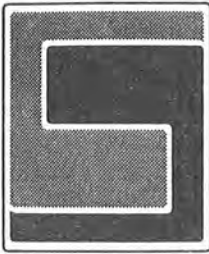


FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

★★★★ Association, Inc.



VOLUME 50, NO. 3

MAY — JUNE — JULY — AUGUST
1997

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

P.O. BOX 69
CHAMPION, PA 15622-0069
412/455-2901

bulletin

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*Deceased

LIVING IN THE LAP OF LUXURY



THE NEW DUES YEAR IS UPON US.
Please see Page 14 and **PAY YOUR DUES!**
We need your support to keep the bulletin coming.

THE MAIL BOX

By Earl Witzleb, Jr., Editor



Company E, 273rd Infantry Regiment
P.O. Box 69
Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069
Telephone: 412/455-2901

To the Members:

The loss of Clarence is a great loss to the Association and to his family and friends. Other than his family, no one will feel the loss more than I.

Since 1977 **Clarence Marshall** and I have co-edited the Bulletin. The first bulletin we handled was Vol. 31, No 1, October-November-December, 1977. It consisted of only 12 pages. Over the past 20 years, the bulletin has grown in size and in sophistication, and our friendship has grown along with it. We put countless hours into making the bulletin the best that we could. Let me tell you folks, it is a thankless job, but we both loved it.

I can't say enough about **Clarence's** honesty and his loyalty to the Association. He was meticulous in everything that he did, researching small details for hours to make sure that the bulletin was as accurate as possible. He worked hard at keeping peace among the membership and officers of the Association.

I will miss **Clarence** very much. Our years together were very gratifying, even with the ups and downs. It is the end of an era for me. I hope that God will bless him and keep him under his wing until we meet again.

* * * * *

Joseph Lipsius, 1354 Bramble Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30329 — Cannon Co. & Reg. Hq., 272nd: I am saddened to learn of **Clarence's** death. You and he were the backbone of the Association. With Dottie's help, I am sure the Association will continue to be successful.

Let me thank you for the beautiful display of my article in Volume 50, No. 2, "Unexpected Bridges from the Past (1945-1995)." I have had a number of telephone calls and letters in praise of it.

There are two corrections I would like to make:

1. I referred to **Bryan Halter** as a Lieutenant when he was actually a Lieutenant Colonel.

2. I stated the regiment was in "the Black Forest" on maneuvers. This was a slip of memory. We were in "The DeSoto National Forest."

Thanks again for the good work!

Your fellow 69er and friend.

Charles Chapman, 7412 Exmore Street, Springfield, Virginia 22150-4026 — Hq., Divarty: I have recently located three former members of Headquarters Battery, Divarty. They are:

Dal W. White

1251 Moulin Rouge Drive, Dallas, Texas 75211

John B. Goldbeck

10451 Sunrise Lakes Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33322

Ian R. Colquhoun

8509 Limerick Avenue, Winnetka, California 01306

I was saddened to hear of the deaths of **Clarence Marshall** and **Joe Wright**. Both were fine gentlemen and contributed so very much to the success of our association. When I first became active in 1981 and commenced writing a newsletter for former members of our battery, **Clarence** went to a lot of trouble to help me and this was before our mailing list was fully computerized. Both will be missed.

Park M. Fellers, 935 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 396, Hillsboro, Illinois 62049 — Service Co./Hq. Co., 272nd: **Captain Lipsius'** article in the recent issue of the Bulletin brought back many fond memories of the 272nd "family."

It would be nice to read other such articles from other survivors of the best regiment in the 69th Division. Captain Joe looks mighty healthy in the picture with the charming lady, Colonel Buie's daughter.

Many years ago enroute to Florida, I stopped in Dalton, Georgia and rang Colonel Buie's number but got no answer. He was a brilliant chain-of-command leader whom I admired very much.

I recall one incident that happened to me which I doubt if **Captain Joe** remembers. The time **Colonel Lanham** "chewed" me out. He had called an important meeting of all company commanders and less than half of them got the message. I was by myself at my desk catching up on some paperwork when **Lanham** came storming in ... too early I thought ... and called me into his office and gave me the old military dressing down for failing to get word out to the company leaders. I didn't know what it was about until then, I was embarrassed naturally. So when **Captain Joe** and his S-3 crew returned, **Captain Kendle** was still out so I proceeded to sort of "dress" down **Captain Lipsius**. And believe it or not, this kind gentleman, instead of reminding me I was out of order, apologized. I felt like a fool, which I guess I really was. But that's the kind of guy **Joe** was, strictly an officer and a gentleman.

Nothing much new from me since my letter of about a year ago with the pictures I sent in. Which reminds me, **Clarence Marshall** helped me with those pictures for which I was grateful. I met him only once at the

(Continued on Page 3)

THE MAIL BOX

(Continued from Page 2)

convention in Biloxi in 1991. Those who worked with him so many years will really miss him, as I do. I called him to see if he was going to Schaumburg. He wasn't sure due to his eyes. I had made hotel reservations but when I fell and broke my arm, I cancelled as I didn't feel comfortable with only my left hand functioning. (I am right handed and of course that's the one that I fractured). Sure hated to miss it since that was so close.

One more thing. Congratulations to **Bob Trimble** for the recognition he received for his good work at Camp Shelby and the Biloxi meeting. A well deserved award.

Arthur Lohrbach, 423 Pine Street, Pemberville, Ohio 43450 — Co. D, 273rd: Thank you for the real assistance you and Dottie have put into the 69th Infantry Bulletin over the years. We enjoyed the reunions that we did attend. In recent years we were not able to attend.

My wife, Eloise, passed away in April of 1997 with congestive heart failure. She was in and out of the hospital and nursing homes several times in the last two years. We had three boys during our marriage. We have five granddaughters and no grandsons.

I try to keep up with the buddies who were with me in combat. I was wounded February 27th, 1945. I was in Company D, 273rd the whole time I was in the service. Again, I want to say thank you folks for what you have done for the 69th Association over the years. Stay happy and healthy.

Ellis M. Benson, 426 Fulvia Street, Leucadia, California 92024 — Div. Hq.: The recently received 69th Division Bulletin was most effectively put together. I congratulate you for it. It is not done without a great deal of effort.

It was sad to hear of Clarence's passing. I guess we're all pushing the limits, so enjoy life while you may.

My college library has requested a copy of the Bulletin for their files. Could you please send me another copy. My very best to you and Dottie.

Frazier Davidson, 3361 14th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon 97402-3194 — Co. M, 272nd: I am an amateur

radio operator. My call is W7PGB. If there are any other Hams in the Association, give me a call. I am also a military affiliate operator. The very best to all in the Association.

Howitzer Al Kormas, 12500 Edgewater Drive, #503, Lakewood, Ohio 44107-1673 — Hq., 879th F.A.:

"A SMALL WORLD"

While at the local hospital having the war department do a few x-rays, I was seated waiting. One of the volunteers somehow seemed familiar. I had to ask him who he was or I would be puzzled all day. Lo and behold, I had graduated from Lincoln High in June of 1939 and he in January of 1939.

As we sat and talked about our alma mater, we now discovered that he too was in the 69th Infantry Division from activation until separation to the 29th Division and to the 78th like myself.

He is **Mike Makuh**, 724th Field Artillery, 2618 Hearthstone Road, Parma, Ohio 44134.

Small world is right, one never knows. He also told me that just recently another 69er made himself known while at the hospital, but they forgot to exchange names. He enjoys our bulletins, but has never attended any reunions. However, he is interested in the Tri-State reunions as they are not as far to travel to for him.

Mike served in a forward observer group. He is hoping to hear from some of his battery mates.

As many of you know, I am very sentimental and I have said how my old Army O.D. hanky had finally worn out with the tears and age. But good news, my buddy, a former CIC agent attached to the 65th Division living near Ft. Benning, purchased me two new ones, very dark in color and twice as big. Now in sentimental moments, I can again use an Army O.D. hanky, over and over.

Neil Shields, 222 Sunnyland Avenue, #1, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15227-1856 — Co. F, 272nd: I was very sorry to hear of the death of **Clarence Marshall**. He was such an asset to the Association. I wanted to mention that **Clarence's** name was in the "Taps" section of the 29th Division paper, "*Chin Strap*." We will all miss him. May he rest in peace.

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

EARL E. WITZLEB, JR., Editor, P.O. Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069

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

ROBERT KURTZMAN, Membership Chairman, P.O. Box 105, Wilmot, Ohio 44689

DO NOT SEND DUES TO EARL OR BOB!!
DUES GO TO OUR TREASURER, WILLIAM MATLACH. See Page 14.

A Final Tribute to our Beloved Editor, Clarence Marshall 1922-1997



Clarence's sister, Gladys, writes the following . . .

We want to thank all of the friends in the 69th who shared our grief when my brother, **Clarence Marshall**, passed away on Easter Sunday, March 30th.

To those who came to mourn with us at the funeral home and the cemetery; those who called, sent cards and letters, pictures and flowers - God bless you all.

I always thought my brother was a very special person. His acceptance of his physical handicaps and his determination to maintain his independence in spite of them; his honesty, integrity, loyalty and his great sense of humor which he never lost, were all factors in the admiration and love I felt for him.

So many of you have told us how much he did for the Association. I agree, but the 69th did a lot for him. He was very proud of the work he did in relocating members and with the Bulletin. He enjoyed all of the reunions he was able to attend, the many phone conversations with members and the correspondence when he was still able to use his trusty, old typewriter. How he appreciated those who came to his weekend home in Clarion County for his picnics.

The "theme song" at Valley Forge Army Hospital, where he spent so much time when he came home from the war, was "You'll Never Walk Alone" from the Rodgers-Hammerstein musical "Carousel." The verse begins:

*"When you walk through the storm,
Hold your head up high
And don't be afraid of the dark;
At the end of the storm is a golden sky
And the sweet, silver song of the lark . . ."*

Clarence has found the golden sky.

Bob and Gladys Braun
112 West Main Street
Clarion, PA 16214

Dutch Hawn, who served with Clarence . . .

It's never been easy to say good-bye to a true and valued friend, but eventually we must.

To those of our 69th Division Association members who were fairly regular attendees at reunions, there is no need to outline any of Clarence's contributions; they are legend. We can fairly say that Clarence, more than any other single individual, built the membership, so, that to this day, we still have a strong and healthy roster, to continue our Association work.

Clarence assumed the responsibilities of membership Chairman in 1965 when we had approximately 1100 members; He continued to increase the rolls until in recent years there are a bit over 6,000 names. He spent countless hours contacting, by every means at his disposal, former Division members, inviting them to join the Association.

