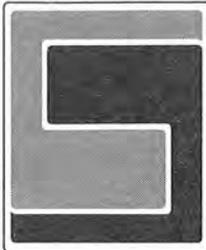


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2005

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

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NEW KENSINGTON, PA 15068-4069
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bulletin

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Doughs of the 69th Division, 1st U.S. Army



S/Sgt. Alexander Walegir, Brooklyn, NY
*“I didn’t have much time to think,
being a squad leader kept me busy.”*



Pfc Earl W. Wiggins, Clifton Forge, VA
*“I just thought of
my wife and kid through it all.”*



PFC Robert M. Sokoloff, New Haven, CT
*“I was pretty busy,
but I hate those Screaming Meemies.”*

See Story Page 4



Pvt. Charles D. Doricourt, Houston, TX
“Cold weather was the worst part of it all.”

Photos submitted by Fred H. Fenn, Jr.

THE MAIL BOX

By Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle
Editor



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Tom R. Smith, 16380 Kelly Cove Drive, #300, Ft. Myers, Florida 33908-3129 — Hq. Btry., 881st F.A: I really appreciate the work you all put into the Bulletin. I always read it cover to cover. Unfortunately, health problems have precluded me from attending the annual reunion for some years now. The last one I was able to attend was in Orlando.

Regarding the **Bill Drugg** item on Page 2 of the most recent bulletin: We too experienced the mud. We cut trees and built a corduroy road to the rear, in the event a retreat was necessary, as well as to give us forward mobility. I remember it well since during one logging activity, a tow truck tow cable broke and struck me in the knee, sending me to the hospital for a brief recovery. The scars remain. I don't remember where we were but it was in the forest not long after we went on line after the breakthrough following the Bulge. We were advised to cut the trees sparingly so as not to leave exposure to air reconnaissance by clear cutting.

The item from **George J. Clay** also recalled my viewing a similar (maybe the same one) air force bailout with airmen landing on both sides of no-man's land. It was mind boggling to see them captured and not be able to do anything about it.

Seymour Kuvin, M.D., 49 Clarkson Drive, Toms River, New Jersey 08753-2605 — Co. H, 271st: I used to be a corporal for the 271st Infantry, mortar gunner. I receive the bulletin regularly and may you live to be as old as Moses. You (Dottie) are the one that keeps us together and keeps the organization going. I'm over 80 now, and see Taps for so many of my colleagues and it makes me cry. But as long as two are left, I'm sure you will keep us posted.

Ben Abbott, 8600 S.W. 139th Terrace, Miami, Florida 33158: I wrote to the 69th Division Association about a year ago asking to speak with some former members of the 69th Division. Thanks to your help, my brother and I were able to meet and speak with several members of the Association.

My twin brother and I have been continuing our interviews with WWII veterans as well as collecting and preserving the artifacts and memorabilia. One thing that we are looking for is an **original WWII helmet with the 69th Division insignia painted**

on the front. There are many photographs of men from the 69th Division wearing these, particularly during the meeting with the Russians on the Elbe River. I was wondering if anyone in the association might have an original one they would be willing to part with or sell to us. Thanks you again for all your help. If you or anyone from the association would like to get in contact with me or my brother please call or write.

Telephone: (310) 717-2237 or (305) 969-0034
email: benjabbott@hotmail.com
email: jonabbott@bellsouth.net
Jon Abbott: 10945 Rose Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90034

Chet Yastrzemski, 251A North Main Street, Southampton, New York 11968 — Co. E, 272nd: On a bit of sad news, I received a call from **Pat Kearsley** who was engaged to **John Havey**. John died on June 14th at 3:00 p.m. He had a couple of severe strokes and also had kidney problems. John and Pat were on our Tour of Europe and enjoyed the tour very much. At the reunion in Stamford, John advised me he would be on the tour and we again would have that final drink on the lunch tour of the Rhine River. I have notified members of our association. He will be sorely missed.

Stephen Rojcewicz, 135 Endicott Street, Worcester, Massachusetts 01610-19444 — 881st F.A.: When we held our reunion in Biloxi, Mississippi in 1991, we were given a tour of Camp Shelby before we dedicated the monument to the Fighting 69th Division. In groups of about 200 each, we toured the camp, had lunch at the officers' quarters, and visited the museum. Some of the fellows were disappointed that we saw no sign of the barracks that were our own quarters in '43 and '44. This picture shows what the barracks looked like. You slept head to toe as the guys will remember. Keep up the wonderful work you are doing. May every blessing and happiness be yours.



A Note from your President and Membership Chairman, Paul Shadle

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



President Paul Shadle and Editor, Dottie Shadle

Sending greetings from your President and Membership Chairman. I trust that you all had a good Thanksgiving. May you all have a safe and happy Holiday Season.

I must say I did enjoy the reunion in Louisville. There was enough to keep one busy all the time. If you missed this reunion, I hope you are able to attend the next one in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Our Early Bird will be a little different next year.

If you are receiving the bulletin and are no longer interested in doing so, please let me know. The cost of doing the bulletins have gone up and we need your support. Your support is in paying your dues yearly.

Special Note on Dues

If you have not paid your dues, please do so now. We are updating our mailing list and if you are no longer interested in receiving the bulletin, I would appreciate you letting me know and I will delete your name and address from our roster. The cost of printing and mailing the bulletins has risen and we need more dues paying members. At this point in time, we have less than 20% of the members paying their dues. **We need your help to keep the bulletins coming to your house.** Thank you.

Names Deleted for Various Reasons

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Frank A. Andrews | Leslie E. Lowe |
| Rene Belanger | Richard B. Magers |
| Michael G. Chervenak | Mrs. Rose Mallia |
| L. G. Congrove | E. Kenneth Marlin |
| Arly K. Dahlin | Jacob S. McLain |
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| Bob Lydy | |

A Note from Dottie, Your Bulletin Editor

Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle
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Well we had our first major snow in the mountains of Pennsylvania. In October we had a seven-inch snowstorm. The snow was laying on the trees and the colored leaves. What a nice sight to see. It only lasted a day and then the warm weather returned again.

The reunion in Louisville was a good one. The attendance was down a little, but with the age of some of the members, this is naturally going to happen. I look forward to seeing you in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania for our next reunion in August 2006.

We are still moving. It seems like the more we move, the more we have to move. We were unable to take our vacation to Branson this fall. In fact, the only vacation we were able to take this year was the reunion. Hopefully next year is different.

I hope you all have a very good Holiday Season and wish all of you the best of health and happiness in the New Year 2006.

MOVING

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Fred Fenn's cover photos

Submitted By: **Fred H. Fenn, Jr.**

Son of Colonel Fred H. Fenn

18929 St. Clare Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70810

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E-Mail: carolhfenn@hotmail.com

I have enclosed 12 photos that you might find of interest that tie in with a story in the last issue on page 15 entitled, "Who is this Guy?" (*The man on the cover of the recent 69th book, "The Stories of Our War" by William Sheavly, Jr.*)

My father was **Colonel Fred H. Fenn** and was a member of General Reinhardt's staff. He was the Division Signal Officer and was attached to the Signal Corp. He was directly responsible for all Division communications and was also responsible for creating a pictorial history of the Division as it moved across Germany. His people produced the 16mm film that was used for the DVD/VCR that is currently being distributed. I currently have over 1,000 photos of the 69th. Most of them have the date the picture was taken, the people in the picture and what the picture represents. I will be more than happy to provide these photos to you for use in the 69th Bulletin. I have them broken down by battles, award ceremonies, prisoners, refugees, concentration camps, link-up and "behind the lines."

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We would be thrilled to have access to your photos. Please send along whatever you can, when you can. The photos you provided with your letter were excellent and we appreciate it. Thank you.)

The Rest of the Story

The men in this series of photos, 'Doughs' of the 69th Division, First U.S. Army, have come through their first action, during which they drove the Germans from dominating positions in the heart of the Siegfried Line defenses. The answers as to their first reaction to combat are as varied as are the personalities of the men themselves. Some were scared - some were cold - one said, 'I hugged the ground like it was my mother.' Few found words to adequately express themselves; the answers are terse, truthful and bitter. As you will note, there is a photo of **Pvt. Roth** which was featured on page 15 of the last issue of the Bulletin with his statement attached.



Pvt. James B. Gray
Fayetteville, Tennessee

"Cold weather was the worst part of it."



S/Sgt. Aloysius Ruthoviski
Hantramck, Michigan

"Didn't mind the small arms fire, but damn that mortar and artillery fire."



Pvt. Raymond L. Roth
Mogadore, Ohio

"I was scared to death."
Cover photo of
"The Stories of Our War."



Sgt. Alphon "Speck" Threlkeld
Titusville, Florida

"I should have stayed a supply sergeant."



T/Sgt. William H. Corun
Knoxville, Tennessee
*"Roughest thing I ever saw
when the rockets came over."*



Pfc. Willey E. Thompson
Houston, Mississippi ??
(never heard of Houston, Mississippi)
"I prayed like I never prayed before."



Pvt. Harold R. Sprang
Lucas, Ohio
"Hell"



Pvt. Fred I. Green
Eton, Ohio
"It was different from anything I ever saw."

Printer E-Mail Address

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

inthewoods@buhlbrothersprinting.com

Our bulletin printer has a large mailbox and can accommodate your photos and stories. Just make sure in the subject line, you include "69th" and the printer will **turn it over to Dottie for approval for publication.**

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

We have been receiving some e-mails where 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,
Dottie Witzleb, Editor

**DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR NEXT BULLETIN IS
JANUARY 31st, 2006 • Volume 59, No. 2
January, February, March, April 2006
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Happy Holidays

*to all members of the
69th Infantry Division Assn.
and your families.
May you enjoy a happy
and healthy new year.*



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Do not send dues to Dottie Shadle.

A Tribute to Harold Lee Gardner

69th Division Recon Troop

Submitted By: **Mike Moscaritolo**
19 Trotters Circle, Kissimmee, Florida 34743

On September 7th, 2005 the day the 69th Division Recon Troop was about to hold our 54th Trooper Reunion in Branson, Missouri, **Harold** decided it was time to meet his maker.

For the past 20 to 25 years Harold had been the backbone of our Recon Troop by publishing, writing and mailing out monthly newsletters.



Jeanne and Harold Gardner

In the very beginning 3 or 4 troopers met together in someone's backyard for a cookout. Each year, 3 or 4 more names were included. We started meeting in hotels in Pennsylvania for the weekend, and we stayed in one of the bedrooms as our hospitality room. Charlie and Bobbie Fox decided that someone was going to die in the room which of course was not smoke free! So Charlie ordered two rooms and we all hung out in one, and they were able to get a good night's sleep in the other room. Why didn't I think of it?

Soon we had 20 to 30 troopers at each reunion, so we obtained a larger Hospitality Room. It was now an ideal situation. On several occasions we had fifty Troopers coming along with wives for a total of 100 persons or more. Some brought their children. This was not a bad turnout for having only 160 men in the whole troop. I like to believe it was because of Harold's newsletter which he mailed 7 or 8 times a year. Each year he published a new Trooper Roster with new names and corrections. He also listed departed buddies, new addresses and telephone numbers of Troopers we lost contact with. Also each squad, platoon and everyone's position in the squad. It took a great deal of time and patience. It was very rewarding to Harold and all of us. At almost every reunion due to Harold's newsletter, we could always expect one or two more new Troopers to show up. And that was always a sight for sore eyes.

Harold and Jeanne were married shortly after he returned home from the war in April 1946. He served in the 29th Infantry Division for another year. Harold was a wonderful family man. He and Jeanne have two lovely daughters, two granddaughters and one great grandson, the first born boy in over 80 years in his immediate family. Harold was a faithful churchgoer and he sang in the choir. He and Jeanne always ended their phone conversation with "AND GOD BLESS."

Harold was laid to rest with Military Honors. He will be missed by all of us. May You Rest In Peace Buddy! "AND GOD BLESS!"

