a loved one cause additional grief. I want to apologize for these instances and I hope that all will understand the reason.

Attendees by State at the 2003 St. Louis, Missouri Reunion

STATE	ATTENDANCE
Pennsylvania	49
California	37
Missouri	37
Tennessee	24
Ohio	23
Florida	22
Illinois	20
New York	20
Michigan	18
Wisconsin	17
New Jersey	16
Massachusetts	13
Arkansas	10
Texas	9
Arizona	7
Colorado	7
Indiana	7
North Carolina	6
Virginia	6
Connecticut	5
Alabama	4
Georgia	4
Iowa	4
Kansas	4
Minnesota	4
Mississippi	4
Nebraska	4
Louisiana	3
Maryland	3
Oklahoma	3
Alaska	2
Kentucky	2
Idaho	2
Montana	2
New Hampshire	2
Oregon	2
Vermont	2
Nevada	1
	405
SUMMARY	First Timers 4 Total 405

2003 56th Annual Reunion Attendees St. Louis, Missouri

AUGUST 17th-24th, 2003

The following is a list of the attendees at the 2003 Reunion in Hampton, Virginia including members, wives, widows and guests. If your name does not appear, it is because you failed to fill out a Registration Form during your visit.

An asterisk (*) indicates a First Timer.

69th DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Welkos and Jeanne Hawn Colorado
Gordon Kjos Minnesota
Guest: Suzanne Hanson
Sumner Russman Oklahoma

69th MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

Frank and Helen Williams Pennsylvania

269th ENGINEERS

William C. Riggle, Sr. Indiana
Guest: William C. Riggle, Jr.
Lloyd and Loretta Roth Ohio

569th SIGNAL COMPANY

George Hepp New York
John and Jean Kastanakis Alabama
Seymour and Ellie Nash New Jersey
Raymond Smith Maryland

69th RECON TROOP

* **Gordon Ewing** Florida
* **Harold Gardner** Missouri
Guests: Patti and Laura McGuire
Michael and Mary Moscaritolo Florida
Herbert and Eileene Norman Colorado
* **Nancy Riccio** Connecticut
Guests: Rebecca, Leila and Rachel Fletcher
* **Robert and Mable Schueler** Ohio
* **Frank Veazey** Ohio

271st INFANTRY REGIMENT HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

John Barrette Wisconsin
John and Barbara Davis Pennsylvania
William and Dorthea Duncan California
Edwin and Sue Lansford Tennessee
Lee Wah New Jersey

COMPANY A

Delbert and Donna Philpott California
Guests: Dennis and Vicki Dobson
Robert and Jean Ross Massachusetts

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2003 REUNION ATTENDEES
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI (Continued from Page 24)

COMPANY B

Lymir and Patsy Bocek Nebraska
Martin Buol Florida
Philander and Ruth Delphey Pennsylvania
Lorraine Hancock Illinois
Guests: Sue Ann and Jack Kortkamp
Earl and Millie Hansen Tennessee
Adam and Margaret Lee Pennsylvania
Guests: Mary Matchenbaugh and Barbara Lego
Charles and Peggy Mabe Pennsylvania
Harold Moore Tennessee
Guest: Cynthia N. Moore
Charles and Bobbie Nicely Alabama
Orrie Pullen Michigan
William and Jo Sheehan New Jersey
Kenneth Upton Louisiana
Neil and Betty Ver Merris Michigan
Charles and Patricia Walsh Wisconsin
James Walsh Connecticut

COMPANY E

Elmer Broneske Colorado
Catherine McCall New Jersey
Guests: William and Anna McCall, Jr.
Bing Poon Pennsylvania
Paul Shadle Pennsylvania

COMPANY F

Arlene Fuller Pennsylvania
Anthony and Adele Vink Michigan

COMPANY G

Edward and Jacquelyn Chando New Jersey
Frank DiFrancisco New York
Clarence and Lena Goon Ohio
Zane and Zelma Gray Arkansas
N. C. and Elizabeth Harrison Tennessee
*Guests: Kenneth and Linda Millichamp,
Alan and Emily Cochran,
Del and Connie Knight,
Debra Knight, Norman Knight,
Will Butler and Teresa Laten*
Glenn and Nadine Hunnicutt Nebraska
LeVerne Loveland New Jersey
Emery and Pat Nagy Tennessee
Guests: Connie Ottway and Karen Myers
E. Doris Phillips Pennsylvania
Guest: Bonnie Phillips
Josephine Plugge Illinois
Guest: Sandy McAdaragh

COMPANY H

Robert and Dorothy Adsit Michigan
3rd BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY
James and Betty Yakle Florida
Charles and Norma Woolery Arkansas

COMPANY I

Douglas and Nathalie Buckstad ... North Carolina
Ralph and Doris Utermoehlen Kansas

COMPANY K

Mae Smith Michigan
Guest: Connie Brough

COMPANY L

Noble and Dorothy Goode California
Guests: Fred and Debbie Goode
Edwin Humiston Pennsylvania

ANTI-TANK COMPANY

Arthur and Nancy Holgate New Jersey
Archie and Pauline Millsaps Arizona
Francis Tomczuk New Jersey
George and Lina West Pennsylvania

CANNON COMPANY

Alfred Blain Massachusetts
Guest: Estelle George

272nd INFANTRY REGIMENT

1st BATTALION, COMPANY A

James Battin III California
Guest: Paulette Elrod
Domenic Dezio Michigan
Guests: James Ellis and Donald Dezio
Sanford and Nancy Firsichbaum New Jersey
Harold F. Patchen New York
Guest: Harold J. Patchen
Guy and Pauline Steele Missouri
*Guests: George, Mary, Ray, Gene, Sonya,
Wayne, Linda, Glenn, Meshall, Brian,
Michelle, Steve and Robyn Steele*

COMPANY B

Richard and Agnes Hadley Colorado
*Diana Mortensen Missouri
Guests: 4

COMPANY E

Fred Butenhoff Wisconsin
*Guests: Nancy Eisenreich
Robert and Janis Hassl*
Chet and Barbara Yastrzemski New York

2nd BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Bretsell and Betty Everson Pennsylvania
David and June Wittman Montana

COMPANY F

James Henry Pennsylvania
Guests: Drew and Gail Yeager
Neil Shields Pennsylvania
David and Jeanne Theobald California

COMPANY G

Will and Barbara Frazee Ohio
Clement Hudacek Missouri
Guest: Rosella Kochner
Ray Lehman Iowa

(Continued on Page 26)

2003 REUNION ATTENDEES

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI (Continued from Page 25)

COMPANY H

- Veto and Athanasia DiPento Pennsylvania
- James and Lillian Fallin Louisiana
- Robert Kasmarick Wisconsin
- Guests: Dennis, Rick and Sue Kasmarick*
- March and June Mussay Illinois

COMPANY I

- Edward and Jennie Ambrose Pennsylvania
- Harold and Ethel Ruck Tennessee
- Ernest and Marion Slovak Wisconsin
- *Richard and Freda Wrons Arizona