Clarence was also co-editor of our 69th Bulletin and as such, handled virtually all letters to the editors and seeing that they were published. As membership Chairman for some 34 years, he maintained the rosters of members. The last couple of years, due to health, he was forced to request help, which Bob Kurtzman willingly provided.

The following chronology is well known by all 69ers who have attended several of the reunions, but I feel it is important to those of you who have not been attendees at reunions or close to the activities of the Association to understand why Clarence was revered by virtually everyone.

First, during the last 34 years he did a superb job of building and maintaining our membership rolls and handling much of the correspondence and requests for information, from many sources. Secondly, you may not know of the man himself. You should. Clarence was in my Company during his active service with the 69th Infantry Division. I can say from personal knowledge that he was as fine and dedicated a soldier as any who served with us. In early 1945 Clarence was severely wounded by an anti-tank mine, and, we who were there, knew that he had almost no chance to survive. He was transferred through the Army medical channels back to the States. After two or three years in the hospital, Clarence was discharged and classified as legally blind. He also had severe diabetic problems, and was on 100 percent disability pension.

Since that time, Clarence has devoted his life to the 69th Division Association. With the aid of enhanced lighting and magnifying instruments, he laboriously deciphered the letters and materials forwarded to him and was able to use his typewriter and telephone to correspond. Clarence Marshall was married to the entire 69th Division membership and their families. You never heard him say, "Why me." He attended

(Continued on Page 5)

A FINAL TRIBUTE TO CLARENCE MARSHALL *(Continued from Page 4)*

reunions and was able to distinguish forms and shapes, and become quite adept at recognizing voices and sounds. Clarence spent his entire adult life in and out of hospitals; Diabetes caused loss of toes - a foot, etc., etc. Also, it finally contributed to his heart problems and death.

Now you know the rest of the story, a man that those of us privileged to have known him, revered for his loving and effective contributions to our beloved 69th Division Association.

He devoted his entire life to the Association. May he rest in peace, and find his reward with God.

W. O. "Dutch" Hawn
2445 South Cody Court
Lakewood, Colorado 80227
* * * * *

Keith Curtis, who served with Clarence and was a close friend of 50 years . . .

I first became acquainted with Clarence in April of 1944 at Camp Shelby. He was my Company Driver of the kitchen truck and we drew rations from the quartermaster. Later in Europe, he handled the rear echelon kitchen where he had his accident. He was hospitalized for 14 months and had many operations. Clarence was never married and the 69th was his life until he died. I corresponded with him by mail and phone for over 50 years. I don't believe that many 69ers were ever aware of all the medical problems that he endured over the years. He was a diabetic and that eventually caused the amputation of his foot. He was robbed and his glasses stepped on and crushed and left helpless. The final blow was the necessity to go on dialysis several times a week.

He was a great part of the 69th Division for so many years and should be remembered as MR. 69th.

Keith Curtis
5820 N.W. 112th Street
Grimes, Iowa 50111
* * * * *

Howitzer Al Kormas, a good friend and comrad . . .

We have lost Clarence Marshall, our beloved comrade. His whole life after World War II was devoted to the 69th Infantry Division. His recall was brilliant, one could question him on just about any reunion or a problem concerning our association, and he had the answer posthaste. Indeed, he was a warm, and extremely considerate 69er, treating all alike and helping anyone that he could. In all these years, he handled thousands of phone calls and countless letters.

Over the last few years he has had nurses in attendance 24 hours a day, vowing no nursing home. Most of these girls soon got attached to Clarence, and openly wept at his funeral services. His favorite restaurant

called Eat-N-Park, left many concerned waitresses weeping who had served him for many years.

Paul Shadle, who lived nearby, was a close friend of Clarence's, taking him to the doctors and on errands. For about the past ten years now, **Rico D'Angelo** made a round trip every Thursday to take him to lunch and the post office, and to the printers to deliver material for the bulletin. Only once did **Rico** turn around due to an ice storm. A distance of 20 miles each way, **Rico** will sorely miss him. As for myself, on my frequent passes to **Enrico's**, we always got up to Clarence's for a chat and out to chow.

The 69ers who were present at Clarence's services were the **D'Angelos**, the **Shadles**, **Earl** and **Dottie Witzleb**, the **Kurtzmans**, the **Shaffers** and myself. The Order of the Purple Heart and the American Legion were present giving a touching farewell tribute to Clarence. Also members of Buhl Brothers Printing, the printing company who handles the printing of the bulletin, were present for the viewing and services. He had made many friends at the printing company over the years.

Clarence was interred at his family plot in New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, close to the site of his annual 69th picnic.

He was one great patriot, soldier, comrade and certainly the "top of the 69th."

Howitzer Al Kormas
12500 Edgewater Drive, Apt. 503
Cleveland, Ohio 44107
* * * * *

Paul Shadle, a good friend and comrade . . .

Over the years of being associated with Clarence, I think he was one of the greatest guys I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. With all of his disabilities, he had more stamina and determination than anyone I have ever known. I cannot remember even one time him complaining about his problems. He was very independent and balked at help from others. Nothing that he did was for personal gain. He never wanted any recognition for any of his efforts. He just sat back quietly and did his work for the betterment of the Association.

We have lost our greatest asset in **Clarence Marshall** and a dear friend. This truly dedicated man will not be forgotten. I will always remember the years of camaraderie and the time we shared as friends and buddies.

May all who knew him learn from him what it is to be truly human. What it is to count your blessings and go on and make the best of the life that God has given you. May God hold him in the palm of his hand for all of eternity.

Paul Shadle
1504 Greensburg Road
New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068

Message from the President



Robert L. Pierce
144 Nashua Court
San Jose, California 95139-1236
Telephone: 408/226-8040

I would be remiss if I did not dedicate part of this message to the memory of **Clarence Marshall** and **Joseph Wright**. I was not a close friend of either man personally, but I did know them by reputation and dedication to the Association. They have now become icons, symbolizing the best a man could be during his lifetime. They will both be missed but always remembered. My sympathies go out to **Eleanor Wright** and family; and, to the family of **Clarence Marshall**.

My position requiring members to pay dues to receive the Bulletin has not changed. The Treasurer's message is a historic recreation of messages I have been hearing year after year. His assertion that "enforcing dues payment would undo everything **Clarence Marshall** accomplished during his 35 years as Membership Chairman" is nonsense. **Clarence** built a membership list which will still be maintained for posterity, or whatever it's needed for, when we are no longer an organization. The major difference will be an "active" list of dues paying members; and, an "inactive list of no pay - no Bulletin" members. **Clarence's** list, in two parts, will always be there.

The question is what do we do with the money? To start with, we should remove the austere measures implemented when it appeared we would go broke in 8 years unless we increased the dues to \$10. Recommend we remove the constraint on page numbers for the Bulletin; and, remove the mark-up for food service at our annual Reunions. Excessive funds in the Treasury is not an indicator of a successful Association, the enjoyment of its members is the mark of success. Remember, we are not a growth corporation, we are an Association formed to perpetuate the friendships and general welfare of its members.

FUTURE REUNIONS

I have been unable to obtain a status report from the Reunion Site/Activities Chairman, so I cannot discuss his progress for the 1998 or 1999 Reunions. I do, however, have a well organized 1998 Reunion Committee of 22 members in the Houston, Texas area. Our first Committee meeting was held in Houston May 17th, 1997. I have four firm proposals from major hotels in Houston and have conducted onsite surveys of all four. The Reunion Committee has already prepared a complete plan including tours, events, and prices that will be presented at the Danvers Reunion.

In Memory of Joseph Wright 1904-1997

In the course of six (6) days, Taps has claimed two of our most prominent and active members. First, **Clarence Marshall** died on 30 March 1997. Subsequent to that **Joseph Wright** answered God's call on 4 April 1997. Joe was our oldest active member. This farewell to **Joe Wright** is a recognition to Joe as he was always known "The Voice of Reason."

Joe Wright, for many years, was the Association Parliamentarian. At Director's Meetings and our Annual Business Meetings, he normally was at the President's side, and provided counsel and guidance as requested and very often as needed, even though not requested. He was truly our "Voice of Reason." His guidance was sought, and it was always very sound. He managed to advise and to proffer constructive criticism with wisdom and humor.

Additionally, **Joe Wright**, for many years at reunions, arranged and supervised Memorial Services. Always a high point of reunions, they were very moving and beautiful — bringing tears to the eyes of many tough old infantrymen.

Joe was always an ambassador of friendship and a frequent contributor of professionally done articles in our 69th Bulletins. He served this Association in many ways through the years. As an example, at the 1996 Reunion at Schaumburg, Illinois he supplied the Early Bird Dinner entertainment. If needed, he willingly filled in at any time others found it difficult to perform a task. Also, Joe's memory and recall were among the best I've ever known.

At 92 years and 10 months of age, we have lost our "Voice of Reason." We will miss you, Joe, but will not forget you.

W. O. "Dutch" Hawn
Past President
2445 South Cody Court
Lakewood, Colorado 80227

Past Bulletin Issues Available

Paul Shadle

Company E, 271st Infantry Regiment

1504 Greensburg Road

New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068

Clarence Marshall had a large collection of past bulletins that he would send to members, usually newly found members, upon request. Clarence's sister, **Gladys**, has since turned them over to me.

I am willing to mail these bulletins out to members on a first come, first serve basis.

Please be patient in receiving them, as I am still working. I am sure I will be bombarded with letters and requests, and I will do my best to accommodate those that I can.

Along with your request, please send \$2.00 per bulletin that you would like to receive, for postage. Any money left over from your postage, should they cost less, will be turned over to the Association Treasury.

Make sure you specify the year, volume, and the number of the bulletins you would like to receive.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
1997	50	1	12
1996	49	1	1
1996	49	2	7
1996	49	3	10
1995	48	1	5
1995	48	2	12
1995	48	3	5
1994	47	1	12
1994	47	2	8
1994	47	3	13
1993	46	1	13
1993	46	2	12
1993	46	3	12
1992	45	1	11
1992	45	2	10
1992	45	3	12
1991	44	1	12
1991	44	2	11
1991	44	3	10
1990	43	1	12
1990	43	2	11
1990	43	3	12
1989	42	1	11
1989	42	2	12
1989	42	3	12

<u>Year</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
1988	41	1	6
1988	41	2	6
1988	41	3	6
1987	40	1	11
1987	40	2	11
1987	40	3	5
1986	39	1	9
1986	39	2	8
1986	39	3	11
1984	37	1	9
1984	37	2	4
1984	37	3	2
1983	36	1	10
1983	36	2	7
1982	35	1	8
1982	35	2	5
1982	35	3	6
1981	34	1	3
1981	34	2	8
1981	34	3	7
1980	33	1	5
1980	33	2	2
1980	33	3	6
1979	32	1	6
1979	32	2	8
1979	32	3	8
1978	31	2	8
1978	31	3	8
1977	30	2	8
Specials			26
Bolte Passes Away			35

Remember, this is a first-come, first serve basis, so get your requests in as soon as possible. Thank you.