C Company's encounters with M-10 & M-18 Destroyers

Submitted By: **Charles H. Griffith**

Company C, 661st Tank Destroyer

944 Somerset Street

Gloucester City, New Jersey 08030-1857

This is about encounters "C" Company had with the M-10, commanded by **Romaine Repair**. The gunner was **Cpl. Veranges**, (Remainder of the crew, got lost in the shadows of my eighty one year old memory bank.) They were out in the field, dashing around learning a new maneuver, I think it was called the right cross, left hook ploy designed to fool the enemy, (Texas was as far as it got, I think.) The destroyer started up a sharply rising hill, when the right side of the hill collapsed under the right track. Result, the destroyer rolled over, **Cpl. Veranges**, bailed out. He made it to the bottom, unscratched. The destroyer wound up upside down, perched on the turret. Tracks up **Lt. Howard Matlack**, (always first to respond, when there was a problem,) ran over, said something to **Repair**, then believe it or not, the entire tank, tracks and all, started turning. **Repair** got to the right spot, then the escape hatch opened, out of which came the assistant driver. (The escape hatch was located under the assistant driver's seat. In this instance over the seat.) Next out was the driver followed by the assistant gunner, and then the captain. But not least, **Romaine** gets out. I was only a spectator, and it scared the hell out of me.

Just recently, **Romaine**, via snail mail, informed me why he turned the turret. The lieutenant wanted something removed from the turret. Traversing on the M-10 was done manually. Must have been quite a strain moving that bulk. Now time for the end of this sad tale. According to **Repair**, his assistant driver could sleep anywhere, in this case topsy turvy in an M-10, he managed to rouse himself enough to pop open the escape hatch.

* * * * *

We, Company C, were on a tactical march. So the enemy (probably Company B) couldn't locate our column, we were driving off the side of the road. The road was made up of kilechi dust. This stuff rises like a cloud of smoke. If a track vehicle runs on it, it can be seen for miles. Now how this came about, I don't know.

We were the third tank in line. First two motored along fine, we right behind them, when WHAM! The destroyer drops down into a depression over a forty foot drop. (Every time I tell this story, the depth grows.) The destroyer stops shuddering, the gun commander, **Jules Slopek**, yells abandon ship! Not being one to wait around for second calls, I flew the coop! I

walked around to the rear of the tank, sat down on the grass, eyeballing this miracle of suspended animation - the vehicle was fully hull down. I sat with my hands palm down on the grass, then holy cow a snake, a three footer, slithered across the back of my hand, and on into the vents over the engine compartment, down where that radial engine was.

About that time **Lt. Matlack** runs up, out of breath, pale faced because of concern about the safety of the men, he was holding a fire extinguisher. We assured him we were all O.K. (Then I loved him for this.) He asked, "Who is the assistant gunner?" I said, "I am sir." "Ah ha!" He said, "Did you turn off the gas?" I said, "No sir." "Well get back in there and turn it off!" (In the M-18, the gas was able to be shut off from three levers that were located directly behind that lazy assistant gunner, yours truly.) Nobody timed it but I bet I set a world record for gas shut off, in and out of that thing in a split second. ain't no darn snake gonna get me!

Yes dear readers, there is an end to this story. The battalion had at its disposal at least two tank recovery vehicles, capable of lifting an M-18 right off the ground. Well two were sent to recover this derelict pile of armor and snake infested scuttlebutt. "They dropped it down the fifty foot hole," they said. (In reality, the "Hole" was a dry creek bed, wide and deep.) There were a bunch of dry places around camp too, (now Ft. Hood) mainly the towns we were unlucky enough to wrangle weekend passes to.

* * * * *



Charles Griffith

I met the owner of this jeep at a car dealer. He had everything on this jeep except the kitchen sink including the angle iron, wire cutter, welded to the front bumper. He collects military vehicles of all kinds. One of these days I'll go to his place and eyeball them. I did not remember the Tommy Gun being that heavy. (Gettin' old, I guess.)

History of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Submitted By: **Chet Yastrzemski**
Company E, 272nd Infantry
251A North Main Street
Southampton, New York 11968

This article appeared in our Retired Police Association publication of the State of New York. I thought it would be interesting to the members of the 69th.

BY MIKE FERRANOLA, 2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Since Memorial Day, a great interest has been expressed by the many inquiries concerning the history of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier also known as the Tomb of the Unknown in Arlington National Cemetery. In 1958, the Quartermaster review published the story of the interesting measures taken in the selection of the unknown soldier who died in World War I and as time passed, the review added the history of the unknowns of World War II and the Korean War.

As I begin this article, picture yourself inside Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia on a hillside overlooking the historic Potomac River as you observe a shrine that has become the Mecca not only for Americans who visit Washington, but also for the many prominent dignitaries and visitors from foreign lands. The Shrine is the Tomb of America's Unknown Soldier, symbolizing those Americans who gave their lives in World War I, World War II and the Korean War, in defense of national integrity, honor and tranquility.

In following the custom inaugurated by other allied countries in World War I, Congress approved a resolution providing for the burial in Arlington National Cemetery on Armistice Day 1921 of an unknown and unidentified American soldier of World War I. The Secretary of War had delegated to the Quartermaster Corps the duty of selecting the unknown soldier and accordingly, the Quartermaster General directed the Chief of American Graves registration service in Europe to select from among the burials of America's unknown dead bodies of four who fell in the combat area in order that one from among them could be anonymously designated as the one for burial in accordance with the provisions of the resolution. The four bodies of unknown soldiers selected, one from each of the following cemeteries-Aisne Marne, Meuse Argonne, Somme and St. Michel were brought to the city of Chalon, France, where they were placed in the Hotel de Ville. The fact that the bodies selected were those of American soldiers was determined by the location of the place of death, original burial and uniforms. The utmost care was taken to see that there was no evidence of identification on the bodies selected and no indication that their identity could ever be established.

After the four bodies were arranged in the Hotel, the next step was the matter of selecting one from

among them to represent all the unknown American soldiers. The ceremony, though simple, was most impressive.

In view of his outstanding service, Sergeant Edward Younger, on duty with the American forces in Germany, was given the honor of making the final selection on the morning of October 24, 1921, in the presence of the Quartermaster General, the Commanding General of the American forces in Germany, the Mayor of the city of Chalon, top ranking officers of the French Army, distinguished French citizens and eminent French and American civilians. While a French military band played an appropriate air, an Army Sergeant designated to make the selection of the unknown soldier slowly entered the room where the four caskets were placed and while passing between two lines formed by the officials he silently advanced to the caskets, circled them three times and then placed a spray of white roses on one of the four caskets. He then faced the body, stood at attention, and saluted. Following his salute the officers of the French Army then saluted in the name of the French people.

The body then laid in state for several hours watched over by a guard of honor composed of French and American soldiers while the people of Chalon reverently paid their respects leaving offerings of flowers and other tributes. After a brief official ceremony by the people of Chalon, the casket was placed on a flag draped gun carriage and escorted by French and American troops to the railroad station where it was placed aboard a funeral car on a special train for journey to the city of Le Havre. Upon it's arrival at Le Havre, the train was met by French officials and troops who gathered to pay homage to the American's unknown soldier. Accompanied by many floral tributes and escorted by French and American troops, the solemn procession moved through the city to the pier where the American cruiser "Olympia" awaited with her flags at half mast to receive the precious cargo which she was to bring back to the homeland. Here, with ceremonies befitting the solemn occasion, the casket was turned over to the United States Navy and placed on the flower deck stern for the long journey to America.

Slowly and silently the Olympia moved from the pier and with a salute of 17 guns from the French destroyer, to which she promptly responded, the journey of the Unknown Soldier to his homeland began.

On November 9, 1921 the Olympia reached the Navy Yard at Washington D.C., where the flag draped casket was solemnly delivered by the Navy to the Army, and escorted to the Rotunda of the Capital. Here upon the same catafalque, that had similarly held the remains of our Presidents, Lincoln, Garfield and McKinley, the body laid in state under a guard of

(Continued on Page 10)

HISTORY OF THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER *(Continued from Page 9)*

honor composed of selected men of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps. During the next day thousands of patriotic individuals passed before the casket to pay homage to the Unknown Soldier who symbolized all the unknown and the purpose for which they died.

On the morning of November 11, 1921 - Armistice Day, the casket was removed from the Rotunda of the Capital and escorted to Arlington National Cemetery under military escort. Following the caisson bearing the flag draped casket was the President of the United States, the Vice President, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, members of Congress, wearers of the Congressional Medal of Honor, Senators and distinguished Army, Navy and Marine Corps Officers. As thousands gathered to pay homage to those who died on the field of battle, the procession moved on to Arlington National Cemetery where the casket was reverently placed upon the catafalque. At this time a simple but impressive ceremony was conducted which included an address by the President of the United States who then conferred upon the unknown soldier the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross. Following the ceremony special representatives of foreign governments associated with the United States in WWI each in turn conferred upon the Unknown the highest military decoration of their nation. At the conclusion of these ceremonies, a brief committal service was held. With three salvos of artillery, the sounding of taps and the national salute, the impressive ceremony was brought to a close.

On August 3rd, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the bill to select and pay tribute to the unknowns of WWII and the Korean War. Two unknowns from WWII, one from the European Theatre and one from the Pacific Theatre were placed in identical caskets and taken aboard a guided missile cruiser. After selecting the unknown soldier of WWII, the remaining caskets received a solemn burial at sea.

Four unknown American soldiers who died in the Korean War were also disinterred from the National cemetery in Hawaii. Both caskets arrived in Washington, D.C. where they laid in the capital Rotunda until May 30th, 1958. On that morning the caskets were carried on caissons to Arlington National Cemetery where each were awarded the Medal of Honor by President Eisenhower and later were interred in the Plaza beside their WWI comrade.

Finally the unknown soldier from the Vietnam War was selected during a ceremony at Pearl Harbor on May 17th, 1984. The unknown was then transported to Alameda Naval Base where the remains were sent to Travis Air Force Base in California. Many veterans and President Reagan visited the unknown soldier in the U.S. Capital on Memorial Day May 28th, 1984.

As President Reagan presided over the funeral he presented the Medal of Honor to the Vietnam Unknown Soldier and also acted as next of kin by accepting the interment flag at the end of the ceremony.

The remains of the Vietnam unknown soldier were exhumed on May 14th, 1998 and based on DNA testing scientists identified the remains as those of Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie shot down near An-Loc in Vietnam in 1972. The identification is presently under review. As a result of these findings it has been decided that the crypt that will contain the remains of the Vietnam unknown will remain vacant.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier stands at the top of the hill overlooking Washington, D.C. has never been officially named. The Tomb is guarded day and night by sentries from all branches of the U.S. Military and services are held every Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

In order to provide an appropriate setting for the Tomb certain changes were necessary in the grounds, roadways and landscaping in the immediate vicinity of the Tomb.

The front panel of the Tomb facing the City of Washington and the Potomac River, has carved upon the marble a composition of 3 figures commemorative of the spirit of the allies of WWI. In the center of the panel stands "Victory," on the right side a male figure symbolizes "Valor" and on the left side stands "Peace." Each of the sides are divided into three panels of which is carved an inverted wreath and inscribed on the back of the Tomb are the words:

*"Here Rests In Honored Glory
An American Soldier Known But To God."*

In closing I salute all the service men and women serving our country in order to protect us against the evil and hate generated by countries who don't believe in Democracy. As we honor the living and deceased members of the Armed Forces let us not forget to honor the living and deceased members of the Armed Forces let us not forget to honor those **True Heroes** who now rest at the Tomb of the Unknown. We will never know who they were but we do know they were American Soldiers fighting for our country's freedom.



Dear Friends, Veterans
of the 69th U.S. Infantry Division.

I wish you all best and much health
to the Veterans Day. I am very proud
to be a member of the organization.

Juergen Moeller
Honorary 69th Member
Ansbach/Germany

Looking Back

Submitted By: **Henry Sak**

Anti-Tank, 273rd Infantry Regiment

820 S.E. Street, #112, Oxnard, California 93030

Soon after V.E. Day, while stationed in Grimma, Germany, I was asked to go as a translator on a trip with two chaplains who wanted to carry out religious services for some allied P.W.s held in a camp about 40 miles to the east. The P.W.s were freed by the Red Army and were being held for a future exchange for Russian P.W.s freed by the Allies.

Our group consisted of an American chaplain, his assistant who drove the jeep, an English chaplain and myself. Soon after we left, we came to a crossroad where a long convoy of horse-drawn wagons carrying Russian soldiers was moving south. One of the wagons contained female soldiers with automatic weapons. The English chaplain ordered our driver to stop and wait for them to pass. After traveling farther on we had to stop for a Russian sentry in a small hut which I noticed was decorated with some spring flowers. I got out of the jeep and tried to explain our mission to the young guard. By that time, I had forgotten most of the Russian language which I learned at Syracuse U. with the Army Specialized Training Program (A.S.T.P.), and with some confusion the guard pressed his automatic weapon against my stomach, but told us to pass.