COMPANY K

- Stanley and Laurene Knedlik Alaska

COMPANY L

- Joseph and June Gibbons Michigan
- Russell and Rosanna Meinecke Missouri
- Guest: Rhonda Hamilton*
- Bernard and Edith Zaffern Michigan

COMPANY M

- Joseph and Kathryn Makosky Pennsylvania
- Floyd and Melva McCalip, Jr. Mississippi
- Richard and Elaine Sodorff Idaho
- Raymond and Alice Wolthoff Florida

ANTI-TANK COMPANY

- John and Lois Brockwell Illinois
- Joseph Huber Wisconsin
- Russell and Betty Koch Missouri
- Guests: Danny and Darlene Koch,*
Laura Koch and Josh Koch
- Raymond and Janet Sansoucy Massachusetts
- Guest: Lauren Sansoucy*
- Edward and Dolly Sarcione New York
- Mel and Joan Schulz Ohio
- Dallas and Laura Shelton Illinois
- Guest: Janet Harrison*

CANNON COMPANY

- Ralph and Ursula Goebel Minnesota

273rd INFANTRY REGIMENT

1st BATTALION

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

- Phillip and Norma Formel Massachusetts
- John Havey Arizona
- Guest: Michael Havey*
- Ralph and Cecilia Scholtz Florida
- Guests: Mary Scholtz, Carolyn Scholtz,*
Emily Scholtz and Gabriela Stablein
- Arthur Seidenstricker Pennsylvania

COMPANY A

- James and Mary Carroll Texas
- James and Allamae Ezell Arkansas
- Wilbert and Rosemary Haas Iowa
- Guest: Kathy Chamberlain*
- Willie and Bertie Lindsey Georgia
- Edward Lucci New York
- William and Ruby Nettles Mississippi
- Robert and Jean Rosane Vermont

COMPANY B

- Eugene and Marilyn Mischke Illinois
- Robert and Peggy Shaw California

COMPANY C

- Stanley and Gloria Czyzyk New York
- Elijah and Marge Dalrymple Florida
- Guests: Gary and Sharon Dalrymple*
- Gerald Gilgenbach Ohio

COMPANY D

- Ed and Mary Case Pennsylvania
- Roland and Janice Hendrickson Oregon
- George and Barbara Johnson Virginia
- Betty Jo McCarty Texas
- Guests: Robert McCarty, Russell McCarty,*
Michelle, Cody and Tyler Jacobs
- Ken Sawyer Florida
- Guest: Holly Mace*

2nd BATTALION, COMPANY E

- Robert Crowe Massachusetts
- Richard and Lucille Eslow Michigan
- Jane Matlach New York
- Dorothy Witzleb Pennsylvania
- Harold and Peggy Sprang Ohio

COMPANY F

- Jack and Marjorie Fair Florida
- Walter and Shirley Harpain California
- Stanley Olszyk Indiana
- Samuel and Anne Woolf New York

COMPANY G

- Homer and Patricia Lind California

COMPANY H

- Robert and Roberta Andrew Pennsylvania
- Guests: Robert Blevins and Floyd Blevins*
- Bert and Rhoda Eckert New York
- Maxine Haag Indiana
- Guest: Nicole Mazelin*
- Leland and Lola Jones Kansas
- Howard and Jane Keyser Pennsylvania

3rd BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

- David and Miriam Malchick New York
- John Mihm Pennsylvania
- Guest: Nancy Decker*

(Continued on Page 27)

2003 REUNION ATTENDEES

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI (Continued from Page 26)

COMPANY I

Paul and Elaine Eagon Illinois
Robert and Theresa Pierce California
Guests: Frank and Doris Pierce,
Paul and Doris Billion,
Tim and Dottie Pierce,
Tom and Kathy Pierce,
Kathy Pierce and Karen Malden
Erwin and Carmen Sanborn New Hampshire

COMPANY K

Oliver and Vera Coker, Jr. Arkansas

CANNON COMPANY

Arlie and Parley Boswell Illinois
Lee Wilson California
Guest: Jan Kremenz

661st TANK DESTROYERS

Eugene Pierron Wisconsin
William and Ellen Snidow Virginia

777th TANK BATTALION

Ellen McCann Massachusetts
Billy Ray Texas
***Ernie and Helen Thielmeier** Kentucky
Gaylord and Ruth Thomas Wisconsin
Robert Weise New York
Guest: Patric Kilmartin
Charles and Edna White Oklahoma

724th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

BATTERY A

William Ruebsamen California

BATTERY B

George and Maureen Bosnich Indiana

BATTERY C

Coy Horton North Carolina
Guest: Dan Ackard

879th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

BATTERY C

John Melanson Arizona
Charles and Harriet Thompson ... North Carolina

880th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

HEADQUARTERS BATTERY

George and Edna Blume Virginia
Stanley and Georgia Bratt Illinois
Robert and Marilyn McKee Maryland
Emily and Peggy Paoletta Ohio
Mike and Lucille Pendrick Arkansas
William and Katherine Suckel Ohio

881st FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

BATTERY B

James and Matilda Boris Pennsylvania
Walter Haag California
Guest: Dorothy Vasiloudis
Edward and Louise Hill Ohio
Emil Matys Nevada
Gilbert Rocco Pennsylvania
Guests: Mr. and Mrs. Nick Rocco

BATTERY C

Joseph and Sybil Conner Georgia
Harold and Mary Early Ohio
George and Ruth Ehll Missouri
Lester Hart Ohio
George and Jennie Vasil Massachusetts

Headquarters, 880th F.A. at the 56th Annual Reunion

Pictures Submitted By: John O'Connor, 400 Homestead Road, La Grange Park, Illinois 60526-1925
 Sent to John By: **Bill Suckel**



The Ladies: Katherine Suckel, Marilyn McKee, Lucille Pendrick, Peggy Paoletta, Georgia Bratt



The Gentlemen: Bill Suckel, Mike Pendrick, Stan Bratt, Emil Paoletta, Bob McKee

272nd Infantry Division Situation Map Presentation

Lipsius finally met Richardson in person at the museum on August 14, 2003. Joe was formerly S-2 for Regimental Headquarters, 272nd Infantry Regiment, and is the founder and Co-Webmaster of the 69th Infantry Division's Website. Jim was a Communications Sergeant for Company B of the 272nd Infantry Regiment, and is now Co-Webmaster and Site Engineer of this Website. This was the first meeting of the two who, along with Amy Rose, Editor and Website Treasurer, have developed the 69th's Website.

The meeting had two purposes: For Joe and Jim finally to meet face to face after countless hours of e-mail messages developing the Website; and for Joe to present the Armed Forces Museum an exact copy of the situation maps of the 272nd Infantry Regiment's move across Europe from the Belgium-German border on February 9, 1945, when it entered combat, until May 9, 1945, VE Day.

The 13 maps (scale 1 to 100,000), show Regimental and Battalion Command Posts by dates, plus some attached Unit locations. Also, two special maps cover the phase lines of fighting in the City of Leipzig and the first meeting of the American and Soviet Armies in WWII at the Elbe River on April 25, 1945.