Hats off to Gladys

I want to let the membership know that Clarence's sister, **Gladys Braun**, has been a great asset to the Association over the years. She has helped Clarence in many ways pertaining to the bulletin, and will still continue to be our primary proofreader, as no one does it better.

So as I said, **Hats off to Gladys**. We owe her a sincere note of gratification.

Paul Shadle

**69TH INFANTRY
DIVISION ASSOCIATION
1997 50TH ANNUAL
REUNION
Tara's Ferncroft
Conference Resort
Danvers, Massachusetts**

50 FERNCROFT ROAD
DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS 01923
508/777-2500 • 800-THE-TARA

Danvers, Massachusetts is approximately 18 miles from Boston's Logan Airport. All of the towns north of Boston are rich in American heritage. Our tours will cover the area and our guide will give us an historical overview of the entire area.

We hope many of you will join us at this reunion. It is our 50th reunion, one that none of you should miss.

TOURS

LEXINGTON and CONCORD TOUR

Tuesday, August 19th, 1997

9:00 A.M. — Board your deluxe motorcoach at the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort. Here you will meet your knowledgeable Hawthorne guide to begin your journey to the start of the American Revolution. It was in Lexington and Concord that the first shots of the revolution were fired as the farmers took a stand against British oppression. Your guide will take you to the North Bridge where the "shot heard round the world" was fired and to see the famous Minute Man Statue. You will continue to follow the Battle Road and see the Hartwell Tavern and the Paul Revere Capture Site among other stops.

Concord is also known for its intellectual and literal history. Transcendentalism and the concept of Utopia grew with the writings and teachings of these local people - Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Bronson Alcott and Louisa May Alcott. Many of the homes of the writers/philosophers who challenged the thinking of a nation are still standing, and within easy walking distance from one another near Concord Center - the Wayside known as the "home of the authors" where Nathaniel Hawthorne lived, the Old Manse and the Emerson House with connections to Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Walden Pond where Henry David Thoreau lived and reflected on life, can all be visited.

Price includes deluxe motorcoach transportation and full-day guide.

It does not include admissions to historic homes.

BOSTON TOUR

Wednesday, August 20th, 1997

9:00 A.M. — Board your deluxe motorcoach at the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort with your knowledgeable Hawthorne guide and begin to enjoy your full day of touring the cosmopolitan city of Boston.

Your ride along the *Freedom Trail* will take you to a number of world famous sites. The *USS Constitution* was launched in 1797 and today is the US Navy's oldest commissioned ship. A walk through the *North End* will introduce you to one of Boston's oldest and most historic neighborhoods, the *Paul Revere House* and the *Old North Church* where lanterns were hung to signal Paul Revere. *Faneuil Hall*, the *Old State House*, *Kings Chapel*, *Old Granary Burial Grounds*, site of the *Boston Massacre*, and *Beacon Hill* are all highlighted as your guide relates the history, folklore and current events of Boston.

The *Back Bay*, the *Boston Commons* and *Public Gardens "Cheers,"* and upscale *Newbury Street* are covered enroute to the *Christian Science Building* to visit the *Mapparium*. We will also get a birdseye view of the city from the top of the *John Hancock Building*. At 60 stories, it is Boston's tallest building. Lunch will be on your own at *Quincy Market* where you may choose from a variety of restaurants.

After lunch you will ride through Cambridge the home of *MIT* and *Harvard University*.

3:00 P.M. — Return to hotel.

Includes guide service, transportation and admission to the John Hancock Observatory.

* * * * *

PLYMOUTH TOUR

Thursday, August 21st, 1997

8:30 A.M. — Board your deluxe motorcoach at the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort, sit back and enjoy the ride to Plymouth. Your Hawthorne Guide will provide commentary enroute to Plimoth Plantation.

As you arrive at Plimoth Plantation, be prepared to step back to an earlier time period. This site is an authentic recreation of an early Pilgrim settlement. Costumed men and women bring to life the seasonal work routines and leisure activities of 17th century Plymouth. In their dress, speech, manner and thought, these "impostors" will give you a glimpse of what life was like for the Pilgrims and Native Americans in the year 1627.

Lunch will be on your own at Plimoth Plantation.

Following lunch, your group will board the motorcoach and continue with a narrated tour of Plymouth. Photo stop at *Plymouth Rock* and the *Mayflower II* is included. Tour concludes with a visit to the *Cranberry World Visitors Center* sponsored by *Ocean Spray*

(Continued on Page 9)

Cranberries, Inc. Here you will trace the history and development of the cranberry industry. Included is an exhibit of antique and modern harvesting tools and machinery. Complimentary refreshments are provided.

5:30 P.M. — Approximate time of arrival back at the hotel.

Includes transportation, guide service and all admissions as stated in the itinerary.

* * * * *

SPIRIT OF BOSTON LUNCHEON CRUISE

Friday, August 22nd, 1997

10:30 A.M. — Depart the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort via deluxe motorcoach and enjoy your ride into the beautiful city of Boston.

11:30 A.M. — Come on Board and catch the exhilarating fun and wonder of a luncheon cruise. You will enjoy a tantalizing buffet, dance bands, a lively show and fabulous sights, all in one unique package.

You will dine on a delectable Lobster Clambake Lunch Buffet that includes:

Whole New England Lobster
Fresh Steamed Shellfish
Tangy Barbecued Chicken
Oven-Roasted Potatoes
Steamed Vegetables
Boston Baked Beans
Creamy Cole Slaw
Fresh Rolls with Butter
Selection of Desserts

2:00 P.M. — Return to Rowe's Wharf. Time allowed for group to shop at Quincy Market.

3:30 P.M. — Return to hotel.

4:15 P.M. — Approximate time of arrival back at the hotel.

Price includes round trip transportation via deluxe motorcoach and luncheon cruise.

* * * * *

BOSTON THEATER PLAY

Wednesday, August 20th, 1997

Wednesday evening we will be going to a theater in Boston to see the comedy play "Shear Madness." The bus will leave at 6:45 p.m. and be back about 11:00 p.m. Cut-off date is July 1st, 1997. Please have your reservations in early so you will not be disappointed.

Directions to Tara Ferncroft Danvers, Massachusetts

From upstate New York

Take Route 90 New York Thru Way to the Massachusetts Turnpike Exit 14 I95 North to Exit 50 (Topsfield) and follow signs to the hotel.

From northern Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan

Route 80 East to 209 North to I84 East to the Massachusetts Turnpike. Take Exit 14 I95 North to Exit 50 (Topsfield) and follow signs to the hotel.

From Southern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and points south I95 North

395 North in Connecticut to the Massachusetts Turnpike East to Exit 14 I95 North to Exit 50 (Topsfield) and follow signs to the hotel.

(If you want to follow I95 all the way through Providence you can but you have a lot of traffic that is going to and from Cape Cod.)

If you get off of Exit 50 look to your left. Up the hill you will see the hotel.

FLYERS

For all of you who are flying in, we have contacted the Granada Transportation. Their rate is \$20.00 per person one way, or \$38.00 per person round trip to the Tara Ferncroft Danvers. They said that when you purchase your ticket, call them at 1-800-633-6220 and tell them when you plan to arrive. They will have someone there to pick you up and bring you to the hotel. If you do not do that you can call them when you arrive, but you will have to wait about an hour or so.

Flyers Renting a Car at Airport

Directions to Tara Ferncroft from Logan Airport

Exit Logan Airport to the right onto Route 1A North marked to Revere and Lynn.

Approximately 3 miles leave Route 1A onto Route 60 West marked to Malden, New Hampshire and Maine.

Approximately 3 miles leave Route 60 West onto U.S. Route 1 North marked to New Hampshire and Maine.

Stay on U.S. Route 1 for approximately 12 miles to the Rotary near the Tara Ferncroft. Note large Ferncroft sign to the left up on the hill. Go left around the Rotary onto U.S. Route 1 South to Ferncroft Road, approximately one-half mile on the right. Follow Ferncroft Road to second left, the Ferncroft entrance to the main lobby.



Salem Maritime National Historic Site

69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 1997
50th ANNUAL REUNION
461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN.
Tara's Ferncroft Conference Resort
DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS
AUGUST 17th thru AUGUST 24th, 1997

SEND THIS RESERVATION FORM TO THE TARA'S FERNCROFT CONFERENCE RESORT

Reservations:

TARA'S FERNCROFT CONFERENCE RESORT

50 FERNCROFT ROAD, DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS 01923

Telephone: 508/777-2500 OR 800-The-Tara Fax: 508/750-7959

HOUSING: Please reserve one of the following:

\$77.00 + Single _____ \$77.00 + Double - 2 persons _____ \$92.00 + Triple - 3 persons _____
\$107.00 + Quad - 4 persons _____ ALL REGULAR ROOMS - \$77.00 + 9.7% TAX

Print full names of ALL persons sharing room: _____

NOTE: Special accommodations required: (if available)

HANDICAPPED _____ KING SIZE BED _____ NON-SMOKING _____

I / We plan to arrive (day) _____, August _____, 1997. (Check in after 3:00 P.M.)

I / We plan to depart (day) _____, August _____, 1997. (Check out before 11:00 a.m.)

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

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

Send Confirmation to: (Please Type or Print)

Name: _____

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

City / State / Zip: _____

Telephone / Area Code: _____

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

Check or Money Order (One Night's Lodging) payable to the TARA'S FERNCROFT CONFERENCE RESORT, OR
Major Credit Card and Date of Expiration. The following Credit Cards are accepted:

American Express, Master Card, Visa Card, Diner's Club, Carte Blanche and Discover.

Credit Card Name _____ Number _____ Expires _____

I, (your signature) _____ authorize TARA'S FERNCROFT CONFERENCE
RESORT to make charges on my credit card. Date: _____

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

Reservations must be received not later than **July 25, 1997**. If a particular type of room is unavailable, the next most suitable
room will be assigned. No particular room, room type, or location can be guaranteed. Deposit returnable on 48 hour cancellation
notice prior to your arrival date.

69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 1997

50th ANNUAL REUNION

461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN.

TARA'S FERNCROFT - DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS

AUGUST 17th thru AUGUST 24th, 1997

Registration form to be mailed to: **William R. Matlach, Treasurer**

P.O. Box 474, West Islip, New York 11795-0474 • Telephone: 516/669-8077

I/we will attend the 69th Infantry Division Association Reunion in Danvers, Massachusetts during the week of August 17th thru 24th, 1997 and will attend the following activities.