At the camp, we met with the P.W.s, most of whom were from the 106th Division. One of them told me their outfit was one of the first to be attacked by the Germans at the Bulge, because they were inexperienced in combat, and the German patrols probably knew that. He told me the G.I.s had only 4 rounds of ammo for their M1 rifles. The Germans even captured the Division Band. I gave him a breakfast K-Ration. All of the P.W.s were complaining about the lack of food. Another G.I. from Brooklyn told me that he tried to crawl through a hole in the fence to go to town in search of food when a Russian guard fired a round close to him. The G.I. got mad and took the gun from the Russian and cursed at him. Another American told me of an incident when a carton of canned milk fell from the vehicle and that he and several others became ill after drinking too much of the milk. They must have been really hungry.

A very large Russian officer, who I think was in charge of the compound, joked around with us. He was proud of his smattering of English: "Early to bed and Early to Rise Makes a Man Healthy, Wealthy and Wise."

We were glad to leave the gloomy place, and return to our units, but the English officer remained for some reason or other. We travelled through the flat land which resembled our Kansas Plains. We overtook a vehicle similar to our old covered wagons, but about 1/3rd their size. Two friendly Czech ladies from the wagon talked with us for a while. We were probably the first G.I.s they met. The rest of the journey was uneventful.

Documenting the Path of American Liberators

Submitted By: **Gilbert L. Hamilton**

Company L, 271st Infantry

7486 East Woodshire Cove

Scottsdale, Arizona 85258

To mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe – and, with it, the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps of allied forces, the Holocaust Museum commemorated this landmark season in the newly redesigned Wexler Learning Center. This special tribute, "*Witness to History-Documenting the Path of American Liberators*," allows visitors to learn more about the trek of American troops across "Fortress Europe." Their encounters with concentration camps are recorded through lenses of the U.S. Army Signal Corps. Animated maps, wartime accounts, and historical photo in interactive multimedia stations are offered.

The 69th Division has been recognized as a liberating unit by both the Museum and the U.S. Army Center of Military History for actions on 4/19/1945 at Leipzig-Thekla (Buchenwald sub camp). Flags of all liberating units continue to be displayed at the museum.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

100 Raoul Wallenberg Pl., S.W.

Washington DC 20044-2126

www.ushmm.org

Anti-Tank Co., 272nd

Submitted By: **Bruno Stefanoni**

Anti-Tank Company, 272nd Infantry

98-05 63rd Road, Rego Park, New York 11374

Telephone: 718/897-4186

E-Mail: GreenThreeC1@aol.com



Corporal Mel Schultz (later lieutenant) of Charlie Squad, Third Platoon, Anti-Tank Company of the 272nd Infantry. Mockrehna, Germany, just before the end of the war.

Annual Meeting of Officers and Board of Directors 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN. Thursday, August 25th, 2005 CLARION HOTEL LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Call to order: The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fighting 69th Infantry Association, Inc. was called to order by **President Bernard Zaffern** at 8:00 a.m., Thursday, August 25th, 2005, in Louisville, Kentucky.

All of the officers were present as were nine of the fifteen directors and two guests. This constitutes a quorum.

Chaplain William Snidow offered an invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by **President Zaffern**.

Minutes of the 2004 Directors meeting were approved as published in the Bulletin.

President Zaffern gave his welcome and report. He thanked the officers, directors and the membership for a "great two years."

Vice-President/Membership Chairman Paul Shadle gave his report. He informed us that presently there are 3,079 members (33 new ones); 103 associate members (36 new); 39 honorary and 416 widow members. He further noted that since the last bulletin went to the printers, he has received 37 notices of death.

Treasurer's Report was presented by **Treasurer John Barrette** in paper form for the group's review.

In introducing **John**, **President Zaffern** commented on John taking over in mid-term and that he has done an excellent job in turning the Treasurer's post around and moving the money accounts from an Eastern bank to a bank in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, where things can be better controlled. John told the group that he worked with his CPA tax man to set up a new and easier to follow set of books for the Association.

The Secretary's report was given by **Joe Huber**. He reported to the group the problem he had trying to make contact with the people that decorate the graves after preceding **Secretary, Ralph Gobel** had advised them of the change and left good instructions on how to contact them. Nothing worked. Joe had to go through a Congressman, the State Department, and the Paris Embassy to make the contact. Contact was established and the Memorial Day decorations were put into place this year. The two individual graves in England and Belgium had individual roses placed on them, while where there were larger burials at two other cemeteries, wreaths were placed. Photographs

were in the reception room. The flowers for Memorial Day 2006 have been ordered and the flowers for 2007 will be ordered before the end of the year.

Bob Pierce gave his report on the 2005 reunion. He noted that attendance was almost 25% less than last year's reunion showing a trend that has been evident over the years as the membership has grown smaller and the members grow older. He said that he does not believe that the reunions will be going on for many more years. **Pierce** was most complimentary on the way this reunion was operated by the hotel. He indicated the cooperation and agreements were top notch.

There will be a one-hour wine, beer and hors d'oeuvres reception prior to the Early Bird Dinner open to attendees whether or not they were going to the Early Bird Dinner; compliments of the hotel. In addition, the hotel is picking up the cost of the pre-meeting continental breakfast on Saturday morning.

On the acceptance of Bob's report, he was given a standing ovation by those present.

No further old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee Report: The committee, chaired by **Charles Yannul** was reported by mail, as Charlie could not make the reunion. **President Zaffern** read the report and said that it will be acted upon at the Annual Membership Meeting.

Honorary Members: **President Zaffern** stated that he has made **Juergen Moeller** of Weissenfels, Germany, a temporary Honorary Member so he could contact the ceremonies honoring the "liberation" of that city during WWII. The event took place on the way to Torgau for the 60th Anniversary of the link-up between the American forces (69th Division) and the Troops of the USSR (58th Grenadier Guards Division).

Respecting **Mr. Moeller's** work on behalf of the Divisions membership, **President Zaffern** made a motion and it was seconded and passed on a voice vote.

President Zaffern reported that he had made both **President Bush** and **President Putin** Honorary Members and presented them with 69th Division caps, jackets and cards, both numbered #1. These were presented to both Presidents during the observance of the 60th Anniversary of VE Day in Moscow.

Treasurer John Barrette spoke on the need to raise the dues to \$15.00 just to cover the upcoming postal increase and to cover the additional costs of printing the Bulletin.

There was a spirited discussion following the introduction of the thought with statements alluding to the orders to "spend down" our surplus funds on hand. A motion was made, seconded and lost on a show of hands. At the same time, the membership chairman was authorized to remove those who are two or more years delinquent in dues, after notification.

(Continued on Page 13)

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Continued from Page 12)

Bob Pierce suggested that because of declining attendance there may not be many more reunions. He also suggested that a two-year study committee be formed to work on the future of the association looking forward to the time of dissolution. He said that the committee should be made up of members of the class of 2008 Directors and other members of the Association. He would like to be a member of that committee.

The committee to be appointed by the Incoming President, **Paul Shadle**.

It was noted that **Jean Ross** would like to give up her duties of the Souvenir operation. She noted that her daughter and son-in-law, **Mary Ross** and **Warren Wilmot**, would take it over. It was suggested that if this happens, the couple should be made Honorary members. A motion was made, seconded and carried that this is to take place.

The 2006 reunion will be held August 13-20, 2006, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, according to Vice-President Paul Shadle.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Joseph F. Huber, Secretary

**Annual Meeting of
the General Membership
69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN.
Saturday, August 27th, 2005
CLARION HOTEL
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY**

Call to order: The Annual Membership Meeting of the Fighting 69th Infantry Division Association, Inc. was called to order by **President Bernard Zaffern** at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 27, 2005, in Louisville, Kentucky.

Chaplain William Sidnow offered an invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by **President Zaffern**.

Minutes of the 2004 General Membership Meeting were approved as published.

President Zaffern welcomed the members to the meeting and gave his report. He thanked the membership, the officers and directors for two great years.

He asked that the members attending the banquet Saturday evening to be on time so that we can start at 7:00 p.m. and be ready to have the food brought out by 7:30 p.m. This will, he said, prevent overcooked steaks.

There will be a **special program** following dinner honoring the 60th anniversary of the link-up between the 69th Division and the 58th Grenadier Guards Division of the U.S.S.R. Our guest will be Colonel Alexander Dryagin of the Russian Federation Marine Corp who is temporary Military Attache to the Embassy of the Russian Federation.

Vice-President/Membership Chairman Paul Shadle gave his report. He told us that we have 3,079 members (33 new this year); 103 associate members (36 new); 39 honorary and 416 widows on the roster. He further told the group that since the last bulletin went to the printers, he has received 37 reports of deaths of members.

Secretary Joe Huber gave his report. He reported to the group the problem he had trying to make contact with the people that decorate the graves after preceding **Secretary, Ralph Gobel** had advised them of the change and left good instructions how to contact them. Nothing worked. Joe had to go through a Congressman, the State Department, and the Paris Embassy to make the contact. Contact was established and the Memorial Day decorations were put into place this year. The two individual graves in England and Belgium had individual roses placed on them, while where there were larger burials at two other cemeteries, wreaths were placed. Photographs were in the reception room. The flowers for Memorial Day 2006 have been ordered and the flowers for 2007 will be ordered before the end of the year.

Treasurer John Barrette gave his report in paper form which was passed out to the membership. In introducing **John, President Bernie Zaffern** commented on John's taking over the post mid-term and that he did a fine job.

Bob Pierce gave his report. He noted that there were only 305 registered at this meeting, down almost 25% from last year. This showed a definite trend in attendance loss from a high, not too long ago of 800. He wondered how many more of these reunions there will be held as the attendance drops.

In introducing **Bob, President Bernie Zaffern** thanked him for the many years he has run these reunions and for the excellent job he has done for the Association.

At the close of his presentation, Bob was saluted by the membership with a standing ovation.

There was no further old business.

NEW BUSINESS

President Bernie Zaffern read the **Nominating Committee Report** sent by mail by **Charles Yannul** who was unable to attend. The following were nominated:

OFFICERS

- President** **Paul Shadle**
Company E, 271st Infantry
- Vice-President** **David J. Theobald**
Company F, 272nd Infantry

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**ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

(Continued from Page 13)

Secretary **Joseph F. Huber**
A.T. Company, 272nd Infantry

Treasurer **John Barrette**
Headquarters Company, 271st Infantry

Directors - Class of 2007

William C. Sheavly *Company M, 271st Infantry*
(to fill out the term of the
Late Director **LaVerne Loveland.**)

Class of 2008

Elmer Bronske *Company E, 271st Infantry*

Harold F. Patchen *Company A, 272nd Infantry*

Edward Lucci *Company A, 273rd Infantry*

Thomas C. Elliott *Service Battery, 879th F.A.*

Robert Heisler *569th Signal Company*

On the call for nominations from the floor, there were none so the Secretary was asked to cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated.

Vice-President Shadle presented the report on the 2006 reunion. The reunion will be held August 13-20 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. This year, the reunion will be run by a professional organization.

Bert Everson told of the problem he had trying to get Congress to honor the 60th Anniversary of the link-up. He had copies of the HR 406 that he handed out and asked that the members contact their representatives urging them to support the measure.

First Timers were introduced and welcomed to the reunion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Joseph F. Huber, Secretary



First Timers at the 58th Annual Reunion
Aaron Bowen, Earl Brittain, Norbert Osiecki, Fuzz Spangler

Oral History Project

Submitted By: **Charles Chapman**
Headquarters Battery, 69th Division Artillery
12223 Seaford Court
Woodbridge, Virginia 22192-2356

Each year the Rocky Run Middle School in Chantilly, Virginia, located in Fairfax County about 25 miles from Washington, D.C., conducts a day-long oral history project about World War II for their 7th Grade Students. This year about 400 hundred students and 30 World War II veterans and former citizens of foreign countries participated from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on June 9, 2005. For the second year I was glad to be a part of this project.