Joe Lipsius (center) donates a historic map of the linkup sites between the 69th Infantry and the Russian Army to Chad Daniels (right), Director of The Armed Forces Museum in Camp Shelby, Mississippi. James K. Richardson is at left.

“The B.B.B.’s”

(Tune: “Mademoiselle from Armentieres”)

The call went out for men to fight, far and wide;
 For liberty and peace and right, on freedom's side;
 From north and south, from east and west,
 To Shelby came the Nation's best,
 69th was called to war!
 They started in and learned to march, far and fast;
 O'er hill and dale, and swampy trail, thru forest vast;
 They sweated 'neath the summer sun,
 They learned to shoot the M-1 gun,
 69th had gone to war!
 They soon adopted another name, that seemed to please;
 They weren't embarrassed nor filled with shame,
 those B.B.B.'s;
 With blistered feet and aching backs,
 They marched and slept in night bivouacs,
 69th had gone to war!
 The chiggers itched, the sand-fleas bit, left and right;
 Mosquitoes stung and cockles clung, day and night;
 On straddle trench they squatted low,
 On chins they let their whiskers grow,
 69th had gone to war!
 The weeks rolled by and more men came, a motley crew,
 The B.B.B.'s increased in Fame, their number grew;
 With babbling baboons, bankrupt betters,
 Bedridden bipeds, bedspread wetters,
 69th had gone to war!

The B's began to multiply, as time went on;
 “Baloney biting, Biloxi bound” became their song;
 With bulging bunions, bleeding blisters,
 Broken backs and baggy britches,
 69th had gone to war!
 Barracks-bandits rolled the bones, winning bets;
 Bigamist bridegrooms turned down blondes
 and tried brunettes;
 Bald-head bachelors, bathless brutes,
 Boisterous braggarts with burning boots,
 69th had gone to war!
 Budget-butchers burnt the biscuits, served us hay;
 Belly-belching beans and beer, night and day;
 Blighted bivalves, barbecue,
 Beets and barley, beefless stew,
 69th had gone to war!
 Blaspheming backsliders, cursed and swore, on the road;
 Blustering bluffers cried and wept, about the load;
 But when the tests were made by Corps,
 The B.B.B.'s got the highest score,
 69th had gone to war!
 The year has gone and training's done, now we're thru;
 The 69th is ready to move, it's job to do;
 And whether on land or whether on sea,
 Wherever you go, you'll always be,
 A member of B.B.B.'s!

Submitted By: **R.H. Fredrikson**
 Company Commander, Co. H, 272nd Infantry
 2734 Hollydale Drive, Homewood, Illinois 60430

Edwin G. Lansford Writes

Headquarters Company, 271st Infantry
1096 Peavine Firetower Road
Crossville, Tennessee 38558

My wife and I both enjoy the Bulletin, and read every issue from cover to cover as soon as each issue is received. I haven't sent you any items for the Bulletin before because my combat experience was with the 44th Division instead of the 69th Division. However, I'm enclosing a couple of accounts herewith which might be of some interest to the other members.

Also, here's one more Burma-Shave sign:

Pity all the
Mighty Caesars
Plucked their whiskers
Out with tweezers
Burma-Shave

Traveling By Troopship

I was the beneficiary of two all-expense paid excursions at government expense during my short career in the service: The first one was in September, 1944, from Boston Harbor to Cherbourg, France, in a large convoy of transport ships of all makes and sizes. The convoy traveled at the speed of the slowest ship in the convoy, which was not fast enough for our ship to maintain stability in the water, resulting in the ship rolling from side to side constantly during the entire trip. Being September, the Atlantic Ocean was the calmest that I have even seen it. We sat on the deck in the warm autumn sun and relaxed day after day, with navy destroyers darting back and forth among them.

The sleeping quarters were something else; steel-frame bunks stacked five-high, with barely enough room to walk between the stacks. Each bunk had canvas stretched across the frame and one navy blanket for cover. All of the bunks were lengthwise to the ship, running bow to stern, so each occupant was rolled from side to side as the ship rolled. To make matters worse, the constant motion made most of the occupants seasick, which was contagious; one soldier getting sick and throwing up made nearby neighbors sick as well. My bunk was second from the bottom in my stack, with three more bunks overhead. I can still remember gathering my blanket in tight so that it would not get hit when I heard someone getting sick above me.

The troops were fed only two meals each day, and I made sure that I ate every meal, because we had been told that eating would help to prevent getting sick. It seemed that even the smell of food made some of the troops sick, however, because the steps leading from the deck down to the mess-room were always slick and slippery.

The return voyage was quite a contrast to the first one. I had been assigned to the Twenty-Ninth Division for the return to USA, and we left Bremerhaven on January 3, 1946, fighting head-winds the entire way through the North Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean. The P.A. system announced on several days that the

ship was only making four knots per hour because of gale conditions. On this trip, my bunk was located in the stern of the ship, close to the screws, which came out of the water repeatedly as the ship tossed in the waves. Each time the screws came out of the water, they shook the entire ship like it was going to be torn apart from the vibrations. Being in one end of the ship in those conditions was like riding up and down in a fast elevator: up, up, and up until the screws tried to shake the ship apart, then dropping down fast like the bottom had fallen out, and then back up again. What a ride, for days and nights without stopping! Needless to say, I went up on deck whenever we were allowed to go, just to get some fresh air and to see the view from the fantail - as far back as I was allowed to go. On deck, the ride was more fun, going up and up with nothing but sky and seagulls to the rear, and the waves a hundred feet below on each side, with the screws shaking the ship apart, then dropping like a rock until a wall of water rose fifty or more feet above and behind the stern, and then back up again.

Finally, early in the morning of January 15, the P.A. announced that we were approaching New York Harbor, so I dressed and hurried up on deck, which was now coated with ice from the fresh water. What a beautiful sight to see the Statue Of Liberty for the very first time! It was bathed in floodlights, standing tall out of the darkness to welcome us home again! Soon a freeway came into view with a steady stream of early morning traffic moving along. Each vehicle reflected a flash of color as it passed beneath each light along the freeway. That was such a contrast to all the drab, colorless vehicles we had become accustomed to in Europe. How beautiful was America, even in the early morning darkness! And I was truly home again even before the ship finally docked!

Embermenil, Alsace, France

The 44th Division first went on line about 15 km east of Luneville at Embermenil. The I&R Platoon occupied the basements of shelled-out houses in the village. My squad occupied the first building back toward Luneville from a crossroads in the center of town. The village church - a large stone structure was on the corner on our side of the street beyond the cross-street, then a vacant lot, and then our house. Due to our inexperience in such matters, we had picked a hot-spot, since the German military always recorded the coordinates of all road intersections and churches. The Germans customarily used the church steeples for observation posts, and assumed that the American army would too, so that was where the Germans usually aimed their artillery.