Name: _____

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

City / State / Zip: _____

Telephone / Area Code: _____ First Timer ☐ Second Timer ☐ Old Timer ☐

Unit: _____ Wife's Name: _____

Guests: _____

Daily Events

	Per Person	Number Persons	Amount
Registration: Monday thru Friday , 9:00 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. For Saturday, Check the Bulletin Board.		NO CHARGE	
Sunday, August 17th — Early Arrivals on your own.			
Monday, August 18th — Check Bulletin Board and Hospitality Room.			
Tuesday, August 19th — LEXINGTON AND CONCORD	\$ 31.00		\$
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lunch on your own.			
Wednesday, August 20th — BOSTON TOUR	\$ 31.00		\$
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lunch on your own.			
THEATER SHOW - 6:45 p.m. to 10:45 p.m.	\$ 35.00		\$
COMEDY SHOW - "Shear Madness." Cut-off date: July 1st, 1997			
Thursday, August 21st — PLYMOUTH PLANTATION - 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. ..	\$ 45.00		\$
GOLF TOURNAMENT	\$ 38.00		\$
EARLY BIRD DINNER , Cash Bar-6:30 p.m. Tickets Required	\$ 29.00		\$
Friday, August 22nd — SPIRIT OF BOSTON - 10:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.	\$ 45.00		\$
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING — 4:00 p.m. Check Bulletin Board			
PX BEER PARTY — 9:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. Tickets Required	\$ 5.00		\$
Saturday, August 23rd COFFEE AND DANISH - 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.			
GENERAL MEETING AND AUXILIARY MEETING - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon			
MEMORIAL SERVICE - 6:30 p.m.			
DINNER AND DANCING BANQUET - 7:00 p.m. to 12:00 Midnight	\$ 33.00		\$
Please Check: <input type="checkbox"/> Prime Rib <input type="checkbox"/> Boston Scrod (Special Diet-Let Us Know)			
CASH BAR - 6:00 p.m. (Banquet Ticket Required)			
Sunday, August 24th - FAREWELL BREAKFAST - 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	\$ 13.00		\$
Replacement Cost for Lost or Broken Permanent Badges	\$ 4.00		\$
SUPPORT YOUR HOSPITALITY ROOM: DONATIONS PLEASE!			\$

Reunion Sub-Total \$

DUES New Dues Year - August 1, 1997 to July 31, 1998

Regular Membership	\$ 10.00	\$
Ladies Auxiliary	\$ 5.00	\$
Postage and Bulletin Donation (up to you)		\$

Total Amount Paid \$

Make Check or Money Order Payable to: **69th Infantry Division Association**

ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY PAYMENT IN FULL — IF NOT — YOUR RESERVATION WILL BE LAID ASIDE UNTIL PAYMENT IS MADE AND THIS COULD RESULT IN YOUR REQUEST FOR SEATING AND FUNCTIONS BEING DENIED. NO CHARGE CARDS ACCEPTED FOR EVENTS.

If you do not have a plastic badge from earlier Reunions, please check box. ☐

Permanent badges will be made if your request is accompanied by an advance prepaid Reservation. Failure to attend Reunion will result in a \$4.00 charge for each badge ordered, and will be deducted from your refund. Please fill out this form and mail it with your payment in full, no later than thirty (30) days prior to the Reunion. By doing this, it will make our job much easier, and save you time at the Registration Desk.



Company E, 273rd Infantry Camp Shelby, Mississippi - September 1943

Submitted by: **Fred A. Huston**, Clarksville, Tennessee

Thought some of the members might enjoy seeing this picture of the original Company E, 273rd Infantry, at Camp Shelby in 1943.

I still receive the bulletin and enjoy it very much. We had to move back east. Eunice's health requires a retirement complex in a climate where desert dust is eliminated. I hope that everyone's health is good and that we see each other at a future reunion.

Treasurer's Message



William R. and Jane Matlach

William R. Matlach, Treasurer

Post Office Box 474

West Islip, New York 11795-0474

Telephone: 516/669-8077

In the last Bulletin (Vol. 50, No. 2) I used a great deal of space to recount Association history in regard to employment of the policy **not** to penalize members who are delinquent in paying dues, and the reasons for its implementation. I hoped that the article would be my last one on that topic, but apparently that was not to be.

In the same Bulletin, our President discussed reasons for **reversing** this policy which has been successfully employed during the past 37 years, and which has been one of the primary reasons for the growth of our membership and increase in the attendance and duration of our Annual Reunions. He stated that the change is so imperative that "This condition can no longer continue," as if we were in dire peril or on the edge of a major financial disaster. (At present the financial status of the Association Treasury is extremely comfortable and is **far better than at any other time** in the history of the Association!) Rather than to go over his article in detail and discuss various statements which I find incorrect or faulty, I will just state briefly the general overall fallacy I have found in the presentation of his proposal.

The President has never been Treasurer of the 69th Infantry Division Association and he has no direct experience in the collection of dues or knowledge of the sources from which it comes, nor is he receptive to any information or advice from the current Treasurer who has spent more time in that office than any other 69er, in both good times and bad. In presenting his supporting arguments, he has paid no attention to established facts or available historic information (such as that which I related in my article in that same Bulletin),

but has used instead as a supporting basis a series of conjectures which are primarily his own personal opinion without any supporting experience or data. In many instances these conjectures are incorrect or inaccurate to say the least. Of course, the primary fault in his proposal is that he wants to sacrifice Members (the **purpose** of our Association) for Dollars which we **do not need**. He believes this can be done without damaging the Association, which is impossible. **The very act of eliminating members is damaging to the Association.**

Recently I received a letter from **Lowell McFarlin** (C-880) who is Secretary of C-Battery, 880th Field Artillery Battalion. They have their own little organization within the 69th, hold reunions, and mail a newsletter three times a year. He states:

"Over the years we too have discussed the matter of paying dues, and even though we mainly receive dues from the men that come, we still carry a healthy balance, and we receive many, many calls and letters telling us how much they have appreciated hearing about their buddies. So we carry a mailing list of about 60 men, but receive dues from around 20 to 28. And have plans to continue to do so. I contend that unless a newly found man has had the opportunity to receive publications of his former division, he is not very likely to show interest in being a member."

Lowell sent me a copy of their roster to check out against the 69th Division Roster. He included a list of 10 "New Members Found in 1996" which had required a great deal of work to compile and which they had sent in to the 69th Division Membership Chairman. I am sorry to inform **Lowell** that only three of those 10 men are on the Roster. Apparently the others did not pay their dues, which is a prerequisite before **Bob Kurtzman** will add any new member to the Roster. On his own, with no authority except his own personal opinion, the Membership Chairman has already been imposing the dues policy now being proposed by the President. If **Clarence Marshall** were Membership Chairman, all ten men would be on the mailing list, and the chances are that more than three would have paid dues by now!

On to more pleasant news. In late September of 1996 I received a telephone call from **Tina Tower**, daughter-in-law of **David B. Tower** (K-273). **David Tower** died at an early age, in his early thirties, and left several small children who grew up knowing very little about their father. Recently, a member of the family started to write a **David Tower** biography for their benefit, but there was little information about his time in the army which was only two or three years, but which represented a large portion of his short life. To help her obtain this information, I sent her a roster of our members in K-273. On 10/8/96 I received the following letter:

(Continued on Page 14)

TREASURER'S MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 13)

Mr. Matlach,

I really can't thank you enough for sending me the list of 69th Division, 273rd, Company K men. What a tremendous help! My second phone call put me in touch with a Mr. H. Dawes who remembered my father-in-law. He told me they were in the 4th Platoon together. He was also able to give me the names of 4 other soldiers, they all remembered each other and my father-in-law, David B. Tower. They each said they would send copies of what they have on their group. I can hardly wait to see it and my husband's face when he will finally know about his father's life.

Again, I thank you with all my heart.

Sincerely,

Tina M. Tower

2071 Royalton Road West

Avon Park, Florida 33825

Telephone: 941/452-5651

* * * * *

This used to be a compassionate organization. Sometimes it still is.

DID YOU PAY YOUR DUES!

1996-1997

August 1, 1996 to July 31, 1997

Regular Membership \$10.00

Ladies' Auxiliary \$ 5.00

Bulletin Donation Up To You

Send Your Dues To:

WILLIAM R. MATLACH, TREASURER

Post Office Box 474

West Islip, New York 11795-0474

Telephone: 516/669-8077

Do not send dues to Earl Witzleb.

NEW DUES YEAR STARTING NOW!

1997-1998

August 1, 1997 to July 31, 1998

Regular Membership \$10.00

Ladies' Auxiliary \$ 5.00

Bulletin Donation Up To You

Keep the Bulletin Coming!

New Men Relocated Since Our Last Bulletin

Edward Bush — Medic, 271st Infantry

P.O. Box 355, Wheeler, Texas 79096-0355

John J. Lasnier — Company K, 272nd Infantry

202 Garden Street, Bristol, Connecticut

Charles S. Price — Company H, 273rd Infantry

P.O. Box 302, Danville, Vermont 05828-0302

Jack B. Tyson — Company H, 273rd Infantry

7201 Galax Road, Richmond, Virginia 23228

Howard V. Wells — Company D, 273rd Infantry

2139 Marcia Drive, Bellbrook, Ohio 45305-1607

**FOUND A NEW MEMBER?
HAVE A CHANGE OF ADDRESS?**

THIS SHOULD BE MAILED TO:

Robert J. Kurtzman

P.O. Box 105

Wilmot, Ohio 44689

Telephone: 330/359-5487

**DO NOT SEND PICTURES AND
ARTICLES TO BOB KURTZMAN.**

See bottom of page 3 for
Editor Earl Witzleb's address.

MOVING

Please print your new address below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please send this form and your old address label to:

Robert Kurtzman

P.O. Box 105, Wilmot, Ohio 44689

Please allow six weeks advance notice.

Notice to Members

Many members have sent in large roll photographs. These photographs can be published only in one place and that is in the center of the bulletin.

If you have not seen your photo in yet, please be patient. We are putting them in on a first-come, first serve basis. Be assured that we will return your photo after it has been published.

3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Anti-Tank Company, 273rd Infantry Regiment

Submitted by: **Hubert Porter**, 900 Cedar Street, Atlantic, Iowa 50022-2010

Enclosed is a picture of the 3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Anti-Tank Company, 273 Regiment. The house was our CP at Ramshied 12 Feb 45, it wasn't in this good a shape however. The top floor on the East side had been pretty much blown away and was an emplacement for our 50.