The students and teachers put in a lot of preliminary work before the veterans are interviewed. For example, each veteran fills out a short questionnaire about his WWII experiences and suggests books, web sites, etc. which the students must research prior to the interviews. I suggested the 69th web site and also sent the school several copies of *Potomac to the Elbe: My World War II Experiences*, which I wrote six years ago. The students were divided into small groups or teams of four to six students. When I arrived they had obviously done their home work. Each team had a list of about 20-25 questions which they - not their teachers - had prepared. It was obvious from their questions and enthusiasm they had given a lot of thought to the project.

I was interviewed by six different teams for 50 minutes each. After the first team completed their interview with me, they moved to a different table and talked to another veteran. Other participants, who were at different tables, included Colonels Elmer Jones and Charles McGee who told about their experiences with the Tuskegee Airmen, Col. Melvin Rosen who told his story about the Bataan Death March, Toby Felker - my former neighbor who was a female pilot, etc. Many of the questions I fielded concerned the meeting with the Soviets on the Elbe River—celebrations and later mistrust.

This small group approach was so much better than just lecturing to a large group. For the next several days after the interviews were over, the students were busy preparing to present their project to their teachers and peers. Each student had a specific job to do in this presentation.

The school administrators and teachers at Rocky Run Middle School have done an outstanding job in motivating their students and making history come alive.

War Shorts

Submitted By: **Robert A. Heisler**

569th Signal Company

1104 Chemawa Loop N.E., Keizer, Oregon 97303-3739

Telephone: 503/463-9524

E-Mail: rbrtheisler1@netzero.net



Bob at 17



Bob at 80

Smoke Screen

We were in Aachen for a day or two. Three of us were shooting the fat when a twelve year old boy said in very broken English, "If you soldots give me food and cigarettes, I show you something." We did and he lit up a smoke and held his nose, grunted, groaned, and lots of smoke came out both ears. After 60 years, I've never seen anyone do that.

Crazy 88's

Somewhere near Kassel, **Sgt. "Pappy" Boyd** told me to climb a pole and secure a phone line on top. It took a couple of minutes to get up there and secure it. Then a German 88 started buzzing overhead. I came down from that pole in a couple of seconds. Pappy said, "That is the fastest I've ever seen you move." I said I would rather be down here than up there. Those 88's had a peculiar sound that is hard to forget.

Backward Duckwaddle

I was sent to Frankfaurt to an army hospital for a complete physical. The nurse said, "Strip down and get on all fours (knees and elbows). There was some confusion between the doctor and the nurse about an extension cord that was to short. The doctor said, "Hold that position and back up about three feet." While doing the duckwaddle in reverse, I thought: My oh my, if my friends could see me now!

Boat Trips on the Atlantic

From Boston to Glasgow, The isle De France was a converted French luxury liner. No luxury now, just grim and grime. We knew we were heading for a war, knowing any minute this ship could be sunk by a Nazi sub. The feeling was "anticipated exuberance." We were happy to get off this stinky smelly garbage can. In contrast, Cherbourg to New York was a different story. The USS Huddleston was clean and bright with 3 good meals a day. A one sheet newspaper kept us up to date on things. Some story making events took place on this trip. A B52 Bomber banged into the 86th

floor of the Empire State Building in New York City. A formal Peace treaty with the Japanese ended WWII. Of local interest was a change of direction for the USS Huddleston, from Charleston, South Carolina to New York City. Nobody complained about that! One day we were hit with a 110 mph gale - that's a thrill you will never get at Disneyland. Another thrill that made us very proud was the reception we received, the Statue of Liberty and the New York Skyline. Then I felt sad about all the heroes who lost their lives and were buried in the cemeteries of Europe. I thank God every day that I got out of there alive.

Does anyone know?

At the time of my discharge, I was wearing 2 shoulder patches. One was the 69th Division emblem and the other was a round blue patch with a black handled tomahawk which I thought was the IX corps (9th corps). I can't find anyone who knows anything about it. Maybe some of the readers have a comment on that.

Reunion Table Gift

Robert L. Pierce, Ex-Reunion Chairman

8295 Faldo Avenue, Hemet, California 92545-9312

Telephone: 951/926-9982

This year's Reunion Gift was a very attractive wine Goblet that was both a 58th Annual Reunion Souvenir and the 60th Anniversary Gift commemorating the "Link-Up" of the 69th Div. with the USSR 58th Guards Div. The glass is decorated in red, white, blue and yellow with the 69th emblem on one side and the crossed flags of the USA and USSR on the other. Both sides are printed in blue lettering to describe the specific event.



There were several dozen glasses that inadvertently missed the blue printing sequence at the factory. I had purchased 100 extra to sell at the Reunion. However, they were all used replacing the defective glasses.

The contractor has sent me 10 dozen more replacements, but I will not set up a mail order packaging and shipping operation. The inconvenience and the cost of the separate packaging, handling and shipping would increase the price of a glass/glasses too high to sell.

There will be opportunities to buy glasses at our cost of \$4.00. I will bring the glasses to the California Western Round-Up at Long Beach in April 2006. If you cannot attend, have another attendee buy the glass for you and bring it to the National Reunion. The glasses I do not sell will be shipped to the hotel at King of Prussia, Pennsylvania Reunion in 2006 to be sold in Souvenir Sales.

69th Patch proudly worn in Iraq

Submitted By: **Keith L. Vickers**
Company L, 271st Infantry
324 St. Brides Road E.
Chesapeake, Virginia
23322-2020

Keith wrote to us and told us that his grandson Steve, who was stationed in Iraq, very proudly wore the 69th Division patch on his uniform.

Steve wrote to Dottie and said, "This patch was worn with great pride across another battle space in Iraq and reminded a lot of fellow soldiers that we were there for the right reasons as our fathers and grandfathers before us."

Thank you Steve for the pictures and the note.



Information Wanted By Sons of 69ers

If you knew of these men, please write to their sons at the addresses below. Thank you.

Harold Oling, 880th Field Artillery

Write To: Guy Oling

153 16th Avenue, San Metao, Texas 99402

* * * *

Oran Jones, 69th Ordnance

Write To: O. Robert Jones

4012 McGregor Oaks, Mobile, Alabama 36608

Facts on the A-Bomb Controversy

Submitted By: **Edward Smaldone, Sr.**
Company K, 3rd Battalion, 272nd Regiment
508 White Springs Road
Geneva, New York 14456

Much has been written on editorial pages regarding the "inhumane" dropping of the A-bomb on Hiroshima and three days later on Nagasaki, which helped expedite the Japanese imperialists' surrender.

Some of these ill-informed, diehard bleeding hearts take the stance that the bombing was unnecessary because Japan was ready to surrender. Nothing could be farther from the truth. As for being "inhumane," let me remind these unfortunates of the torture of American prisoners, i.e. bamboo shoots rammed under the fingernails and the ends put on fire; electrodes wired to the testicles of prisoners until they screamed for mercy; the rape and sodomizing of American and Philippine nurses and Red Cross workers; the Bataan death march following the surrender of the Philippine Islands to the Japanese, which resulted in thousands dead from thirst, starvation and beatings.

As for Japan being ready to surrender, let me tell you something that's been overlooked. The Japanese were ready to fight to the last man if the United States invaded Japan.

We were making plans to invade Kyushu in southern Japan with at least 11 infantry divisions and many more in reserve. Most of these divisions were the same ones that had just ended a war in Europe. My division, the 69th Infantry Division was one of the 21 slated to fight in Japan. We were to be given 30 days leave and then shipped out to the West Coast. This was in June and July of 1945. Strategists estimated 100,000 to 250,000 casualties would occur when we invaded.

As it was President Truman gave the O.K. to drop the bomb to end the war and save all these American lives. No one wants war with the death and destruction that goes with it, but what's the alternative? Surrender and live under terrorist yoke or to spread a democratic theme for the good of all?

And just for the record, yours truly witnessed the Nuremberg war trials; our 69th Division linked up with the Russian army at Torgau on the Elbe River. We freed over 2,000 D.P. (displaced persons), mostly Polish and Russian prisoners, when we liberated Leipzig in Germany.

So you see, I experienced these times with a great many others who were there and are still alive. To live through these war years and realize what we did for mankind is a tribute to our generation.

THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE

By **Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**

Ladies Auxiliary Editor

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Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle



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Southfield, Michigan 48034-2011
Telephone: 248/357-4611

Carmen Sanborn, Secretary

333 Mechanic Street
Laconia, New Hampshire 03246

Ellen McCann, Chaplain

39 Mayflower Road
Woburn, Massachusetts 01801



A Message from your Past Auxiliary President, Theresa Pierce

Dear Ladies of the 69th Ladies Auxiliary:

At our meeting in Louisville, we had 61 current members and 5 First Timers. Our ladies donated 38 lap robes, 3 booties and 1 tote bag. As usual, Ann Lipsuis donated 11 lap robes again. We received a nice letter from the VA in Louisville, thanking us for the check and our donations.

Our new officers of the Ladies Auxiliary are:

- Jane Matlach** *President*
- Louise Hill** *Vice President*
- Carmen Sanborn** *Secretary*
- Ellen McCann** *Chaplain*
- Edith Zaffern** *Sunshine Lady*

Our entertainment was great, the authentic German Dancers - especially when they got our members to participate.

As my two years have come to a close, I enjoyed it very much, and I wish to thank all my volunteers who have been so gracious to help out.

A Message from your New Auxiliary President, Jane Matlach

Dear Ladies of the 69th Ladies Auxiliary:

The 58th Annual Reunion was a happy time for all who attended. We participated in four days of tours and it's always wonderful to see friends from past years.

Theresa Pierce conducted the Ladies' Meeting on Saturday, August 28th, 2005. Sixty-one members and five First-Timers attended. Our ladies made 38 lap robes and they were presented to Mary Jane Crowder from a nearby medical center.

Gifts were exchanged and the Louisville Ethnic Dancers entertained both the ladies and men with German dances.

Please keep creating those wonderful 35"x45" lap robes and booties during the next year. Our veterans really appreciate these items. They will be given to a local veterans' hospital in Pennsylvania in August 2006 at our 59th Annual Reunion.

See you all at the next reunion in 2006.

(Continued on Page 18)

- In Memoriam -

"LADIES' TAPS"

MRS. BOCK

wife of **Ralph Bock**, 661st Tank Destroyers

BARBARA CARLTON

wife of **Howard Carlton**, 880th Field Artillery

DORIS DAMATO

wife of **Joseph C. Damato**, Btry. B, 880th F.A.

MARY KRAUSE

JOANIE MASON

wife of **John W. Mason**, Co. D, 272nd Regiment

FRANCES PARSONS

wife of **Edgar Bud Parsons**, Co. A, 272nd Regiment

WIDOWS

GLADYS FISHER, Hq., 269th Engineers

ESTHER KEHEW, Division Headquarters

MAE SMITH, 271st Infantry Regiment

Rocks of Love

Paul Eagon, *Company I, 273rd Infantry*

1435 North Avenue

Waukegan, Illinois 60085

I'd like to make a correction to the last bulletin on page 18. It was **Lloyd Herr** and I (not Roland Hay), who laid a wreath at the grave of **Joe Polowsky** during our 60th Anniversary European Tour. And I'd like to tell you a little story about what happened after most of our group had gone back to the bus.

After the wreath was laid at Joe Polowsky's grave and most all of our members had gone back to the bus, a little German lady came and laid a rock from the Torgau Bridge which had been blown up in 1945. She tried talking to my wife, Elaine, but she could speak only broken English and Elaine knows very few German words, so it was hard for them to understand one another. But this is what she got across to Elaine. She had had a large rock on the grave but evidently it has been removed when the grave was cleaned up. So she had brought a small rock from the bridge to replace it. She said that she comes to Joe's grave often; she had a group of pictures of it that she had taken. She was crying softly. Elaine had the feeling that she had been Joe's girlfriend during the war when he was in Germany. Elaine's just sorry that the film had run out in her camera and she didn't have time to replace it as the bus was waiting for us.

And, oh yes, the woman said she had more rocks at home from the bridge so if the one she put on Joe's grave on April 25th is taken, she will be back and will replace it. War certainly does make poignant stories and even after 60 years, loved ones are not forgotten.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We are sorry we couldn't print your photos of the European tour. We covered that extensively in the last bulletin and don't have room this time.)

I get to call you Grandpa

Don Connelly, *Headquarters Co., 271st Infantry*

4545 East Quivira Drive

Tucson, Arizona 85718

I was fortunate in that I attended the 60th Meeting in Torgau with other fortunate 69th members and their families.