Our house was a two-storied frame building, stuccoed, with a red tile roof and a concrete ground floor. The basement was fairly safe, but noisy at night. Some nights it seemed like an 88 came in about every 15 minutes and struck our house. The sounds always woke me up with the following sounds of violent destruction:

- 1) The sudden brief roar of the shell
- 2) The concussion

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EDWIN G. LANSFORD WRITES

(Continued from Page 29)

- 3) Sounds of shrapnel, plaster and other debris crashing against the upstairs walls
- 4) Chunks of plaster, etc. bouncing down the wooden stairs from the second floor
- 5) Brief silence
- 6) A scraping sound, almost instantly turning into a roar louder than the explosion as tiles dislodged by the blast began sliding over the remaining tiles
- 7) A loud clattering as the dislodged tiles shattered in the street outside.
- 8) Silent thoughts of the senseless, systematic destruction of some Alsatian family's home.
- 9) Back to sleep 'til the next shell came in.

We had carried beds and mattresses to our basement to sleep on, so we were quite comfortable until the weather turned wet. Then, with many tiles missing from the roof, the basement began accumulating water. Soon we had two or three inches of water on the basement floor, and were forced to lay boards on top of blocks in order to move around. We also set our beds on blocks so that the bedding would not get water-soaked. Outside, heavy traffic had turned the unpaved street into a virtual river of oozing mud flowing ever so slowly back toward Luneville.

One clear day while I was standing in the street a Messerschmidt flew over the town from the rear with its machine guns chattering. Everyone was so surprised that we only watched in amazement as it passed overhead. That was the only time that I remember our unit being strafed. A few minutes later it came back strafing in the opposite direction and several of us shot at it. I was only carrying a carbine at the time, but I fired several rounds it was so near. Brownie opened up with our 50 cal. from the jeep it was mounted on. Somebody's shots did take effect, because we learned later that the pilot had bailed out and had been taken prisoner in the adjacent 114th area. We also heard that the pilot went to the rear without his boots because some infantryman took a liking to them.

The line companies, meanwhile, relieved units of the 79th Division which had been occupying trenches left over from WWI. My squad joined them after a few days to establish an observation post (daytime) and listening post (night-time). When I learned that the unit we joined was part of C Company, I immediately asked where Davis (Dodson Davis from Charlotte, NC) was since we had become friends in ASTP at St. Louis University and had planned to continue our friendship after the war. I was shocked and saddened to learn that he had been killed the very first night, before his unit ever got to the trenches.

The observation post was a complete bust: That section of trench was down in a hollow grown up with trees, so observation was severely limited. I spent the afternoon trying to dig a foxhole with my mess-kit lid in the side of the trench. We were told that the Germans had attacked that section the night before

and driven C Company out, then they had counter-attacked and taken the section back again, including one severely wounded German who cried for water. I don't think anyone ever gave him any.

We were also told that the Germans had shelled them all night before, and the informer was dismayed because the shelling had seemed to come from the rear. The listening post that night was also a complete bust. All we could hear all night long was the screaming of shells coming in from the rear and exploding about 50 yards or so in front of our positions. The shrapnel sounded especially ugly; some pieces buzzing, some pieces making whirring sounds, some zinging, and most of them either thudding to the ground or whacking into trees. The sounds would have been reassuring instead of frightening if we had only realized that the shelling was friendly, protective fire from our own artillery instead of enemy fire.

The next morning our squad moved to another section of trench in a different area, and we spent the remainder of that day and that night in a dugout also left over from WWI. Needless to say, I rested much better that second night. In the trench near that dugout was an American helmet, and curiosity prompted me to ask about the owner, whereupon I was informed of the following series of events: The former owner of the helmet had been a young kid who had repeatedly, morning after morning, climbed out of the trench and stood up in plain sight of the enemy, shouting insults and challenges at the Germans, disregarding pleas from the other men to get back down into the trench. That foolish show of bravado had continued for several mornings without incident until one fateful morning when the Germans fired a single machine-gun burst dead-center. The poor kid was killed instantly. There is no telling how many other casualties also happened to green, inexperienced troops before any of them learned that none of us were immortal.

Several years after the war, my wife Sue and I were on a tour with other 324th veterans and their wives, and although Embermenil had not been scheduled on our tour, we had called the mayor from Strassbourg the night before and took a side trip back to the town. Much to our surprise, the entire town, men, women, school children, and all were waiting to receive us when our bus arrived. The people held a lovely reception in the town hall for our group, serving champagne, cakes and cookies. The ladies must have spent much of the night preparing for us. Next door to the town hall stood a new church building, smaller than the huge stone building that I remembered, neat and clean, but without a steeple, which the townspeople had not yet been able to afford. Our group took a collection to apply toward the steeple. In 1993, Sue and I returned on our own, and saw that the church had added a tall tower to the building, with clocks in each side of the tower which we could see from quite a distance away. In 2000, my son Jim and I returned again, and this time they had added a tall steeple to the tower, so finally, after fifty-five years, the building had been completed.

The First Time I Saw Paris

Written By: **Gus R. Wiemann**

Company L, 271st Infantry

7126 Canella Court, Tamarac, Florida 33321

A few months after the war ended many of us were sent to another division which was billeted in former German military barracks near the port of Bremerhaven. Ships redeploying American troops to the States left from here regularly. Any day we expected orders to pack our bags and to board a ship. In the meantime I wrote a few stories for the division newspaper.

One morning I received a call over the intercom in the barracks: "Wiemann, report to the orderly room," our company headquarters. As I entered the office and identified myself to the First Sergeant, he said, "The Captain wants to see you," and pointed to the door marked "Commanding Officer." On the other side of that door was one of the original officers of the division who landed on D-Day, was wounded twice, and stayed with his troops until Germany surrendered.

As soon as I knocked I heard the Captain call, "Come in." I entered, saluted and said, "Wiemann reporting, sir." At the moment he was reading the division newspaper and without looking up answered, "At ease, Wiemann." Then he folded the paper, laid it aside, leaned back in his chair and studied me.

"Wiemann, I notice that you've been writing for the paper. I've enjoyed your stories."

"Thank you, sir."

"I've been reviewing your record, Wiemann, and I see that you have 49 points toward redeployment. You need 50. I'll tell you what I'm going to do. The Stars and Stripes newspaper has its headquarters in Paris. I'm going to give you a three-day pass to Paris. Maybe you can get a job there. If you hurry, you can catch a train.

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir."

Within an hour I had packed a bag, hitched a ride in a jeep to the station and boarded a train ready to leave for Paris. Because of wartime attacks on the German railway system the train stopped frequently for crews repairing the tracks and bridges. Occasionally we passed abandoned passenger and freight cars perforated by strafing. A slogan painted in white on the side of one freight car read: "Wheels Roll For Victory."

It was about eight in the morning when our train pulled into Paris. Even though I had slept fitfully during the trip, I grabbed my bag and jumped onto the platform. At a food stand nearby was an elderly man wearing a black beret and selling half-loaves of bread with cheese. I had no French francs, but offered a pack of American cigarettes, which he accepted smiling.