After corresponding with Chris Van Kerckhoven in Belgium and him sending me a map of Ramshied he went to Ramshied and verified the location. There was a church just in the back of the house.

Picture of the truck shows holes in the box, truck took almost direct hit by a rocket, got three tires, windshield and filled it full of holes but it still made out the war.

I have been corresponding with **Wes Taylor** in California and both of us would like to hear from more A-T Company men if they care to write.



*Top: Turanno. Center Row: Broderson, Taylor, Francis, Porter
Bottom: Snodgrass, Ugero, Atkinson, Wagner, Silvia*



A Few Passing Thoughts . . .

- To err is human; however, if you really want to foul things up, get a computer.
- In spite of much inflation, a penny for some people's thoughts is still a fair price.
- The mind is simply wonderful - it works from your birth until the moment you stand up to speak in public.
- Some folks are quite easily entertained; all they ask of you is to sit down quietly and listen to them.

The Longest Day, Before and Thereafter

Written by: Bill Lord

Headquarters, I&R Platoon, 272nd Infantry

927 Unity-Center Road

Pittsburgh, PA 15239

From my early days I remember a reunion of the G.A.R. on the public square of downtown Cleveland. I learned that G.A.R. meant Grand Army of the Republic and that the wispy and bowed gentlemen gathered in an irregular line before us were veterans of the union forces in the Civil War. I wondered how they ever could have been soldiers. The vets I knew were members of the A.E.F., the American Expeditionary Force, the fun loving doughboys who held such rowdy reunions that few cities would host their annual conventions.

The movie, *All Quiet On The Western Front*, disabused me of any notion that war was a frivolous affair. Later, during my college days I read the *Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane and became aware how close the line within us is whether we be brave or cowardly in combat. Through Crane's masterpiece I saw that wispy line of old men rejuvenated into young soldiers coming to grips with war. War was on my horizon and I lived in spirit with the men in blue.

The movie and the book remained my lasting impression of what war would be and I never had any allusions of glory when I became a member of the U.S. Army, ultimate destination Germany as a member of the I and R platoon, 272nd Regiment in the 69th Infantry Division.

I remember the day as a green buck private, I was interviewed along with a bunch of other discards from ASTP (Army Specialized Training Program). At this time, I was sent to the 63rd Infantry Division at Camp Van Dorn in southern Mississippi, an uninspiring assembly of tar papered barracks commemorating a fighting Confederate general who never won a battle.

The Division Commander, absolutely resplendent and be-medaled in his uniform, came by while we were being given our assignments. He talked to a few of us asking where we would like to serve our country in the 63rd. When he asked me I saw a great opportunity for salvation and asked for military intelligence, seeing myself safely behind the lines putting little flags on a wall map. He had just the place for me, an I&R platoon. I saluted with enthusiasm. "Thank you, sir."

After he left I asked what the I&R platoon did. "You go out and draw enemy fire so we know where they are." "Really?" That evening I walked alone down a camp road, looking into a beautiful sunset. "Go ahead and enjoy it, you dumb S.O.B., you won't be seeing many more."



Pfc. William Mulford (left) B.A.R. man, Pvt. William Lord (right) Scout. Germany - April 1945.

Life in infantry basic training, as we all know, is far from choice. Long marches with a full field pack, bivouacking in a pup tent among snakes and poison ivy, and gigs from spot inspections that deny the weekend pass.

But I had one more fling into a hoped for better world. Somehow my application for aviation cadet was accepted and I was shipped out to a nearby Air Force base, whose name escapes me. The probable reason is that all of us assembled P.A.C.'s (Pre Aviation Cadets) were washed out of the program on the day of our arrival. The military decided it had plenty of pilots. It needed fodder for the infantry.

I was shipped to the 69th Division in Camp Shelby, Mississippi, and was not surprised to learn that I was assigned to an I&R platoon. Actually, it was not bad at all. Our platoon consisted of two squads of eleven men with three jeeps. A group of five, under a first lieutenant, with a jeep for travel, made our headquarters unit.

I accepted the fact that I was destined for the infantry as a scout in an I&R platoon. In some ways I was less than my lieutenant desired, but I took to the more physical aspects of our training with great elan. On training patrols, our first two jeeps leap-frogged as we simulated a probe into enemy territory. The lead jeep would pause at a bend in the road, or just below the brow of a hill. The driver would quickly back into hiding. The scouts moved forward to scan the distance ahead. If all was clear they signaled for the second jeep to move into the lead. In this manner we moved along the road. The third jeep stayed to our rear as the "get away" vehicle in case of trouble.

At times during our mock warfare our sergeant would shout, "We are under attack, take cover," and

(Continued on Page 17)

THE LONGEST DAY, BEFORE AND THEREAFTER

(Continued from Page 16)

the scouts would dive head first from the moving jeep, hit the ground in a roll, and come to a prone position on the ground with M-1s at the shoulder and ready to fire. It was great stuff.

On the other hand, I was reminded too often that combat was surely going to be hazardous. Like the times I was told to reconnoiter a foot bridge on the run and heard the ping of a booby trap. Simulated or not, the impact was deadening.

However, by the time we embarked overseas, crammed to the point it seemed we must sink the ship, an attitude of acceptance prevailed. We would do what we had to do.

Our military had greatly reduced the effectiveness of the German U-boats, but we did have one encounter. Our platoon was located in compartment E-5, which was two decks below the water line and at the rear of the ship. One night, just before "lights out," we heard the rush and thud of detonating depth charges or "ash cans." The drone of small talk became abruptly silent. A few men sprang down from the tiers of cots slung from the bulkheads and scrambled up the stairway. The rest of us just lay there, waiting. Then a raucous voice rasped, "F--- it. If they get us they'll get the colonel. That brought a big laugh and popped the tension. Our colonel wasn't very popular with the enlisted men, but I don't think he cared. He set his mind to training fighting men and I think he succeeded.

Combat proved to be less terrifying than the gory trench warfare described in *All Quiet On The Western Front*, but it had its moments. My longest day came on April 12th, 1945. A combat team headed by the 272nd regiment was advancing through central Germany, approaching Naumberg to the west of Leipzig. We were told that the way into Naumberg was clear and our squad was given the easy mission of nailing placards bearing our Battle Ax insignia to telephone poles en route. A few miles from Naumberg we paused at a village inn and imbibed a glass or two of delicious Rhein wine. It was a warm spring day. Ahead lay level, open farmland. Apple trees in bloom bordered the road side. Skylarks pirouetted above and sang their tinkling melodies.

I was in our second jeep. Two scouts in the lead jeep were nailing a placard to a roadside pole. A burst of machine gun and rifle fire erupted from a wooded edge that marked the outskirts of Naumberg. We scrambled from our jeeps and lay flat on the ground. There was a pause in the firing. I was in the lowest part of the roadside drainage ditch. It was covered with tall grass that offered little protection. Midway on the side of the ditch I noticed a concrete mile marker, perhaps six inches wide. It was the best I could get and I slid behind it. At least my head was protected. Another

angry burst of machine gun and rifle fire mowed the grass where I had been lying. Nothing left but stubble. Another brief silence ensued. Apple blossoms descended in a scattered shower, and skylarks on the wing resumed their shimmering melodies unperturbed.

This bizarre sequence repeated several times and the grass to my right kept getting shorter. Someone from the lead jeep yelled that four German soldiers were advancing along the road. I couldn't believe it. How brave they were. The war was almost over and these dumb duty bound krauts were coming towards us across the open field. I yelled, "Hey sarge, O.K. if I go and get help?" "Go ahead and try. It's your ass."

The Germans were perhaps one hundred feet away. Luckily, I don't think they saw me. They were arming a panzerfaust to blow up the lead jeep. I kneeled at the side of the jeep and put it into low low gear, pressing down the clutch by hand as I turned the ignition key. The little beauty roared and I jumped in, backed down the ditch, wheeled and headed away with the motor roaring like sixty but moving like a turtle. Just as I shifted into high gear I heard an explosion and over my shoulder saw parts of the lead jeep sail into the air above a black cloud of smoke.

There were plenty of troops in the village we had recently left. Some of them were of our combat team and some were elements of an armored division, the one we thought had cleared the way ahead for us. I approached a captain standing in the turret of his tank and asked him to go to the rescue. Perhaps I had seen too many war movies and naively thought that John Wayne would always answer the call. The captain told me that his orders were to advance along a different route. I was outraged and incredulous. I glared at him. "The war is up ahead you S.O.B., not down that road." Perhaps he sympathized with my anguish, for he let me leave without a reply.

Shortly thereafter I came upon two men from our get-away jeep who were quietly telling the plight of our comrades to a lieutenant colonel. This got results. Soon a platoon of light tanks was assembled. Their leader stood confidently in the open turret, his triangular pennant waving proudly above. He waved his arm forward and the tanks moved out. I never saw a more glorious sight.

All of our squad, except one man, made it back to the village and we reassembled and joined a platoon from I company. We moved forward in diamond formation behind the tanks that spread out into the fields on either side of the road. We passed the remnants of the lead jeep. Our squad broke into a shout and charged to rescue our buddy. An angry burst of hostile fire abruptly changed our minds and we hit and hugged the dirt. Some of us squeezed off a round or two at the distant woods bordering Naumberg. But we didn't move forward.

(Continued on Page 18)

THE LONGEST DAY, BEFORE AND THEREAFTER

(Continued from Page 17)

Then the sergeant of I company cried out words of disdain that have shocked soldiers into action since the dawn of battle. "Come on you S.O.B.'s, do you want to live forever? Move out." We followed orders to a man, moving forward at a trot across the open terrain.

The German fire had been a final show. We saw a few gray forms melt into the woods ahead. But the tanks were cautious. Overcome with bravado, I jumped up on a tank. "Come on, let's go." And we sallied forth.

A road block of logs and planks lay across the road at the entrance of Naumberg. Tall woods grew on either side. The tanks pounded it with their guns but the shells had no apparent effect. We foot soldiers moved on into Naumberg without further resistance. We searched the buildings for our missing buddy. We found his copy of Time magazine but nothing else.

It was now dark and we ceased operations. Later that night we learned that the Germans had taken our buddy prisoner and that his captors surrendered and he was safe and unharmed. We sacked out in the open by our jeeps. A voice message passed in low tones from group to group. President Roosevelt was dead.

That was the longest day.

The war was close to the end but there were more tight times. One of the men in our other squad had his mustache shot off in a sudden, brief firefight that ended with men in gray uniforms holding their hands in the air.

The Germans, perhaps desiring defeat with honor, made us pay a price for Leipzig. And then it was over.