My grandson Brenden, of Morgan Hills, California, attended with me. He sent me this letter. He is 16 years old and the letter expresses his feelings. I believe the membership would enjoy reading it.

Dear Grandfather,

Our trip to Europe along with your brothers-in-arms from the 69th Division struck a deep cord within me; behind the veils of Hollywood and claims of heroics lay the true men that did it. Young men from Deer Lick, Pennsylvania, and the rolling hills of Tennessee; The Chet Yastrzemskis and the Bing Poons; the Paul Eagons and the Ralph Goebels.

During this trip I was able to see the reality of what you and other men like you accomplished. You helped put an end to an absolute tyrannical regime, one that would stop at *nothing* short of unconditional surrender. Gallantry could be found anywhere, regardless of rank and assigned duty.

Many call you a member of the Greatest Generation, and they are right in doing so. The sacrifices of the young American fighting men, the young futures of the country, made between 1941-1945 must never be forgotten. Some will only be able to call you a hero; I get to call you Grandpa.

Love,

Brenden Azevedo



Don Connelly with his grandson, Brenden Azevedo on the 60th Anniversary Tour.

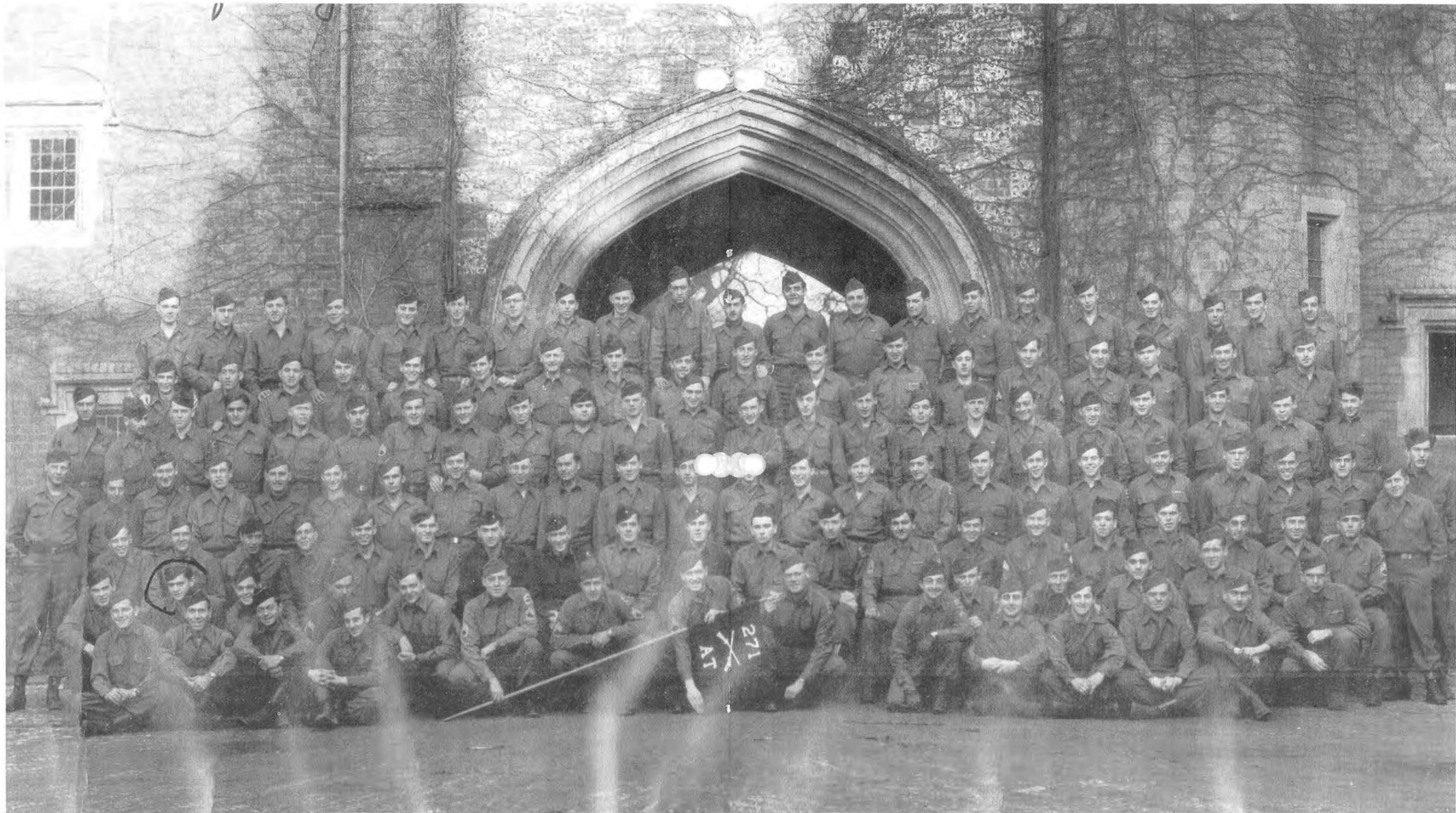


The Mine Platoon and Best Platoon. 4. 1944.

Anti-Tank Company of the 271st, Mine Platoon

Submitted By: **Nancy Weber, wife of Joseph Weber**, 1030 Durham Road, Wallingford, Connecticut 0492-2525

Photo taken outside of Winchester Castle in England.



Anti-Tank Company of the 271st Infantry Regiment

Submitted By: **Nancy Weber, wife of Joseph Weber**, 1330 Durham Road, Wallingford, Connecticut 0492-2525

Photo taken outside of Winchester Castle in England. We are assuming that the man who is circled is **Joseph Weber**.

Attendees by State at the 2005 Reunion Louisville, Kentucky

STATE	ATTENDANCE
Pennsylvania	33
Tennessee	30
Ohio	23
California	18
Illinois	17
Florida	14
Wisconsin	13
Michigan	12
New York	12
Kentucky	11
Texas	11
Virginia	11
Massachusetts	10
Georgia	9
Louisiana	8
Indiana	7
Maryland	7
Colorado	7
New Jersey	6
North Carolina	6
Arkansas	4
Minnesota	4
Mississippi	4
Missouri	4
Nebraska	4
New Hampshire	3
Oklahoma	3
Alabama	2
Arizona	2
Connecticut	2
Idaho	2
Kansas	2
Montana	2
Nevada	1
South Carolina	1
Ontario, Canada	1
TOTAL	307

2005 58th Annual Reunion Attendees Louisville, Kentucky AUGUST 21st-28th, 2005

The following is a list of the attendees at the 2005 Reunion in Louisville, Kentucky 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

Patricia A. Avery Virginia
Guest: Janice Atkinson
Philip L. Bolte South Carolina
Archie H. Brooke Virginia
Guest: Vivian Brooke-Bailey (daughter)
Gordon K. Kjos Minnesota
Guest: Suzanne K. Hanson (daughter)
Sumner A. Russman Oklahoma

569th SIGNAL COMPANY

Carl R. Stetler Pennsylvania

269th ENGINEER BATTALION COMPANY B

Ernest Krause Illinois

H&S COMPANY

Lloyd B. and Loretta C. Roth Ohio

271st INFANTRY REGIMENT

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

John H. Barrette Wisconsin
William P. and Dorothea Duncan California
Ed Lansford Tennessee
Guests: James R. Lansford (son)
Kristin Ann Jones (granddaughter)

COMPANY A

* **Mary A. Cheek-Gabbard** Tennessee
(Daughter of Garvey R. Cheek)
and William Alex Gabbard
Delbert and Donna Philpott California
Jean F. Ross Massachusetts
Guests: Warren J. and Mary F. Wimot (daughter)

COMPANY B

Lumir and Patsy Bocek Nebraska
Philander and Ruth Delphey Pennsylvania
Earl and Millie Hansen Indiana
Guests: Art and Paul Strauss
Adam and Margaret Lee Pennsylvania
Guests: Barbara Lego, Mary Matchenbaugh

(Continued on Page 23)

2005 REUNION ATTENDEES

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

(Continued from Page 22)

COMPANY B (cont.)

- Charles and Rosie Mabe Pennsylvania
- Orrie Pullen Michigan
- William F. and Jo Sheehan New Jersey
- Kenneth D. Upton Louisiana
- Charles and Patricia Walsh Wisconsin
- James A. and Jane P. Walsh Connecticut
- James H. and Dorothy White Tennessee

COMPANY E

- Elmer and Erma Broneske Colorado
- Guests: Sharon Sparks*
- Calvin and Barb Schell (daughter)
- Bing T. Poon Pennsylvania
- Paul and Dottie Shadle Pennsylvania

COMPANY F

- Cecile A. and Alene S. Cottle Ohio
- Arlene Fuller Pennsylvania
- Everett L. Sharp New York
- Anthony and Adele Vink Michigan

COMPANY G

- *Earl J. Brittain Missouri
- Guest: James R. Brittain (son)*
- Clarence C. Goon Ohio
- Guest: Larry C. Goon*
- N. C. and Elizabeth Harrison Tennessee
- Guests: David and Polly Harrison, Teresa Laten, Ken and Linda Millichamp Alan and Emily Cochran*
- Glenn and Nadine Hunnicutt Nebraska
- Emery J. and Pat Nagy Tennessee
- Guests: Bruce and Conny Ottway, Karen Myers, Steve and Diane Nagy, Kyle and Taylor Nagy*
- Clyde and Edna Robbins Tennessee

COMPANY I

- Douglas and Nathalie Buckstad ... North Carolina
- Richard E. and Jane H. Haines Ohio
- John H. Sawyer North Carolina
- Guest: Cleta Conner*

COMPANY K

- Connie Brough Michigan

ANTI-TANK COMPANY

- Arthur E. and Nancy A. Holgate New Jersey
- Archie and Pauline Millsaps Arizona
- John B. and Narcisa California
- *Norbert E. and Gerda Osiecki New York
- Francis T. Tomczuk New Jersey
- George C. and Lina West Pennsylvania

CANNON COMPANY

- Alfred J. Blain Massachusetts
- Guest: Estelle George*

**272nd INFANTRY REGIMENT
HEADQUARTERS COMPANY**

- Jim Kennedy California
- (Brother of Pat Kennedy)*

COMPANY A

- Harold F. Patchen New York
- Guest: Harold J. Patchen*
- Robert and Esther Smith Ohio

COMPANY C

- *James P. and Marie Kearns Kentucky

2nd BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

- Bretsell and Betty Everson Pennsylvania
- David and June Wittman Montana

COMPANY E

- Fred R. and Nancy Butenhoff Wisconsin
- *Francis E. and Lila Mae Spangler Wisconsin
- Chet Yastrzemski New York

COMPANY F

- Neil J. Shields Pennsylvania
- *ASC Kit M. and Denise Sullivan Kentucky
- *ASC Kevin M. and Lori Sullivan Kentucky
- (Son and Grandson of Francis "Jack")*
- David J. and Jeanne Theobald California

COMPANY G

- Edgar and Connie Ross Ohio

COMPANY H

- Veto T. and Athanasia DiPento Pennsylvania
- James L. and Lillian Fallin Louisiana
- Guests: David Fallin, Jana Fallin, Donna Fallin Waltz, Barbara Fallin Monzingo, Daniel Fallin*
- Robert J. Kasmarick Wisconsin
- Guests: Dennis, Rick and Sue Kasmarick*
- Marsh and June Mussay Illinois

COMPANY I

- Edward J. and Jennie Ambrose Pennsylvania
- Mr. and Mrs. Wendell H. Freeman Georgia
- Guests: Joe and Alice Freeman plus 1*
- Forrest and Marilyn Frentress Colorado
- Vivian M. Kurtzman Ohio
- L.A. (Pat) Lushbaugh Maryland
- Ethel Ruck Tennessee

COMPANY L

- Russell and Rosanna Meinecke Maryland
- Guests: Steve and Rhonda Hamilton*
- Bernard H. and Edith Zaffern Michigan
- Guests: Barbara Picklo, Joseph Zaffern, David Zaffern, Phil Chaplin*

(Continued on Page 24)

2005 REUNION ATTENDEES

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

(Continued from Page 23)

COMPANY M

Joseph and Katheryn Makosky Pennsylvania
Floyd L. and Melva McCalip, Jr. Mississippi
Richard and Claire Sodorff Idaho
Alice Wolthoff Florida