After a breakfast of bread, cheese and water from a nearby drinking fountain, I hurried out of the station into the fresh morning air and looked for a taxi. Just then a small taxi pulled up to the curb near me and discharged a man in uniform. I ran to the cab, leaned

into the open driver's side and showed him the address of The Stars and Stripes which I had ripped out of the paper. Then I held up another pack of cigarettes and asked, "Okay?"

"Oui, Monsieur," he replied, bouncing a cigarette in the middle of his lips. Ten minutes passed before we pulled into a street leading off the Champs-Elysee and stopped in front of a three-story, cream-colored limestone building. Turning in his seat back toward me, the driver pointed to the address outside.

Handing him the cigarettes, I said, "Merci," picked up my bag, hopped out of the cab and headed for the building. Once inside the small lobby, I found two signs on the wall: "Herald Tribune, Second Floor" and "Stars and Stripes, Third Floor." An elevator with filigreed black iron sides and room for three passengers stood next to the signs. I entered it, closed the door and pushed a button marked "3." Creaking and shaking, the elevator lifted me slowly to the third floor where it stopped in front of a dark, wooden door marked "The Stars and Stripes."

I picked up my bag, carefully opened and closed the elevator door and headed for what appeared to be the newspaper's office. As I entered the room I found a receptionist's desk a few feet in front of me with a WAC or Woman's Army Auxiliary Corps Lieutenant seated behind it.

Approaching the Lieutenant, an attractive young lady, I saluted. She smiled, saluted and said, "That's all right. We're really not all that formal here."

I explained that I had been working for my division paper, that my commanding officer had suggested that I apply for work here and I presented copies of my previous stories.

"Just a minute," she replied as she took the samples and entered an office behind her desk. In a few moments she returned with a Captain, a tall, slim dark-haired man. "Thanks for coming in," he said, smiling, and returning my stories.

At the moment we don't have any vacancies and, you know, most of the people here have been with newspapers in civilian life. Sorry you had to make such a long trip, but leave your name and address in case something turns up.

"Thank you, sir," I said, saluting out of habit.

After leaving my name and address with the Lieutenant, I descended in the creaking and vibrating elevator to the street. Once outside, I headed for the Champs-Elysees and the Arc de Triomphe, standing for a moment at the eternal flame or Tomb of an Unknown Soldier. For the first time in months no ruins of war surrounded me. A chronic fatigue began to drain away. Still, as I glanced at my watch, I realized that I had better return to the train station and head back to Germany.

My three-day pass was about to expire as I signed in at the First Sergeant's desk. "Wiemann," said the Sergeant, "the Captain wants to see you as soon as you sign in." Again I reported to the Captain and saluted.

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THE FIRST TIME I SAW PARIS

(Continued from Page 31)

"Wiemann," said the Captain, returning the salute, "you must have made a good impression. I just got a request from the captain at the Stripes for your transfer to Paris."

"Thank you, Captain."

"I'll have your orders cut so that you can leave tomorrow."

"Thank you, Captain."

In the morning right after breakfast I reported to the First Sergeant, picked up my orders and caught a jeep ride into town and to the train station. As soon as I arrived in Paris, I again munched a half-loaf of bread and cheese at the stand in the station and hailed a taxi, all for two packs of American cigarettes. Arriving at the Stripes building, I pushed my duffel bag, loaded with everything I owned, into the small elevator. Once more, it creaked and vibrated to the third floor.

As I entered the office and reported to the WAC Lieutenant, she smiled, said, "Hello again," and disappeared into the office behind her. In a few minutes the Captain greeted me and, looking down at the floor, confided, "We have a slight problem. Right now we don't have a slot for you. What I'm going to do is have you report to our mess, be kind of an assistant to Monsieur Henri, our maitre d'."

"Before you see him, take your bag over to the Hotel Jubilee. See the sergeant in charge and he'll assign you to a room. You'll see the hotel sign just a couple of blocks from here on the other side of the Champs-Elysees. It's about two blocks from the Arc."

"Thank you, Captain," I answered as I pulled my duffel bag out the door and back to the elevator. Once back on the street, I lifted the bag onto my shoulder and began searching for the Hotel Jubilee.

If you translate Champs-Elysees into English, you'll come up with roughly Fields of Paradise. Although that translation for my situation then might have been somewhat exaggerated, I did sense something ethereal or magical. For the first time in years the strict discipline of military hierarchy had disappeared. I sensed that I was about to enter an adventure with people and places that I had never imagined.

Finally I found a marquee proclaiming Hotel Jubilee. Inside the marbled lobby to my left was the sign "Concierge" on a door. I knocked and someone called out, "Come in." As I entered I found a Staff Sergeant sitting at a worn wooden desk and reading *The Stars and Stripes*. A small radio nearby was playing, "You've got to accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, don't mess with Mr. In Between."

Putting down the paper, the Sergeant said, "Hi."

"Hi, Sarge," I answered, dropping my bag and handing him my orders.

"Okay, come with me," he said as he headed toward the lobby and a small elevator similar to the last one. We squeezed in and rattled up three flights. Once out, we walked down a long hallway to a door marked "4."

He pulled out a key, opened the door and we entered a small room with upper and lower bunk beds. Each had a thin pillow at its head and was covered with a brown army blanket.

"The Krauts set the bunk beds up before we arrived," said the Sergeant.

Opposite the beds stood a small desk, its drawer partly open and showing a writing pad. Next to the desk stood a washstand. Hanging over it on the wall was a ceramic-framed mirror. A full-length glass door at the far end of the room led out to a little balcony overlooking the Champs-Elysees.

"Your bathroom is down the hall near the elevator," explained the Sergeant, "and here's your key," he added as he laid it on the desk. "You can leave laundry in the supply room below my office and get it back in about two days. The restaurant we use is about two blocks down the Champs-Elysees on this side and then turn right for about half a block. They start serving about seven in the morning, again about noon and then about five."

As he talked he began moving toward the door. "Thanks, Sarge," I said. Without replying, he left. I closed the door and as I sat down on the lower bunk I could feel a straw mattress and hear it crunch. I wondered who the soldier was who used this bunk before the Americans came. Finally I took off my shoes, stretched out and fell into a deep sleep.

It must have been hours that I slept because as I awoke I could see the earlier bright sunshine had turned into twilight. Looking at my watch, I saw that it was almost five o'clock, time to find that restaurant the Sergeant mentioned.

Lying over a rack on the washstand were a clean face towel and wash cloth. Digging into my bag, I took out my toilet articles, washed and put on a clean, slightly wrinkled shirt.

Before heading downstairs I opened the glass door and stepped onto the balcony. Watching the traffic around the Arc reminded me of the lyrics from "The Last Time I Saw Paris." "I dodged the same old taxicabs that I had dodged for years. The chorus of their squeaky horns was music to my ears."

Stepping back into the room, I remembered seeing the stationery in the desk drawer. I wrote a short note to my parents to give them my new address and to promise more news as soon as I was settled.