Officially we were not allowed to fraternize with the Germans. Our war was with the German soldiers, however, and not with the frauleins. The penalties for fraternizing did not agree with our colonel. He became our hero for refusing to let his men be subjected to fines.

War is hell, and the coming of peace is heaven by comparison. I am glad our leaders allowed us the freedom to mend our souls as we chose to do. Surely we had earned the right to fraulein-ize if we so wished.

After the war I remained for a while in the army of occupation and my 69th became a vehicle for bringing high point veterans back to America.

Gradually I began to see the German people in a favorable light. They got on with their lives and worked hard to restore their ravished land.

But my change in attitude was not a sudden happening. I remember a German town perhaps a month or more after the war ended. The main street was a weaving flux of local citizens and transients and a few off-duty G.I.s. Suddenly a truckload of German prisoners came into view. I looked at them with hatred and could not speak.

I remember the day my attitude changed. I was driving alone along a rural road in my jeep. A long straggle of people moved along the roadside. Just ahead I saw a one armed German soldier, who turned as I approached. I offered him a ride. He sat by my side and I offered him a cigarette. He accepted with grave but polite thanks. I stopped the jeep so I could give him a light. He politely declined and with a dexterity born of necessity he took out a book of matches, detached a match and lit it with one hand. He could make his own way. When he motioned that he was at his destination, I stopped and let him out. We knew we would never meet again. I gave him the highest honor it was in my power to bestow. I gave him the salute of an American soldier. He returned it, with equal pride.

During the seventies I revisited Germany. The Germany I left as a soldier had but one city, Heidelberg, that was not a gutted ruin. Frankfurt, and Munich were cleared of rubble and completely rebuilt. The medieval architecture of Nuremburg had been restored in faithful detail. Germany has risen from its ashes.

I am proud that Pittsburgh, my city of residence, is actively engaged in an exchange with German cities to promote free trade and job opportunities for our mutual benefit.

Keeping the flame alive

Frank W. Fisher, 569th Signal Company
1136 East Fairview, South Bend, Indiana 46614



Frank Fisher prepares to play taps in front of the Vietnam Memorial at Howard Park in South Bend as part of the wreath-tossing ceremony on Memorial Day. This photograph appeared in an Indiana paper.

THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE

by - **Dottie Witzleb**

Ladies Auxiliary Editor

P.O. Box 69

Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069

or

R.D. #3, Box 477

Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606

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Dottie Witzleb



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Rosemarie Mazza, Vice President

3502 Russell Thomas Lane

Davidsonville, MD 21035

Telephone: 410/798-4085

A Message from your Auxiliary President, Edith Chapman

Dear Ladies of the Auxiliary:

The time has arrived for all of us to plan our trip to Danvers. Hope all of you put the dates, August 17th to August 24th, on your calendar.

The end of the Revolutionary War was really the beginning of our country. Before this, we were English colonies. Boston was an important seaport. We first rebelled against the English by dumping tea in the harbor. We will have two tours of Boston - one will be on Tuesday and the other on Friday.

What I remember about Lexington-Concord is the midnight ride of Paul Revere to tell about the beginning of the Revolutionary War. We will be visiting there on Wednesday. We will also be visiting Plymouth Rock, the landing place of the Pilgrims in 1620. Every Thanksgiving we celebrate the feast they had a year later with the friendly Indians.

On Thursday, we will visit Salem and Marblehead. Here the people of that day thought there were witches.

Here they tried and hanged them. We will also see the "House of Seven Gables." This was a story written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, an important early American writer.

As you can see, I am very excited about this trip.

I am planning a board meeting on Friday, August 22nd, at 4:30 p.m. in my room.

Plans for Saturday's Auxiliary Meeting are as follows:

- 8:00- 8:30 — Continental breakfast
- 8:30- 9:00 — Registration
- 9:00-10:00 — Business meeting
- 10:00-10:30 — A representative from the VA Hospital will come to receive our lap robes and a check for the veterans.
- 10:30-11 :00 — Exchange of our \$5.00 gifts
- 11:00 — Entertainment — Cape Ann Senior-ettes (Senior Citizens Dance Group)

Please bring lap robes, size 36" x 45," for the VA Hospital. Please have your husband send in dues of \$5.00 for you.

Hope to see you at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Edith Chapman

(Continued on Page 20)

- In Memoriam -

"LADIES' TAPS"

★ ★ MARY BALZANO ★ ★
PAST PRESIDENT - LADIES' AUXILIARY
wife of Del Balzano, Service, 879th F.A.

* * * * *

PEGGY HARVEY
wife of John Harvey, Co. L, 273rd Infantry

ELOISE LOHRBACH
wife of Arthur Lohrbach, Co. D, 273rd Infantry

EDITH SULLIVAN
wife of Donald Sullivan, Division Headquarters

Attention Ladies WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER FROM THE WAR??

Ladies, if you can think of anything that occurred during war times that might be of interest to other women of the Ladies Auxiliary, please write a short story and we will include it in the Ladies Auxiliary pages.

We are particularly interested in memories of Camp Shelby or Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Or perhaps you have some stories to relate from home during the war, as you waited for your 69er to return. Please send them to:

Dottie Witzleb
P.O. Box 69
Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069.

Remembering Camp Stark

FROM YANKEE MAGAZINE

APRIL 1996

Submitted by: **Arthur Moore C Battery, 881st F.A.**
55 High Gate Road, Apt. C4
Newington, Connecticut 06111

Fifty years ago this month the last German soldiers left Stark, New Hampshire, home of the state's only World War II prisoner-of-war camp. During its two years in operation, Camp Stark housed hundreds of German enlisted men, who worked cutting pulpwood for the nearby Brown Company paper mill.

It was simple to slip away into the woods; about ten percent of the prisoners tried to escape. Most were recaptured within a day.

One exception was artist Franz Bacher, who escaped August 1, 1944, after leaving an apologetic note on his bunk explaining that he feared the wood-cutting would damage his hands. After a 20-mile trek through the woods, he caught a bus in Jefferson - buying his ticket with money he'd earned selling sketches to camp guards - and went to New York City, where he sold his art in Central Park. Soon he was able to rent a room and live in relative comfort until, one October morning, Bacher ran into an old friend, U.S. Army sergeant Ted Tausig - the Camp Stark interpreter in the city on a pass.

Neither man is alive today, but many who spent time at Camp Stark remember it well. Town historian Madeleine Croteau says that in September of 1986, townspeople, former guards, and five ex-POWs who flew in from Germany held an emotional reunion in Stark. Its high point came after dinner at the town hall, when everyone linked arms and joined in a song that had been hugely popular among guards and prisoners alike - "Don't Fence Me In."

(See Pages 29 thru 35 - Excellent article by Jack Fincher on German POWs.)



THE WIZARD OF ID CARTOON STRIP

Cartoon with revision courtesy of **Bill Sheavly**, our 69th Secretary - Submitted by: **Howitzer Al Kormas**

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 **Earl Witzleb, Jr., Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or R.D. #3, Box 477, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606**, as early as possible. Then follow through with a write-up immediately after the event(s).

California Western Chapter

Delbert E. Philpott, President
P.O. Box 2014
Sunnyvale, California 94087-0014
Telephone: 408/739-0308

The Casa Munras Garden Hotel in Monterey, California, was the site of our fifth Annual Spring Round-Up held April 20th to 24th. The natural beauty of the Monterey Peninsula and its multitude of exciting activities provided participants with another enjoyable setting.

Many members opted to take advantage of Tuesday's Deluxe Motor Coach Tour which began with a visit to Father Serra's Carmel Mission and Museum. Next was the chance to explore the exquisite village of Carmel, home of many celebrities and stars as well as the site of exceptional shopping, art galleries, and quaint restaurants. Some even dined at Clint Eastwood's "Hogsbreath Inn." The tour then followed the sea along the beautiful 17 Mile Drive. Stops at the Pebble Beach Golf Course, Lonesome Pine, Bird Island and Seal Island were included. The coach continued through Pacific Grove along Ocean View Boulevard with a final stop at Cannery Row to explore the many shops and attractions of the wharf area.

Complementary coffee and pastries were served each morning in the Hospitality Room. In addition to a fully stocked bar,

snacks and hors d'oeuvres were provided for the afternoon and evening Hospitality Room camaraderie sessions.

The Chapter now has a new three color vinyl banner to display at our Round-Ups. **John Tounger** initiated the proposal for the banner and coordinated its design and acquisition. **Sam Johnson** assisted him in contracting for the purchase. Special donations to fund the project cost of \$120 were made by members at the 1996 and 1997 meetings.

The Business Meeting took place Wednesday afternoon in the Hospitality Room. Minutes of the 1996 Palm Desert Meeting were presented by the Acting Secretary, **Bob Pierce**. (**Sam Johnson** passed away in November.) The 1998 Round-Up Site was discussed following the Treasurer's Report and Old Business. Site screening volunteers were **Al Gwynne, Keith Mower, Jim Stacy, and Sam Johnson** (assisted by **Bill Robertson and Bob Pierce**). The site selected



California Western Chapter: Board of Directors Stan Hawk, 1996-97 President Del Philpott, Secretary Walt Harpain, Treasurer Lee Wilson, President John Tounger, Vice President Al Gwynne, Board of Directors Eldon Atwood and Harold Faulkner, Chaplain John Pereira.

(Continued on Page 22)

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

(Continued from Page 21)

by the officers and Board of Directors is the Queen Mary in Long Beach, California. The Round-Up will be held April 19th to 23rd. The Business Meeting and Banquet are scheduled for Wednesday, April 22nd. **Bill Robertson** volunteered to be the point man for the Long Beach activities. He will form a committee of local members to assist him. A site for 1999 was also discussed. Reno, Nevada, and St. Helena, California, are possibilities.

Two new policies decided by the officers and Board of Directors were presented: 1) The Chapter President would ascertain if a deceased active member had a widow, son, or daughter living in the immediate vicinity of future Round-Ups, the widow, son or daughter would be an invited guest to our Banquet including an escort, cost of the two meals to be paid from the Treasury. 2) To reward attendees from out-of-state, it will be standard practice to give a basket/box with a bottle of California wine and cheese to the person or couple who come the farthest distance to attend. (Duplicates may be given, at the discretion of the President.)

A Nominating Committee of **Al Gwynne** (Chairman), **Harold Faulkner** and **Walt Harpain** presented the group with a slate of nominees for this year's Election of Officers. These candidates were all elected by unanimous vote. Our new Officers are:

President **John Tounger**
Vice President **Al Gwynne**
Secretary **Walt Harpain**
Treasurer **Lee Wilson**

The two Board of Directors vacancies resulting from the elections were filled by appointment for the two remaining years. **Eldon Atwood** and **Stan Hawk** will serve these terms.