ANTI-TANK COMPANY

John and Lois Brockwell Illinois
Urno and Evelyn Gustafson Pennsylvania
Joseph F. Huber Wisconsin
Russell E. and Betty Koch Missouri
Raymond and Janet Sansoucy Massachusetts
Mel and Joan Schulz Ohio
Dallas and Laura N. Shelton Illinois
Guests: Tony and Linda Traylor

CANNON COMPANY

Ralph H. and Ursula Goebel Minnesota
Joseph and Anne Lipsius Georgia

273rd INFANTRY REGIMENT

1st BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Phillip A. and Norma H. Formel ... Massachusetts
Guest: Kristina Burkart
Ralph C. and Cecilia Scholtz Florida
Guests: Ed Gaitan, Joseph Scholtz plus 1
A.H. Seidenstricker Pennsylvania

COMPANY A

Barbara Brooks Georgia
James and Mary Carroll Texas
Edward L. Lucci New York
William and Ruby Nettles Mississippi
Bennie and Marcella Srubar Texas
Guest: Dolores Srubar Dawson

COMPANY B

Eugene and Marilyn Mischke Illinois

COMPANY C

***Aaron S. Bowen** Virginia
Guest: Mary B. Tunnell
Stanley and Gloria Czyzyk New York

COMPANY D

Mary E. Ammon Michigan
Guest: Barbara Dearing
Arthur L. Ayres, Sr. New Jersey
Ed and Mary Case Pennsylvania
George M. and Barbara H. Johnson Virginia
Betty Jo McCarty Texas
Guests: Dodd and Pam McCarty, David Reitan
Russell and Kathy McCarty
Ken Sawyer Florida
Guest: Holly Mace

COMPANY E

Robert F. Crowe New Hampshire
Jane Matlach New York
Harold R. and Peggy Sprang Ohio

COMPANY F

Stanley A. and Gladys L. Olszyk Indiana
Guest: Stanley C. Olszyk (son)

COMPANY G

Elijah and Marge Dalrymple Florida
Guests: Gary and Sharon Forbes
Jim and Nancy Forbes
William B. Jackson Georgia

COMPANY H

Robert and Roberta Andrew Illinois
Guests: Floyd and Roberta Andrew-Blevins
Bert and Rhoda Eckert New York
Maxine Haag Indiana
Guests: Gary and Loretta Rusie
Elio Jackson Kentucky
Leland and Lola Jones Kansas
Howard R. and Jane Keyser North Carolina

3rd BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Charles and Patricia Hoffman, Jr. Alabama

COMPANY I

Paul H. and Elaine J. Eagon Illinois
Janet Houseal Pennsylvania
Robert L. and Theresa Pierce California
Guests: Frank and Doris Pierce
Erwin and Carmen Sanborn New Hampshire

COMPANY K

Oliver D. and Vera L. Coker, Jr. Arkansas
Lawrence E. Smith Tennessee
Guest: Jackie S. Carlson (daughter)

COMPANY M

Raul L. Nava California

CANNON COMPANY

Lee Wilson California
Guest: Jan Kremetz

**880th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
HEADQUARTERS BATTERY**

Robert B. and Marilyn R. McKee Maryland
Mike and Lucille Pendrick Arkansas
William and Katherine Suckel Ohio

**881st FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
BATTERY B**

Walter Haag California
Guest: Dorothy Vasiloudis
Edward and Louise Hill, Jr. Ohio
Louis Linebaugh Ohio
Emil Matys Nevada

(Continued on Page 25)

**2005 REUNION ATTENDEES
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY**

(Continued from Page 24)

**881st FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
BATTERY C**

Lester E. Hart Ohio

**661st TANK DESTROYERS
RECON**

Eugene J. Pierron Wisconsin

COMPANY B

William and Ellen Snidow Virginia

Guest: Patricia S. Woody

777th TANK BATTALION

Charles and Edna White Oklahoma

HONORARY MEMBERS

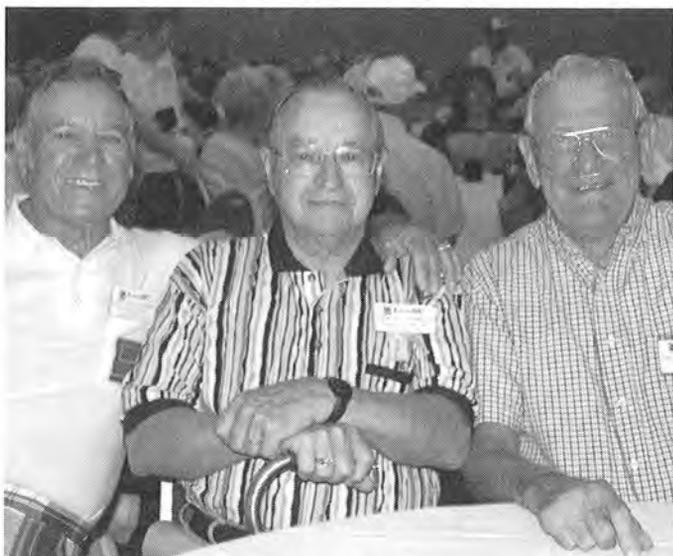
Wilfred M. and Ollie Ferda Ontario, Canada



Emerson Sharp and Bing Poon



George West and Raul Nava



*Chet Yaz, Fuzz Spangler and Fred Butenhoff.
First meeting in 60 years with Fuzz Spangler.*



Ed and Louise Hill



Donna Philpott, German dancer and Dell Philpott



First Timer Earl Brittain and son, Jim Brittain



Jan Atkinson, Paul Shadle and Pat Avery



Bill and Ellen Snidow



Sumner Russman, Erwin Sanborn and David Theobald



Pat Avery and Janet Atkinson



Harold Patchen and son, Harold, Jr.



Russian Marine Colonel and Chet Yaz



Holly Mace with grandfather, Ken Sawyer



Raul Nava and Bob Crowe



Sam Woolf and Stan Olszyk



Jane Matlach, Ed Lucci, Barbara Brooks, Anne Lipsius



Pat Woody, Russian Colonel and Bill Snidow



Fred and Nancy Butenhoff



Warren and Mary Wilmot, & Mary's mom Jean Ross



Russian Colonel, General Philip Bolte and Army Colonel



The Sullivans



Robert and Esther Smith

Company E, 271st Infantry Regiment

Submitted By: **John R. McNamara**
60 Cherry Road, Ithaca, New York 14850

John would appreciate hearing from members of the 271st.



Company E, 271st Infantry Officers
Front: Lt. Kaiser: 4th Platoon Leader
Captain McNeely: Company Commander
Lt. Fernandez: 2nd Platoon Leader
Back: Lt. Aicheb: 3rd Platoon Leader
Lt. Sharpe: Company Executive Officer
Frieburg, Germany - June 15, 1945



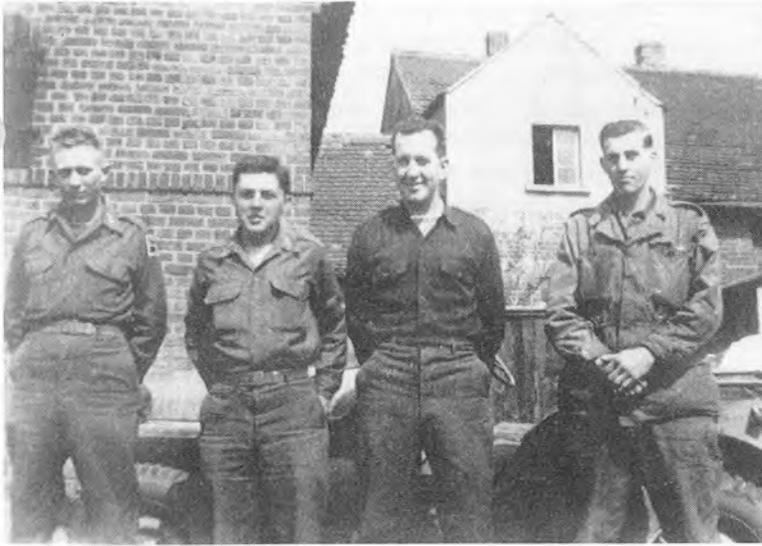
*Captain McGee and Captain McNeely
Frieburg, Germany*



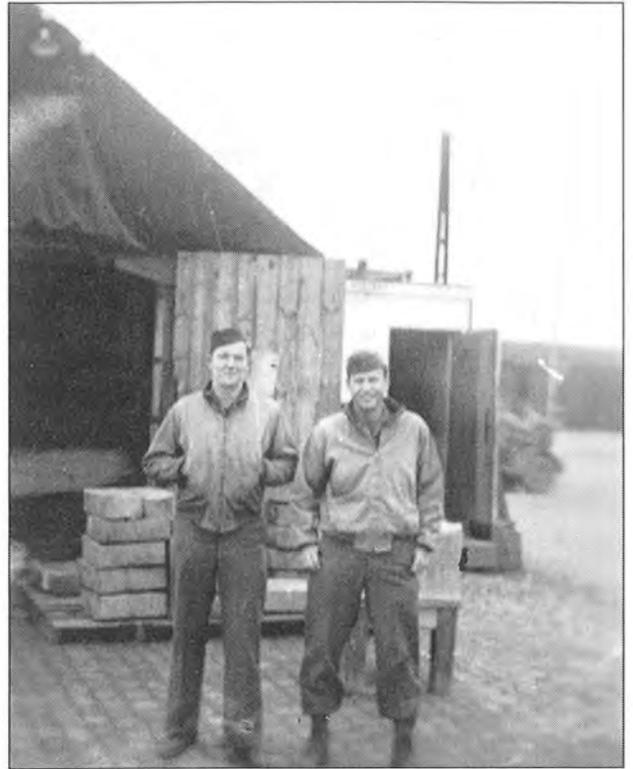
*Company E Headquarters
Frieburg, Germany - July, 1945*



John McNamara and Norm Fortress in Germany



Captain McNeely, Lt. Sharpe, 1st Sgt. Louden, T/5 Gratrix



*Belson and Dimmick
Ration Point in Mannheim in September*



The 69th and 83rd meet on the road near Friburg



McNeely and Louden



Lieutenant Sharpe



*Retreat Formation
June 13, 1945 - Friburg, Germany*

From the Rhine to California

Written By: **Gus R. Wiemann**

Company L, 3rd Battalion, 271st Infantry

7126 Canella Court, Tamarac, Florida 33321

As our I and R section approached the Rhine River over sixty years ago we used a small house overlooking the river for observation. Two elderly German women happened to be in the room as I knelt by an open window and picked up my binocular to scan the area ahead of us.

One of the women whispered to the other, "Look out, there's an Ami," German slang for "American." Her companion replied, "He's only a Mensch," or, translated, "He's only a human being."

There was no activity ahead of us and our section quickly crossed the Rhine and I never saw the two women again. However, for some reason, that woman's words, "He's only a human being," stayed with me the rest of my life. Maybe the reason for that was that despite the long years of anti-American propaganda, that woman could still see me as just a person.

Shortly after the war ended and while working on *The Stars and Stripes* I met a German girl who was working as a proofreader on the paper. Altogether, our total time of conversations must have been about half an hour within a year.

She told me that she and her mother had fled from Berlin to Bavaria, where she found work with our paper. Her English was excellent because of her schooling and friendship with the two daughters of Robert Murphy, General Eisenhower's top civilian adviser in Military Government. President Roosevelt chose Murphy to make contacts with French resistance in North Africa prior to and during the American invasion.

Her name was Lilo and because of the civilian food shortage, she and her mother subsisted primarily on potatoes. She was a pretty blond with blue eyes, but due to the potato diet she had gained about twenty extra pounds. Several of the paper's GIs nicknamed her *Elsie Borden*, a name unknown in the Bavarian hills.

In one of our few conversations she told me about the bombings of Berlin and how she had become an atheist as a result. When I left the paper Lilo asked if I would give her my stateside address as she would like to write me sometime.

About a year after I had left, a letter from her arrived. She wrote that she wanted to emigrate to the States and asked if I could help. Several of my mother's friends agreed to send letters to the American consul, pledging that they would assist Lilo.