Putting on my Eisenhower jacket and cap and locking the door, I headed toward the elevator. It wasn't on my floor and so I hurried down the adjacent worn marble steps to the lobby and onto the street. Following the Sergeant's directions, I found the restaurant on a narrow, cobblestoned street. Lace curtains hung on a brass rod in a large window next to the entrance. As I looked through the window I could see there were only a few uniformed customers sitting at tables and two waitresses serving.

(Continued on Page 33)

THE FIRST TIME I SAW PARIS

(Continued from Page 32)

As I walked in, searching for the maitre d', a distinguished, white-haired gentleman wearing a black, pin-striped suit approached me.

"Are you Monsieur Henri?" I asked.

"Yes, sir. May I help you?"

Introducing myself, I explained that I was assigned to help him until a position became available in the newsroom. He looked at me quizzically, but then answered, "Oh, very good. And, I'm sorry, your name again?"

In postwar France I had decided not to use my first name of Gustav but rather my middle name of Robert. When I said, "Robert," he answered smiling, "Very well, Monsieur Robert," giving it the French pronunciation of "Ro-bare." "Why don't you sit down and have your dinner? Then we can talk."

He showed me to a booth near the kitchen and in a few minutes a waitress served me. It had been a long time since I had enjoyed a meal on a linen-covered table with elegant china and silverware. Later I learned that not only our editorial staff dined here but also personnel from the Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune. As I relished my meal I realized that although the Army supplied the food, Monsieur Henri's staff knew how to convert chow into cuisine.

Looking around, I noticed a small radio on a shelf nearby. A label in German by the loudspeaker warned: "Soldiers: Do not Listen To The Enemy Radio!" Maybe it was typical French reaction to be indifferent to what the Germans had left behind.

Also it reminded me that Major Glenn Miller with his famous swing band had broadcast from London to German troops during the war. A German lady named Ilse had translated for Major Miller. Maybe Ilse's dulcet voice with the Major's band was too much of a temptation for a German soldier.

Meanwhile in England the Jones family along with millions of English citizens did not need any warning about listening to the "enemy radio." Whoever put that label on the radio in Monsieur Henri's restaurant made a statement about one difference between dictatorship and democracy.

Shortly after I had finished and the waitress had cleared the table, Monsieur Henri approached me, said that he hoped all was satisfactory and asked if he could speak with me for a few minutes. He mentioned that he had lived in New York City nearly twenty years, but decided it was in Paris where he felt most comfortable.

As far as my work in the restaurant, he said that it would help him immensely if I could meet his driver at four o'clock in the morning. His driver, Maurice, and I were to pick up the restaurant's provisions at Les Halles, a market place he described as covering about twenty acres.

I told him that I'd be glad to assist in any way and shortly before four the next morning I arrived at the restaurant and saw that a truck was parked in front. Glancing through the window, I saw a man wearing a black beret and sitting alone at a table. A cigarette smoldered in an ashtray as he sipped from a cup and then began to eat a croissant. I entered the restaurant, walked to his table and saw that he was stocky, about thirty years old with jet-black hair showing on the side not covered by his beret.

My French didn't go much beyond, "Bon jour, Monsieur," but I extended my hand and added, "Je suis Robert."

"Ah, Robert," he replied as he stood and shook my hand. "Je suis Maurice." He pointed to his breakfast and asked, "Robert, cafe, croissant?"

"Non, merci," I said, feeling that that might be the extent of our conversation. Trying to show Maurice that I was trying to learn as much French as possible, I pulled out and handed him a small vocabulary booklet issued by the Army and containing such basics as "Where is the railroad station?"

Turning over a few of its pages, Maurice grinned as he studied it and returned it, commenting, "Ah, bon, Robert," probably realizing that his new co-worker was not to be much of a conversationalist.

In a few minutes we left the restaurant, jumped into the cab of the truck and headed down the Champs-Elysees. Even though it was still dark there were billboards along the way that could be read by the streetlights. I'd point them out to Maurice and attempt the French pronunciation. He'd smile and correct me or if I passed the test, I'd get a "Bon, Robert."

Our journey ended soon and we parked close to a huge tent covering sacks of flour. Carrying the bags to nearby vehicles were Germans in gray uniforms and peaked caps. On the backs of their shirts were the large white letters "POW."

Maurice had to leave for a moment just as one POW was dropping a flour sack into the bed of our truck. His blond hair fell below his cap and he appeared to be about eighteen or nineteen years old.

Speaking to him quickly in German as I sensed that Maurice avoided any exchanges with the POWs, I asked, "Where are you from?"

He looked startled, then answered, "Bremen." It was an ironic twist as that was the city near my last division's barracks. "It is nearly all kaput, yes?" he asked as he searched my face for an answer. I nodded and turned away as I saw Maurice approaching in the distance.

Stories circulated continually about German soldiers who wanted to remain in France and marry their girlfriends. One American military policeman had the reputation of apprehending German deserters. Mingling in crowds and dressed in civilian clothes, he hunted for what he considered suspicious males. Many times they were fellows with blue eyes and blond hair or hair with obvious bleaching. Usually the suspects had female companions.

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THE FIRST TIME I SAW PARIS

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Once a suspect was sighted, the policeman followed discreetly until the prey stopped to watch street entertainer or gaze into a shop window with his companion. When the fellow's attention was focused on a particular object, the officer walked quietly behind him and suddenly shouted, "Achtung!" If the policeman's intuition had been accurate, the suspect would jump to attention with his hands held stiffly at his sides, ready to be handcuffed.

My work with Monsieur Henri continued while I waited for a slot in the newsroom. One day I happened to read an item in the Herald Tribune which seemed promising for my future. It concerned a Stars and Stripes newsman who was to be discharged from the service, perhaps opening up that elusive slot. In part, the story read: "JUNIOR GORDON LEAVES THE ARMY," by Edward Hartrich, Herald Tribune, Occupation Forces Correspondent.

"Junior Gordon is an irreverent sort of a guy so far as the brass is concerned. Several weeks ago he picked up a colonel's garrison cap and paraded down the Champs-Elysees incognito. In a one-man inspection tour, this T/5 stopped majors, captains and lieutenants and chewed their brass out for being out of uniform. His jacket was unbuttoned at the time, but a chicken colonel is not to be questioned.

"Perhaps by instinct, General McNarney was correct in his judgment, for as long as Junior was a member of the Army, he never lost a decision to the brass... Finance officers who have encountered Junior's request to change the tab in his currency control book will never understand that this small dark-haired lad from Boston was one of the most successful dopesters on the Paris racetracks.

"Junior spent his afternoons at Auteuil or Longchamp, handicapping the horses. While he speaks a brand of French three degrees west of Esperanto, Junior managed to name the winning bagtails more days than the teller at the 1000-franc window wants to remember, including a disastrous Sunday last autumn when he clipped the pari-mutuel for a mere 500,000 francs.

Junior summed up his French and his attitude in one clipped phrase, "Tout droit - that means go ahead."

Despite Junior Gordon's discharge, my job of assisting Monsieur Henri in getting restaurant supplies, providing menus or substituting for an absent waitress continued. However, my relationship with him developed into friendship as he continued tutoring me.