Wednesday evening's Memorial Service and Banquet was held in the Norman Room at Casa Munras. **Chaplain John Pereira** conducted the Memorial Service. Dinner was the Grand Buffet featuring 5 salad selections and 3 entrees.

Deborah Kelly and her escort were the first recipients of the new guest policy. She lives in Monterey and is the daughter of **Lt. Albert L. Kotzebue**. Deborah spoke briefly about her feelings on this occasion. Duplicate out-of-state attendee wine and cheese awards were presented to **Bob and Jean Ross** from Wilbraham, Massachusetts, and **Erwin and Carmen Sanborn** from Laconia, New Hampshire.

The 38 Round-Up Attendees came from California, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Washington. A few members unable to attend sent letters of regret.

Attendees were:

Eldon and Marjie Atwood San Diego, CA
Wade and Marcia Drysdale Sunnyside, WA
Harold and Nancy Faulkner ... Walnut Creek, CA
***Tom and Lou Gallagher** Long Beach, CA
Edward Gildner Desert Hot Springs, CA
Al and Bobbi Gwynne Novato, CA
Walt and Shirley Harpain Fresno, CA
Stan and Lois Hawk Lemoore, CA
***Richard Hopkins, Jr.** Roseville, CA
***Deborah Kelly and Escort** Monterey, CA
Keith and Mary Loo Mower Van Nuys, CA
Del and Donna Philpott Sunnyvale, CA
John and Mary Pereira Roseville, CA
Bob and Theresa Pierce San Jose, CA
Earl and Matilde Ramsey Sylmar, CA
Bill Robertson Culver City, CA
John Rosenbrock North Hollywood, CA
***Bob and Jean Ross** Wilbraham, MA
***Erwin and Carmen Sanborn** Laconia, NH
Bob and Peggy Shaw San Jose, CA
John Tounger Oakland, CA
Lee Wilson Stockton, CA

* = California Western Chapter First-Timers

The California Western Chapter has no dues. It is supported entirely by the generous contributions of members. We wish to thank all who contributed.

Mid-West Group

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

1997 SPRING MEETING

The Mid-West Group met at the Radisson Inn in Madison, Wisconsin on May 8th, 9th and 10th, 1997. Twenty-five people showed up and conversation in the Hospitality Room was very lively on Thursday afternoon. We had dinner at Smoky's Club that evening.

Friday morning was cool and very windy, so the golfing for that morning was cancelled and most of us went on a tour of Madison which included the Elvehjem Museum of Art and the Veteran's Museum. After lunch at the Elk's Lodge, the wind subsided somewhat. A few of the golfers managed to play nine holes, while the rest of the group toured the State Capitol.

New attendees were:

Robert and Florence Klein .. Morton Grove, Illinois
Company C, 271st Infantry
Ernie Slovak Beaver Dam, Wisconsin
Company I, 272nd Infantry

(Continued on Page 23)

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

(Continued from Page 22)

The regulars present were:

John Barrette Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin
Headquarters, 271st Infantry

Fred and Mavis Butenhoff ... Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Company E, 272nd Infantry

Fran and Zita Enright Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Battery A, 881st Field Artillery

Ernest and Mary Krause Addison, Illinois
Company B, 269th Engineers

Thora Miller

Eugene and Marilyn Mischke .. Spring Valley, Illinois
Company B, 273rd Infantry

Marshall and June Mussay Glenview, Illinois
Company H, 272nd Infantry

Curt and Evelyn Peterson Madison, Wisconsin
569th Signal Company

Gene and Ethel Pierron Belgium, Wisconsin
661st Tank Destroyers

Ralph and Jo Plugge Calumet City, Illinois
Company G, 271st Infantry

Gaylord and Ruth Thomas Waupun, Wisconsin
777th Tank Battalion

Chuck and Pat Walsh Glendale, Wisconsin
Company B, 271st Infantry

The 1998 Mid-West Spring Meeting will be in Milwaukee. Watch the Bulletin for details.



June Mussay, Marshall Mussay, Bob Klein



John Barrette, Gene Pierron, Ethel Pierron



Dinner at the Radisson: Bob Klein, Florence Klein, Curt Peterson, Evelyn Peterson, Ralph Plugge, Jo Plugge

(Continued on Page 24)

**DIVISION ASSOCIATION CHAPTERS, UNITS,
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ACROSS THE UNITED STATES**

(Continued from Page 23)

69th Cavalry Recon Troop

Lewis "Boyd" and Stella Ellsworth, Coordinators
Route #1 - Knoxville Road
Steubenville, Ohio 43952-9801
Telephone: 614/282-2327

Harold and Jeanne Gardner, News Reporters
2929 Mason Avenue
Independence, Missouri 64052-2962
Telephone: 816/254-4816

Twenty-five former members of the 69th Division Recon Troop reported to the Chamberlin Hotel on Fort Monroe at Hampton, Virginia for their 45th annual reunion. The official dates of the reunion were September 4-8, 1996, but some came earlier. The final count including wives, family members and friends was 56. It was great to have both our **CO Boyd Ellsworth** and **1st Sgt. Hank Weiman**, with us this year.

Our host and hostess were **Charles and Bobbie Fox** and they did their usual sterling job of handling the entire affair as they have done on numerous times in the past. They made sure that we all enjoyed ourselves.

The Chamberlin is a grand old hotel. Most of us had rooms with views of Chesapeake Bay from which we could watch various types of ships ply the waters. One day while in the hotel dining room we were treated to the sight of two submarines passing in the bay on their way to and from their berths.

Our hotel accommodations included a very good daily breakfast buffet. In the hotel lobby we had a daily afternoon "tea time," where cookies, cake, tea and coffee were available. In the evenings there were free snacks with live entertainment in the lounge. These items were all included in our room cost.

Charles and Bobbie Fox had a nice agenda laid out for us, but due to the wind, rain and high waves in the bay caused by the closeness of Hurricane Fran, some of our activities had to be somewhat curtailed or cancelled. Although hurricane Fran blew into shore well south of our location, we were still subjected to rain, high winds and high waves in the bay which came over the seawall surrounding the hotel area. The hotel grounds were covered by water at times and it was running through the streets over the curbs. **Joe and Jean Elliget** had their car parked on the street in front of the hotel and water got into it.

One day a large group of us walked the short distance to the original Fort Monroe. It was a guided tour and our guide gave us a complete history of the fort and made our excursion very interesting. It was the only fort at that time which was completely surrounded by a moat.

On Saturday the waves in the bay subsided to the extent that it was possible to take the harbor tour. In addition to viewing the original Fort Monroe from the harbor, we were also treated to seeing numerous US Navy vessels at their berth at the Norfolk Naval Base. Our Saturday night banquet was a sit down dinner served in a private dining room. After dinner "**Cowboy**" **Vaughan** presided as Master of Ceremonies and called for a round of applause for **Charlie and Bobbie**

(Continued on Page 25)



The Guys - Front Row, left to right: Boyd Ellsworth (CO), Al Gold, Fred Wohlers, Hap Stambaugh. D.B. George, Lewis Pickett, Mike Moscaritolo, Morris Kaiserman. Back Row: Gordon Ewing, Lloyd Walker, Herb Norman, Robert "Bones" Schueler, Bob West, Joe Elliget, Lewis Hill, Eddie Glenz, Harold Gardner, Floyd "Big Juice" Opdyke, Lewis "Cowboy" Vaughan, Hank Weiman (1st Sgt.), Charlie Rice, Charlie Fox, Jerry Leib.

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

(Continued from Page 24)

Fox for their excellent handling of the reunion. It had to be very trying at times for our hosts due to the weather causing cancellation and/or rearrangement of scheduled activities. Cowboy then called on each of the troopers to relate family happenings during the past year. Perhaps **Phil "Doc" Sesler**, former 1st Platoon Medic, had the best comment. He rose to his feet with his Medic Red Cross arm band on his sleeve and told us that with all our illnesses, etc., he didn't want us to come to him for treatment.

At the close of our dinner and program our reunion committee of **Harold Gardner, Mike Moscaritolo** and **Bones Schueler**, presented to **Bobbie and Charles Fox**, a small gift for all their work in providing us with another swell reunion. **Bobbie and Charles** were very appreciative of the gift.

Roll call was answered by the following:

Boyd and Stella Ellsworth Ohio
Hank and Lillian Weiman New Jersey
Charles and Bobbie Fox Maryland
Joe and Jean Elliget Arizona
Gordon and Fern Ewing Florida
Harold and Jeanne Gardner Missouri
D. B. and Betty George Maryland

Guests: Alan and Norma Lewis

Barbara and Greg Gaumer

Eddie and Mary Lou Glenz Pennsylvania
Albert and Esther Gold Massachusetts
Lewis and Janie Hill Texas

Guests: Paul and Linda Steinmets

Morris and Gert Kaiserman Illinois

Jerry Leib California
Mike and Mary Moscaritolo Florida
Herb and Eileene Norman Colorado
Floyd and Evelyn Opdyke New Jersey
Mary Paradine Michigan

Guests: Cecil and Jean Paradine

Wally and Carolyn Pepper Florida
Lewis and Lucille Pickett Virginia
Ted and Nancy (Makris) Ricco Connecticut
Charles and Pat Rice Oklahoma
Bones and Mable Schueler Ohio
Phil "Doc" Sesler West Virginia
Harold and Maxine Stambaugh Virginia
Lenke Treible (Widow of Art) Ohio
Cowboy and Janet Vaughan Virginia
Lloyd and Ruth Walker Ohio
Bob and Jean West Ohio
Fred and Fran Wohlers Florida

Guests: Robert Boyer and Wife

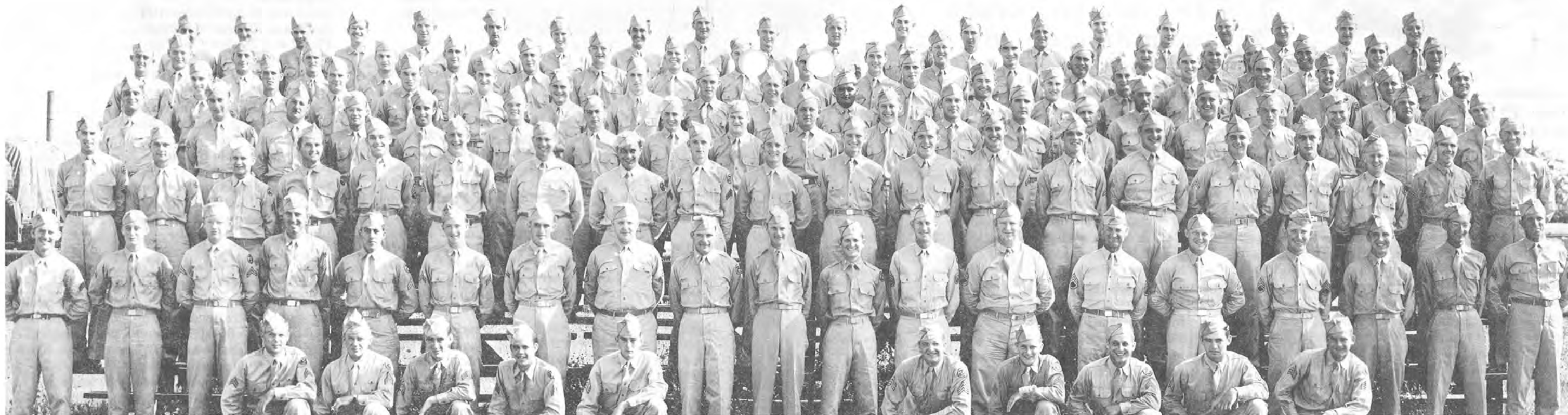
We were pleased to have **Bill and Jo Beswick** visiting with us and attending our banquet. **Bill** is a former member of the 661st TDs, and a past president of the 69th Division Association. We are always pleased to have family members and guests at our reunions. You're always welcome. Please come again.