Nearly a year later she arrived in New York City and soon found work as a secretary. Although Lilo once claimed to be an atheist, she did an about-face here and joined a women's church group. As part of her work in the church, she gave lectures as to her life in Berlin during and after the war, adding that now her goal was to bring her mother here and move to California for her mother's health.

In her next letter to me she described how the ladies at church contacted other churches throughout the United States and arranged for the Greyhound Bus Company to transport her from one city to another. At each city representatives from the local church met her, arranged meals and lodging, a sight-seeing tour and then sent her to the next welcoming committee. Finally, she reached Los Angeles.

One day, years later, an updating letter arrived. Lilo had married, was raising five children, worked with her husband in a storefront religious mission and volunteered some nights on the serving line of a soup kitchen.

* * * * *

Background of Ultra

While the 69th was in Winchester waiting to cross into France, another Allied unit about 50 miles north of London on an estate named Bletchley Park was working three eight-hour shifts, seven days a week getting information that saved many of us.

Our story begins in a small town in Poland where during the 1930's a young man named Rekjewski, a recent college graduate, listened to German army wireless messages. As he gradually began decoding them he discovered that the Germans were using a little machine resembling a typewriter to code and forward their messages.

The French intelligence service, which also was working to decode German wireless signals, contacted Rekjewski. Together they developed a machine called a *Bombe*. With that they were able to decode even more military secrets of the Germans, who never suspected anyone could break their code.

In August, 1939, just one month before the war started, the *Bombe* was sent to England and reached Bletchley Park. Here in a mansion on a sprawling estate with several wooden huts were a few hundred men and women who worked with *Bombe*, now labeled *Ultra*. By 1943 the personnel numbered five thousand.

As an island, a great problem for England was that much of the food had to be supplied by sea. German U-boats were sinking so many ships that rationing of food became very severe. Working closely with the Allied navy, the men and women in the huts of Bletchley Park learned that the German submarines were at sea weeks at a time. Their supplies of rations

(Continued on Page 31)

"BACKGROUND OF ULTRA"

(Continued from Page 30)

and other necessities were provided by ships called Milchcows, which met the submarines on the ocean at certain times and places. By intercepting radio messages among the U-boats and their bases, the people at Bletchley Park pieced together details as to when and where the rendezvous would occur. Once the navy received this information, it hunted down the Milchcows, and the threat of slow starvation was ended.

Another outstanding success was detecting German positions around the French town of Falais where in August, 1944 250,000 prisoners fell into a combined English-American trap.

Although his army continued to fight into 1945, the average German soldier realized that the war for him was lost. After he had been promised protection from the Allied air attacks, many of them joked bitterly, "If the plane in the sky is silver, it's American. If it's blue, it's British. If it's invisible, it's ours."

Even though World War II ended on August 14, 1945, with Japan's surrender, the secrets of Bletchley Park were not revealed by the English government until 1973 and 1974.

* * * * *

Ursula Part II

You may remember the first part of the story of Ursula, the ten-year-old girl on the outskirts of Leipzig. Our 69th Division had just met the Russians at Torgau and Ursula with her small brother, approached our mess sergeant as we were cleaning up after supper. She asked him if he had any food for her and her brother. "Sure kid," he replied, dishing out left-overs into the two cans the children were carrying.

I spoke to her in German and she invited me to her home. When I arrived I gave the mother some candy for the children and a few packs of cigarettes to barter for food. Ursula mentioned that the Red Cross had notified them that her father was in a POW camp.

After a little conversation, I gave the mother my family's address and asked her to write when the international mail goes through again to let us know how the family is. As I left the house Ursula called out, "Auf Wiedersehen."

From this scene we fast-forward twenty-five years. I am a court reporter proofreading a transcript in my office when the telephone rings. My wife is on the phone. "Gus," she says, "there's a lady here from Germany with her husband. She says her name is Ursula."

Apparently Ursula traced me through my mother. After I arrived home my wife, Ursula, her husband and I had a catch-up get-together over coffee and cake. Her husband, a genial man in his middle thirties like Ursula, was working toward a Ph.D. with a thesis on

constitutional government. He had spent time at the University of Michigan and now they were planning to tour the United States in their Volkswagen.

They produced a picture of their ten-year-old daughter who was staying with Ursula's mother in Germany. As I looked at their daughter in the photo, I saw a girl with blue eyes and shiny brown hair parted in the middle. Two twin braids reached her shoulders. For a moment I was seeing a little girl asking our mess sergeant for left-overs.

My wife and I found a place nearby where the couple could rest after their long journey. Then for a few days the four of us traveled around South Florida exploring tropical sights and food.

Before we knew, it was time for them to hop into their Volkswagen and we said, "Auf Wiedersehen," words I hadn't heard since Leipzig.

Wanted – Photos and Descriptions

Submitted By: **Charles Chapman**
Headquarters Battery, 69th Divisions Artillery
12223 Seaford Court
Woodbridge, Virginia 22192-2356

Eilenburg

Recently, **Chet Yastrzemski** reported on the 69th web site about his visit with the 69th to the Eilenburg Museum and said that curators Rolf Schulze and Andreas Flegel had published a book in German entitled *Eilenburg 1945*. However, as Chet reported, the authors were still looking for photos and descriptions of the battle. Since then I have corresponded with Herr Schulze by E-mail on several occasions and sent him some items which he did not have, including a copy of the 69th Infantry Division Artillery unit history authored by 1st Lt. William N.L. Hutchinson, aide-de-camp to General Maraist and the Division Artillery Historical Officer.

If anyone has photos or descriptive material concerning the destruction of Eilenburg, Herr Schulze would be delighted to receive them. He may be contacted by E-mail at rolfschulze@hohenpriessnitz.de or by mail at Duebner Strasse 18, 04838, Hohindriesswitz, Germany.

Fuerstenhagen/Heiligenstadt

Sebastian Berka just finished high school in Germany. According to two June E-mails to the 69th web site, he is writing a story about the 1045 events in his village of Fuerstenhagen or places nearby including Heiligenstadt. He would appreciate any photos or accounts concerning the 69th's presence in that area. You can contact him at Dorfstrasse 18, 37318 Lutter, OT Fuerstenhagen, Germany or by E-mail at Sebastian.Berka@web.de.

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

We are interested in all news from Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, Units, T.D.'s and minis for this column. Mail your date(s), location, banquet cost, activities and room rates, plus a good write-up to **Fighting 69th Division Bulletin, P.O. Box 4069, New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068-4069**, as early as possible. Then follow through with a write-up immediately after the event(s).

Company D, 273rd Infantry

Kenneth A. Sawyer, *News Reporter*
2207 Country Club Road
Melbourne, Florida 32901-5323
Telephone: 321/729-8237

There were fewer of us from D-273 this year at the Louisville, Kentucky reunion. Many of the same faces were in evidence; the difference was the absence of a large turnout of the **Blackmars**. But we will be back in their section of the country when we meet at King of Prussia, Pennsylvania next August. And the **McCartys** are likely to have more than the four they had in their party this year. We had a decent showing of 13 this time, but we are hoping for around 20 next August.

Gathered at Louisville this year were a group from Pennsylvania, **Ed and Mary Case** and granddaughter, **Holly Mace**. From Virginia we had **George and Barbara Johnson**. **Betty Ammon** and her daughter, **Barbara Dearing**, came from Michigan. **Art Ayres** was from New Jersey, and I came from Florida. The **McCartys** had the largest group: **Betty Jo** from Texas, **Russell** and his wife **Cathy** from Colorado, and their friend, **David Reitan**, from Florida.

Most of those in attendance this year indicated that they plan to be in King of Prussia in 2006. We are all pushing 80 now, but we can still muster a score of us. Let's give it a try.

661st Tank Destroyers

Charles J. Yannul, *News Reporter*
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Report on the 661st Tank Destroyers

2005 Akron, Ohio Reunion
September 22nd to 25th, 2005

The family of **Julius Slopek** "C" Company held a reunion in honor of **Julius**. Not since he was alive and they held a reunion many years ago have we been able to come up with any 1st timers, till now! There seems to be something magical about Akron! This time, for 1st timers, there were **Marvin Brown** of A Company, with his wife, **Connie**, and **Ken Gillett** of Recon Co. with his wife, **Wilma**. Both **Marvin** and **Ken** were able to meet with their fellow Company men after 60 years!

There was quite a large arrival of folks on the very 1st day. We had them come from as far as the state of Washington and California. We missed you people from Florida and Texas but from your letters, we know you will try for next year's reunion to be held in Danville, Virginia.

Tommy Slopek arranged for the group on Saturday morning to visit the WWII Vehicle Museum in nearby Hubbard, Ohio. The name is misleading as there is a magnificent collection of just about any thing related to the war. The amazing part is that most of the displays were functional! We Tank Destroyers were able to see a real M-18 of which there are not many left in this world. To all who read this, don't ever miss visiting this museum in Hubbard, Ohio, if at all possible.

While the count was 15 veterans, we had over seventy for the Saturday night banquet because many family members of our deceased comrades attended. For this, we were most thankful and indebted.

Following were the attendees as they signed in:

Gene and Ethel Pierron and family
Belgium, Wisconsin

Bill and Mary Wahl and family
Chagrin Falls, Ohio

John and Eva Golden
Greenbrook, New Jersey

Marvin and Connie Brown
Columbus, Ohio

Guy Nowels
Portland, Oregon

Charles and Frances Yannul
Hinton, Virginia

Warren and Dorothy Mitchell
Redwood City, California

John and Leora Sherlock and family
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Ruth Mellinger (Widow of Millard) and family
Wrightsville, Pennsylvania

Mike and Dorothy Kotnick and family
Elyria, Ohio

Ken and Wilma Gillet
Battle Creek, Michigan

(Continued on Page 33)

DIVISION GROUP MINI WEEKENDS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES (Continued from Page 32)

Stanley and Gertrude Green and son
Battle Creek, Michigan

Bill and Margaret Dawson and family
Nathalie, Virginia

Bill and Ellen Snidow and grandson
Pembroke, Virginia

George and Helen Ringer and family
Hopewell, Ohio

Ann Forgas (Widow of Steve) and family
Broadview Heights, Ohio

Pat Slopek (Widow of Julius) and family
Tallmadge, Ohio

Charlie and Carol Rodgers
James Creek, Pennsylvania

Company I, 273rd at the 58th Annual Reunion 69th Banquet

Submitted By: **Paul Eagon**
1435 North Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois 60085

Photo below: Front Row: Carmen Sanborn, Theresa Pierce and Janet Housel. Back Row: Erwin Sanborn, Robert Pierce, Elaine and Paul Eagon

Photo right, top: Bob Pierce's brother, Franklin and his wife Doris.

Photo right, bottom: Russian colonel shaking hands with Paul Eagon. Bernard Zaffern in background.



881st Field Artillery at the 58th Annual Reunion

Submitted By: **Ed Hill, Battery B**
819 Main Street, Hamilton, Ohio 45013-2550



Walter Haag-Battery B with guest, Dorothy Vasiloudis, Emil Matys-Battery B, Lester Hart-Battery C, and Ed Hill-Battery B



69th Division Honored with Two Members as Guests in Germany

Submitted By: **Joe Lipsius** and **Bud Parsons**
6314 Deerings Hollow, Norcross, GA 30092-1800
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April 20-28, 2005 were red-letter days for **Edgar A. "Bud" Parsons** (Co. A, 272nd) and **Joe Lipsius** (Hq., 272nd). We were guests in Weissenfels and Leipzig, Germany April 21-22 to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the liberation of Weissenfels and Leipzig, and in Torgau, Germany for the Elbe Day festivities, April 23-25, celebrating The 60th Anniversary of "East Meets West." Then on April 26, we visited Strehla Memorial Park and the Torgau Memorial, toured key points of the Link-Up Patrol areas, lunched with an old friend of Bud's, who drove us to Berlin. In Berlin, we toured the City that afternoon and April 27th.

A German group whose name translates to "The Heavenly Four" began plans for the trip. Its purpose was to bring American veterans who were in Torgau during the 1945 Linkup with other Allies' veterans, in Berlin and Potsdam, Germany during May 7-9, 2005, for a special event to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE Day. Unfortunately, this event had to be postponed.

The U.S. Consulate in Leipzig and Torgau decided to take a part in funding so Bud and I would be in Leipzig and Torgau to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Leipzig and the Elbe Day events. The Consulate paid for our stay in Leipzig, and Torgau paid for our airfare and time in Torgau. The Heavenly Four group picked our expenses in Berlin.