One evening as we sat over cups of coffee in our customary booth, he looked at me with mischievous twinkle in his eyes. "Robert," he asked, "do you have any lady friends in Paris?" When I answered in the negative, he continued. "There is a club for American soldiers called Rainbow Corner. They have a band there and young French ladies who work for the Red Cross. Most of them are college students who volunteer to serve as hostesses. Why don't you visit? Maybe you can make some friends."

It was a *deja vu* moment, reminiscent of buddies in England predicting "action" in London. But not having a four o'clock visit to Les Halles the next morning, I agreed. "Ou est Rainbow Corner, Monsieur Henri?"

He smiled, unfolded a paper napkin and drew a map. From his sketch, I saw that the place was probably a twenty-minute walk from the Hotel Jubilee. "Merci, Monsieur Henri," I said as I began to leave.

"A demain," he answered.

Following directions on the map, I strolled down the Champs-Elysees to Place de la Concorde where, according to Monsieur Henri, revolutionaries once used the guillotine to shorten the lives of royalty. Turning left toward Church la Madeleine, I saw clusters of GIs outside of a building bearing the sign "Rainbow Corner."

As I entered Rainbow Corner I saw a marble dance floor near the entrance. Girls in Red Cross uniforms and soldiers were jitterbugging to "String of Pearls" played by a five-piece band.

Only a few minutes after entering and finding a place to watch the dancers, a tall, attractive brunette wearing the dark-blue uniform of a Red Cross hostess approached me. Smiling, she introduced herself. "Hello, I'm Christine."

"And I'm Robert."

"Would you like to go to a little party? I have two girlfriends and so far one fellow, Sam," who I assumed was the short, dark-haired GI standing beside her.

"Sure," I answered and introduced myself to Sam who offered a limp handshake and a weak smile. Maybe he was telling me that his enthusiasm for a party did not measure up to Christine's, who left to hunt down a third man.

As Sam and I watched the jitterbuggers, Christine suddenly broke through the spectators. Following closely behind her was a blond, blue-eyed young man, at least six feet tall, in a uniform about two sizes too large.

"All right, now we can go," announced Christine, putting her hand on the young man's shoulder. "This is Louis. I'll get my hat and coat."

Sam and I introduced ourselves to Louis and, noticing that he wore no insignia on his uniform, I asked him what unit he was in. "I'm not really GI," he answered a little wearily. "I'm Dutch."

Paris was teeming with multiple nationalities in uniform, but it was usually difficult for anyone other than an American to enter Rainbow Corner unless as a guest.

"You see," he continued, "I was guarding German POWs at Rheims and so I was given this uniform."

Christine returned just as Louis was beginning his tale and the four of us left through a revolving door which muted the strains of "Little Brown Jug." A gum-chewing MP stood outside the door, examining IDs and a buxom girl near him, carrying a tray of small Eiffel Towers, bellowed, "Souvenirs!"

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THE FIRST TIME I SAW PARIS

(Continued from Page 34)

We walked to the Madeleine Metro Station and while waiting for the train Louis began singing a popular French song, "Joli Madame," and dancing a shuffling step. Like a blues singer perched on a piano, his eyes rolled and closed as his voice caressed the lyrics.

Just as Louis began the refrain once more, the Metro rolled into the station and we boarded the car marked "Premier Classe." Although our tickets read "Troisiem Classe," no conductor would have evicted us as we were in uniform.

Within half an hour we reached Christine's apartment where we sipped a few cognacs and finished the popular topic of Americans impressions of the French and vice versa. In answer of the girls' questions about where we had lived in the States, Sam mentioned that he had worked with his family on their dairy farm in Wisconsin until he was drafted. I told them that I had been a freshman at Columbia University in New York until I quit to join the Army.

Then, Monique, a brunette with a page-boy coiffure, turned to Louis and asked how it was that he had come to Paris. Louis leaned back in his chair and lit a cigarette.

Well, I have always wanted to be an anchor, but in order to be a good actor, you have to know people; and in order to know people, you have to travel. During the war we couldn't travel. I had to work as an interpreter for a quisling doctor. He examined boys for work in the German coal mines and decided who were fit or unfit. If I saw a boy who was a good fellow and not tough like the others, even though the doctor told me to write, "Fit," I'd write, "Unfit."

"And the Germans never found out?" asked another girl named Simone.

Louis smiled, puffed on his cigarette and just shook his head. "About a week after the war I packed my things and told my parents I was going to travel. They didn't say very much and I just left. I didn't have any papers, but I was able to cross the border. I went to Rheims, where I joined some Dutch boys guarding POWs.

"We had a Dutch officer and one day I asked him if I could visit Paris. 'Why do you want to visit Paris?' he said. 'You're only eighteen years old.'

"I thought I don't have to listen to him. I'm not in the Army. So one day I left and came to Paris."

Even though it was nearly midnight and the girls seemed to want Louis to continue, I thanked Christine and her friends for their hospitality and Louis, Sam and I headed back to the Metro station. As Sam's unit was on the outskirts of Paris, he boarded a different train and Louis and I headed back toward Rainbow Corner, only a short walk from the Hotel Jubilee. When I asked Louis where he planned to stay, he shrugged his shoulders.

"Louis," I said, "there are two bunks in my room. You can stay there tonight. Tomorrow I don't have to work, so maybe we can find a place for you."

Louis and I rose early the next morning and I took him to the restaurant to meet Monsieur Henri. He arranged for Louis to have breakfast with me before the paper's staff began trickling in. Then we headed back to the hotel where I introduced Louis to Sergeant Bickford, who was in charge of supplies for the paper.

Our burly and amiable Sergeant, a small department store manager in civilian life, showed his sympathetic side by hiring unofficially about a half-dozen displaced teenagers to work in the supply room. These youngsters, a European polyglot known as Sergeant Bickford's Foreign Legion, owed their existence to him and demonstrated their gratitude by a fierce dedication. They categorized and neatly shelved shirts, pants, socks, shoes, underwear and whatever else Stripes personnel needed. If Sergeant Bickford saw that the quantity of a particular item was getting low, he would send one of his "boys" to the supply depot and know that his contacts at the depot would solve the problem.

Although the Sergeant's staff synchronized their work, differences in their languages sometimes created communication problems. One small fellow, who sported a red beret and was nicknamed Toute Suite, spoke a language none of the group ever fathomed. His co-workers attempted reaching him with their native languages like French, German, Spanish, Italian and even Esperanto, but with no success.

Through their constant exposure to Paris and its people, inevitably each one found a niche outside Sergeant Bickford's Foreign Legion. Realizing this, I introduced Louis to the Sergeant and within a day Louis became a Legionnaire with his own room in the hotel's attic and bathroom facility just one floor below.

One morning after returning to the restaurant from Les Halles I received a telephone call from an editor in the newsroom. Speaking quickly, he said, "This is Ernie. We need help in the newsroom to sort teletypes for the copy desk and do some rewrite of wire-service stories. Could you be here tomorrow at nine a.m.?"

"Hold on a minute," I replied. "Let me check with Monsieur Henri."