Eleanore Fox, U S Consulate-Leipzig, met us at the Leipzig Airport on April 21st and drove us to Weissenfels, where Mayor Manfred Ravner at the City Hall welcomed us. Also, there to welcome us was Juergen Moeller, the force behind the Weissenfels Memorial and author of a book, "Die Stadt Wessenfels im April 1945," the story of the 69th liberating Weissenfels, (in German text). More importantly, we went to surprise the 69th European Tour with our presence, when it arrived later in the day. Then all of us went to the Museum where Director Martin Schmager, Assistant Mike Sachse and Moeller showed us the Weissenfels Memorial tablet and gave us a guided tour of Weissenfels' tribute to the 69th Division.

On April 22, Bud and I were met by Geertje Huendorf and Beate Renker of the Leipzig Consulate office, and taken to two Leipzig high schools to take part in each school's "Outreach Program" to discuss and answer questions to English classes about Leipzig in 1945. Afterwards, Huendorf and Renker took us on a tour of Leipzig and to the Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig (Leipzig City History Museum) where Dr. Volke Rodekamp, Director, and Chris Kauffman,

photoarchivist, showed us the fabulous display of artifacts, uniforms, pictures and 69th memorabilia paying tribute to Leipzig's liberation by the 69th.

Saturday, April 23, we were taken to Torgau and settled in the hotel and restaurant "Golden Anker" on the town square. I am almost certain Colonel Buie, the late Regimental Commander of the 272nd and I visited this square on April 27, 1945. When we arrived back then, the Russian soldiers were drinking vodka and having a big time, which did not meet the Colonel's approval. After just a few minutes in Torgau, Buie and I drove back to Mockrehna, the regiment's command post location.

The days in Torgau were a blur - eating, touring, taking part in The Elbe Day celebration on April 25, which was a huge affair. I can't say enough about how the citizens of Torgau and nearby communities make such a big celebration of this event every year. It is almost like a 4th of July celebration! Mayor Andrea Staude delivered a speech to hundreds on the banks of the Elbe near the Torgau Memorial, which is a tribute to the meeting of East and West. Press Secretary to the Mayor, Rene Vetter, who arranged the most of our Torgau itinerary, was busy seeing Bud and I were well taken care of. At various times, Rene carefully scheduled guides for us - Vice Mayor Osmar Bruck and wife, Martina, Janine Mohr, Monica Esslinger, Heike Strasser and Claudia Mantz.

During our Torgau visit, it was gratifying to meet Dr. Uwe Niedersen of Forderverein Europa Begegnungene V., organizer of the Link-Up celebration for 11 years, until it was taken over by the City and other public groups. Dr. Niedersen conducted a round table discussion with American, Russian and German veterans participating. He is author of the book, ELBE LINK-UP, in English and German, with more than 100 pictures. The book tells the story of the movement of the three patrols.

(Continued on Page 35)



Joe Lipsius, Bud Parsons and a young German dresses as a Russian soldier on the banks of the Elbe River during the April 25, 2005 celebration. Buildings of Torgau seen in background.

We also visited the Dokumentations-und and Informationszentrum (DIZ) Torgau, a state-run memorial institution operated by Wolfgang Oleschinski dedicated to remembering those eventful days of April, 1945.

At one point, a gentleman introduced himself. He was Karl-Heinz Lange, who formerly lived in Torgau. In early 1995, as the 50th Anniversary of East Meets West was approaching, he got my address from some 69th acquaintance of his, to ask me for information of the 272nd's movements during the linkup days. We exchanged several letters, which I still have, even after 10 years. Lange had learned I would be in Torgau and came to meet me. What a thrill!

Originally, we were to be met by Stefan Eggerdinger of The Heavenly Four in Torgau, the morning of April 26, then depart by train to Berlin for our stay and tour there on April 26th and 27th. This was changed so that Heinz Richter, a friend of Bud's who lives near Torgau, could take us on a tour of the two Memorials and important patrol points, treat us to lunch in his home, then drive us to Berlin to meet Stefan at the hotel he had arranged for us to stay. These few hours were most enjoyable and enlightening. Mr. Richter is well versed in the history of the two Memorials and the three patrols paths and meeting areas.

Finally, we arrived in Berlin and met Stefan at the Art Hotel Charlottenbuerger Hof Berlin on Stuttgarter Platz where we stayed the next two nights.

The afternoon and evening of the 26th, and the day and evening of the 27th, were spent taking in some of the attractions of Berlin, very ably guided by Stefan Eggerdinger. Stefan met us at the hotel early on the 28th to take us to the airport for our departure home. It was with great reluctance that "Bud" and I, weary 69ers, boarded the airplane for home, leaving behind a trip we will well remember forever.

Daddy at War

Submitted By: **Betsy Kirkman Black**



Clyde W. Kirkman, Company C, 271st
Somewhere in Germany in 1945

461st AAA (AW) Bn Mystery Photo

Submitted By: **Juergen Moeller**

Honorary 69th Member

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Germany

juemoehistory@netscape.net or juemoe@odn.de

I do much research concerning the activities of the 69th Infantry Division and attached Units during the period they were in combat in Germany and after VE Day. This carries me into local town halls, archives, museums and libraries.

Recently, I encountered a very good picture of an unknown soldier from Battery A 461st AAA (AW) Bn standing in front of one of the Unit's vehicles. Perhaps he was the driver, or he could have been standing to identify his Unit?

The picture was among the possessions of Hildegard Schneider (later Mrs. Hildgard Bohme,) now deceased, who lived in the small town of Wallendorf in May 1945. Wallendorf is 6 kilometers east of the big town of Merseburg.

Are you this soldier? Or did you know him? I would love to hear from you.



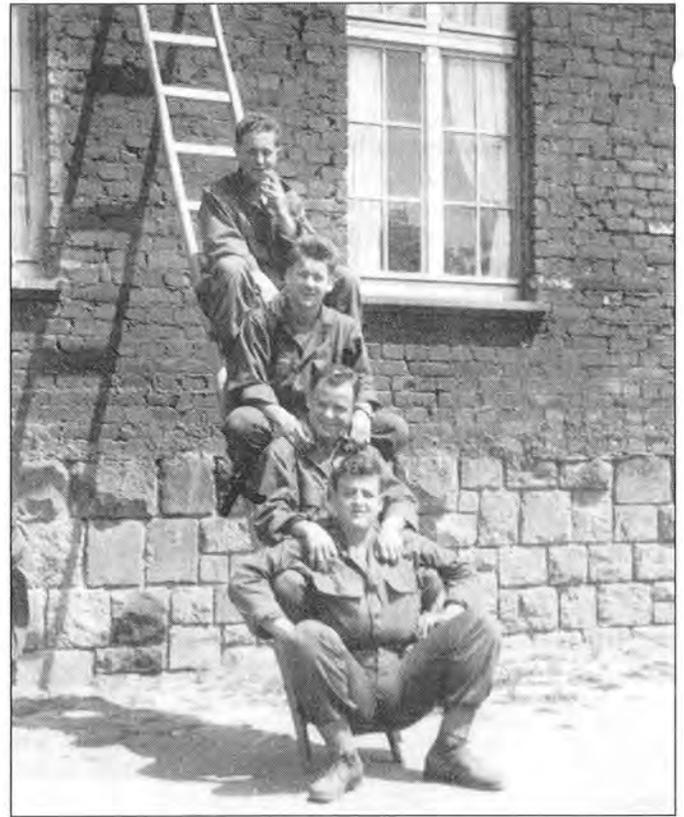
4th Platoon, Company K, 273rd Infantry

Submitted By: **Vito J. Narducci**
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I've enclosed photos with some recollections. Maybe I will hear from some of the guys. **Bob Robbins** and I talk often and I was able to meet with him in California. He lives in Santa Cruz. "**Tutt**" **Snodgrass** wrote to me in 1991 but for some reason when I wrote back, he never answered my letter. I'll write again. I hope his address is still the same. I would love to hear from anyone who would like to contact me.



*Me and
Robert Robbins.
We still
get together.
He lives in
California and
made the Army
a career. He is
now my adviser
and mentor.*



*Altmen, Hoffman, Stienlibler, Snodgrass
Altenhain, Germany*



4th Platoon, Company K, 273rd Infantry



Top: Bob Robbins, Salvatore, Naducci and Marty Pfeffer.
Seated: Steinbach and Sherman



Me and John Milazzo (medic)
He became a doctor.
We saw each other after the war.



Sergeant Paul "Papa" Beck and me. Paul was a dear friend who was killed in the last days of the war. His father was raising his daughter. She was 12 at the time. They lived somewhere in PA. I wish I could find her.



John Milazzo receiving the Silver Star for action under fire. He passed on some years ago. He lived in Maine and left behind his wife Willie, a son and daughter.



Top: Me and Frank Barreiro. Others unknown.

I can't remember this guy. That's me on the right.



Fred Crane writes . . .

Submitted By: **Fred L. Crane**

Battery C, 879th Field Artillery Battalion

P.O. Box 294, Stout, Iowa 50673

As I was reading my 69th Bulletin that I got in the mail today, it made me think back on all that has happened in my life. I was born on August 13th, 1924 in Cedar Falls, Iowa. I graduated from Cedar Falls High in 1942 when I was 17. I thought that I had the world by the tail. I had no thought that December 7th, 1941 would have any effect on my life. Thought that I was safe because when I was nine years old I had Polio and it left me with a crooked spine. I had a good job, a very serious girl friend and all was right with the world. It is strange how things can change so very fast.

In May of 1943 I got my notice to report to Camp Dodge, Iowa for my physical. I knew that my friends from school were all going and I did not want to be left out. So, I lied to the doctor about my condition. Even then, he almost turned me down but I finally made it and was sworn into the Army on May 14th. I went to Fort Sill for my basic and was classified as a gunner on a 155 howitzer. After nine weeks of basic, we were transferred to a 105 howitzer. I was still a gunner but we started all over again with basic training. While I was at Ft. Sill, I signed up for the paratroops. I went to Ft. Benning in Georgia but there I couldn't fool the doctor and I was rejected. After 19 days, I was sent to good old Camp Shelby. I had no idea what I was in for because there I was just a replacement. I soon found out that these were some of the finest men that there could ever be. It did not take long for me to become one of the 69th. There I met some good friends. I did not enjoy all of the time that we spent in the field and soon found out why we were known as the 4B's. I stayed with Battery C, 879th until after the war was over in Europe. Then I went to the 78th Division in Berlin. I was there until April of 1946 when I was able to come home. I returned to the States and was discharged on April 25th.

I was so very glad that I had the opportunity to have that experience and to come home safely.

One day as I was sitting at home alone I was remembering different periods of my life, and thinking about what might have been if I had stayed home instead of going into the Army. I decided to put my thought down on paper and this is what I came up with. I am curious to know if anyone else ever thinks about this. I have sent along a copy of my thoughts and I hope that some of you might have had thoughts similar to mine.

NOTE: We really had a lot of articles and photos submitted for this bulletin. If you did not see your article and/or photos in this bulletin, it will appear in the next. We are limited by finances to 40 pages. Thank you for your patience.

I sit alone thinking, dreaming

Dreaming tho I'm wide awake.

I glance out the window to watch the trees

The wind is blowing and they sway in the wind

The sun peeks out from behind a cloud

And I sit here alone thinking, dreaming.

I watch the pendulum on the clock

As it slowly swings back and forth

How precious time really is

If only happy moments could be preserved

Not just in our memory but to be used again

And I sit here alone thinking, dreaming.

The events of the past go through my mind

Memories, some good some bad

But still only memories, not reality

Although reality is but future memories

Some to be treasured some to make us sad

And I sit here alone thinking, dreaming.

I think of what was and what might have been

Everything is so beautiful one moment

And just as fast it slips away.

I wonder is our future all planned

Was all that happens meant to be?

And I sit here alone thinking dreaming.

Do we have a right to search out the truth

Are we questioning the Almighty?

The refrigerator is humming in the kitchen

Once again the sun breaks through

The humming has stopped and it's quiet

And I sit here alone thinking, dreaming.

I wonder how others feel about this

Would we want to know tomorrow's memories

Or should we not think about it

If we knew could we change things

Is that what I'm trying to do

Sitting here alone thinking, dreaming?

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"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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“Taps”

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