After I explained the call to him, he answered, "Go right ahead. Bon chance?"

Before nine the next day I found Ernie in the newsroom. He was probably in his mid-twenties, slim, slightly bald and constantly looking at his wristwatch. Pointing to a desk with two teletype machines, he said, "All you have to do is sort out the stories as to origin: The States, France, England, et cetera. If they don't fit into a particular country, put them into a separate pile and I'll decide where they go."

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THE FIRST TIME I SAW PARIS

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For the following two weeks I sorted out news pouring from the teletypes, gradually becoming familiar with the subjects: politics, international affairs, celebrities, court trials.

French news centered on postwar problems as well as the trial of Vichy France's number-two man during the German occupation, Pierre Laval. Our paper assigned one reporter to cover the proceedings. In following the case, I noticed that the prosecution presented a lengthy case, but the Court appeared to limit Laval's defense. As was expected by most of the trial observers, Laval was found guilty and shot.

Although my job was sorting out news releases and occasionally rewriting a short item, my thoughts began focusing not on the hard news but on the youth caught in the Old-World prejudices. One night at the Rainbow Corner an attractive French hostess confided, "I had a German governess who taught me German when I was a child. Now I never want to hear German again."

Even though Louis and I lived in the Hotel Jubilee, we didn't see each other sometimes for weeks. One evening as I was sitting in my room and writing a letter to my folks there was a knock on the door. When I opened it, there was Louis with his usual broad smile.

"Hello, fellow," he greeted.

"Hi, Louis, come in. Sit down. What have you been doing?"

Well, I just came back from Germany today. One of Sergeant Bickford's friends in the office drew up travel orders, made me Private Louis van Dyck and now I have Serial Number 12159615."

"Louis, why did you go to Germany?"

"Well, you know I like to travel, so I thought, well, I'll go to Germany. I thought I'll go to Cologne, see the cathedral there. I heard it was still standing. Sergeant Bickford gave me some K-rations so I wouldn't get too hungry.

"It was afternoon when I arrived there. I visited the cathedral and took a long walk. I got lost and went up to a house, knocked on the door and an old lady answered. I explained what happened and asked if she had a room.

"Kommen Sie bitte herein," she answered. Then she took me upstairs to a little room which had belonged to her son who, she said, was killed in the war. She brought me warm water, soap and a towel.

"In the morning she brought me eggs, toast and coffee. Really, it was very nice. Don't you think so?" I agreed and in a few minutes Louis left. I finished writing my letter, undressed, turned out the light and slid into my bunk.

When I reported to work the next morning Ernie asked, "Did you hear the news? They're closing the

Paris office and we're going to Germany, a little town called Altdorf near Nuremberg."

It was a surprise, but when you move in the Army all that you need to pack is your clothes. I wanted to say good-bye to Louis, but even Sergeant Bickford didn't know where to find him. I visited the restaurant and thanked Monsieur Henri for all his patient tutoring and friendship. His parting words as he shook my hand were, "Bon chance, Monsieur Robert."

One final place I had to see was the book stalls along the Seine. Here I had found used books and magazines from all over Europe. A curious find was copies of a German picture military magazine titled Signal. One of them bore a cover picture of General Ulysses Grant, captioned "... the man responsible for the first total war." I bought three different copies, headed back to the hotel, packed my duffel bag and headed for the train.

What's the Story on "Red Cross Susie"?



Does anyone know the story behind this lion cub? We found these pictures in an old archival box. The caption on the back of one of the pictures states, "Red Cross Susie, lion cub coming out of the in basket."

If you know the answer to this mystery, please write in and let us know and we will publish it in the next issue of the bulletin. Thank you.

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

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.

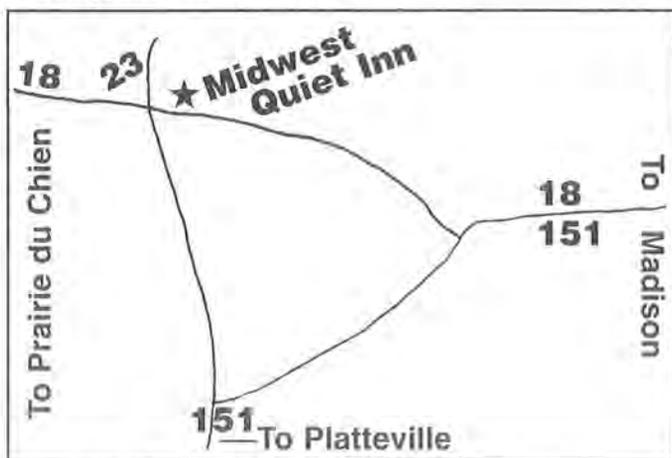
Tuesday: Check in time, 3:00 p.m.
Hospitality Room

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 in New York City,
West Point Military Academy,
P.T. Barnum Museum and much more.

Don't miss this one.

It promises to be one of the best!

See pages 6 and 7 for more information
and pages 10 and 11 for registration forms.

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER 1st to 4th, 2004
69th CAVALRY RECON TROOP
53rd ANNUAL REUNION
BRANSON, MISSOURI
Cobblestone Inn

Great Southern Travel is assisting with Lodging, Activities, Show Tickets, Air Travel, Car Rental and/or shuttles if needed.

Room Rate: \$60.00 per night, tax included.

All rooms, single or double, 1 or 2 beds, are available for this special rate August 29th through September 7th only through Great Southern.

For Information Call or Write:
Harold Gardner
2929 Mason Avenue
Independence, Missouri 64052-2962
Telephone: 816/254-4816



“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.**

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273rd Regiment

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(Continued on Back Cover)

"Taps" (Continued from Page 38)

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Ladies' Taps

MRS. WILLARD CLINEFF
880th Field Artillery Widow

MRS. VIRGINIA McMURRY
Wife of Joe McMurry
Company I, 271st Infantry Regiment

MRS. OLGA NINA NICKELS
Wife of Robert Nickels
661st Tank Destroyers Recon

MRS. MILDRED STETLER
Wife of Carl Stetler
569th Signal Company

MRS. MARY YOUNG
Wife of Bruce L. Young
Headquarters, 879th Field Artillery



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PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR E-MAIL YOUR REGULAR ADDRESS AND UNIT.

We have been receiving some e-mails where members are wanting a response from other members but leave no regular address or phone number for people to contact them. 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



the 69th

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The 273rd Gang at the 56th Annual Reunion



Front Row: Bill Nettles, Gene Mischke, Kathy Chamberlain-Bill Haas' daughter, and Rosie Haas. Back Row: Ruby Nettles, Peg Shaw, Bob Shaw, Marilyn Mischke, Bill Haas, Ed Lucci, Bob Rosane, Jean Rosane.

Correct caption for photo in center of last bulletin page 21: Front - Bill Nettles, Gene Mischke, Bob Rosane. Back - Bill Haas, Bob Shaw, Ed Lucci.

Submitted By: **Wilbert F. Haas**, 2948 Washington Street, Dubuque, Iowa 52001-1926

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