Again **Bobbie and Charles**, in spite of Fran, you did a whale of a job showing all of us a swell time.

1997 Reunion - The reunion committee established in Oklahoma City in 1995 was given the authority and responsibility of determining the location of the 1996 reunion, which we did. At Hampton, Virginia this same committee was again given the authority and responsibility of determining where our 1997 reunion will be. All troopers will be advised of this decision at an early date.

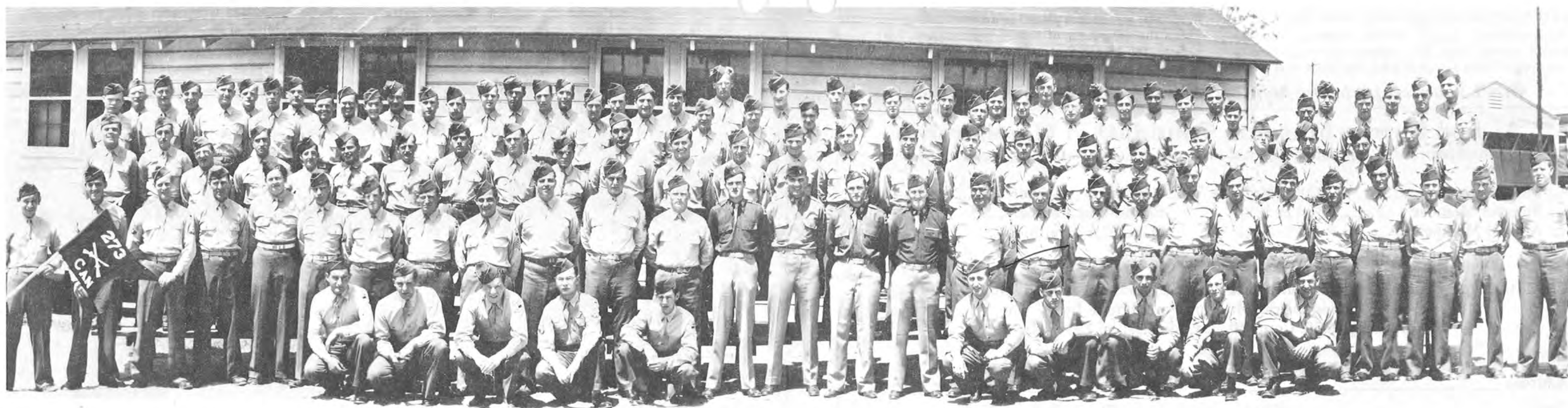


The Gals - Front Row: Maxine Stambaugh, Carolyn Pepper, Pat Rice, Lenke Treible, Gertrude Kaiserman, Mary Moscaritolo, Esther Gold, Janie Hill, Nancy Riccio. Middle Row: Ruth Walker, Stella Ellsworth, Lillian Weiman, Barbara Fox, Mable Schueler, Betty George, Mary Paradine, Janet Vaughan, Evelyn Opdyke, Jean Elliget, Fern Ewing, Jeanne Gardner, Eileene Norman. Back Row: Jean West, Norma Lewis, Lucille Pickett, Barbara Gaumer.



Company A, 661st Tank Battalion - Camp Hood, Texas

Submitted By: **Warren E. Tuthill, Sr.**, Staff Sergeant, 1st Platoon, Company A — 10905 Warwick Avenue, Fairfax, Virginia 22030 • Telephone: 703/273-0839. **Warren** is shown 5th from left, front row (kneeling)



Cannon Company, 273rd Infantry Regiment - Camp Shelby, Mississippi - April 1944

Submitted By: **Brad (William) Morehouse**, Box 827, Fairfield, Connecticut 06430



The Armed Forces Museum Foundation, Inc.

Building #350, Camp Shelby, Mississippi 39407-5500

FINAL PLANS FOR A NEW MUSEUM BUILDING NEARING COMPLETION

The Board of Directors of the Armed Forces Museum at Camp Shelby and representatives of the Adjutant General's office have signed off with the firm of Barlow & Plunkett Architecture, Engineering, and Planning, Ltd., of Jackson, to design and oversee the construction of a new building to house the museum. The State Legislature has authorized \$2.5 million in bonds to finance the building to replace a World War II building now housing some 8,000 items of military history.

The front of the building will face in an easterly direction in the open area south of the parade field and just east of the chapel. The floor plan includes 11,275 sq. ft. of exhibit space and 4,415 sq. ft. of administrative space. The building will be situated to allow expansion mainly to the south.

The monuments of units that trained at Camp Shelby now located along "Memorial Walk" will compliment the front of the building. Space is available for more memorial markers. Plans are to place more emphasis on the development of history about units that trained in Mississippi during World War II.

Approximately 10,000 visitors registered at the museum during 1996. The visitors represented every state in the Union except Alaska, Delaware and Utah.

ARMED FORCES MUSEUM FOUNDATION NEEDS YOU AS AN ANNUAL MEMBER

The Armed Forces Museum Foundation needs financial support from retirees, veterans and members of their families, veterans organizations, members of the current active, reserve and National Guard troops and corporate sponsors to assure the museum will be a state of the art facility that will make all veterans proud. It will be the only active repository of military history in Mississippi.

Although the State Legislature issued bonds for the construction of a modern new building to house the museum, it will be the responsibility of the Museum's Board of Directors to come up with the funds to complete the interior displays and to provide monthly and annual administrative funds, including the salaries of full time professional employees. It will take the financial support of all interested parties to ensure a state of the art museum.

World War II is more than a half century in the past, the Korean War has been over for 44 years, and the Vietnam War is three decades old. The information, artifacts and equipment related to those wars will soon be lost unless placed in an established repository for the education of future generations. With your help, the Armed Forces Museum at Camp Shelby will become that repository.

Won't You Complete the Membership Application Below to Join?

Armed Forces Museum Foundation Membership

(Volunteer annual membership, not to be construed as a binding agreement)

- ☐ Patron Member \$1,000 or More
☐ Sponsor Member \$100 to \$499
☐ Annual Member \$25 to \$49

- ☐ Benefactor Member \$500 to \$999
☐ Sustaining Member \$50 to \$99
☐ Other Contributions \$_____

(Less than \$25)

Check the type of membership or contribution desired, detach and mail your check to the:

Armed Forces Museum Foundation, Inc.

Building #350, Camp Shelby, Mississippi 39407-5500

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Military Affiliation (if any) _____

By Convention, the enemy within never did without

From *Smithsonian*

June 1995

A special thanks to Smithsonian Magazine for assisting us in reaching the writer Jack Fincher, and to Jack Fincher for giving us permission to reprint this exceptional article.

Submitted by: **Stan Eskin, Co. A, 269th Engineers**
855 Ronda Mendoza, Laguna Hills, California 92653
Telephone: 714/458-9109

* * * * *

Written By Jack Fincher

During WWII, 375,000 German prisoners of war lived so well in U.S. POW camps that thousands migrated back to become citizens.

Late one night in the 1980s, Texas A&M history professor Arnold Krammer got a long-distance telephone call from a man at a pay phone who wanted to talk about Krammer's book *Nazi Prisoners of War in America*. The caller soon swung the conversation around to the 2,222 Germans who had escaped from POW camps in this country between 1942 and 1946. There was no mistaking his inside knowledge. What else could he be but one of the thousands of ex-prisoners who had since emigrated from Germany back to the United States. Krammer was astonished when the voice finally blurted out:

"I escaped from Camp Deming, New Mexico, in 1945 and have been on the run for 40 years. I want to come in from the cold." The only POW remaining at large, Krammer knew, was Georg Gaertner, a sergeant in Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's famous Afrika Korps. "Hello, Mr. Gaertner," Krammer said. Chuckling, Gaertner quietly replied, "Hello, Professor Krammer."

Gaertner was innocent of any crime; under the Geneva Convention all POWs have a duty to try to escape. As the last man left of almost half a million Axis prisoners penned up on U.S. soil during World War II (some 375,000 of them - about ten divisions' worth - German), he was allowed to resume his life in Hawaii as a building contractor. That he has since returned to Germany diminishes not at all the

enduring fascination his kind hold for those of us old enough to remember their wartime presence.

That fascination, in fact, was evident one day in Phoenix, Arizona, when ten former prisoners of war came back as guests of a local study group to commemorate the onetime German POW camp at nearby Papago Park, scene of the only organized, large-scale domestic escape by an alien enemy in U.S. history. The escape route took three months to dig. On Christmas Eve 1944, twenty-five crisply disciplined captive submariners clambered through a superbly engineered, electrically lighted tunnel they'd dug through 66 yards of hard clay and fanned out as far as San Diego. All were recaptured.

A corroborating witness at the Phoenix meeting is World War II American submarine officer Arthur Lidman, who now owns a house on the land where the tunnel came out. Lidman likes to brag that he has the "only basement in Phoenix built by a German admiral," a reference to one of the digging ringleaders, Lt. Fritz Guggenberger, who went on to attain illustrious rank in Germany's postwar navy.

At the POW reunion I attended in Phoenix, only one escapee, 69-year-old Johann Kremer, a grizzled machinist from Cologne, and his wife were among the German couples who spent ten festive days with host families. Kremer was kept busy. He waggishly donned a cowboy hat, drank beer and danced to country music with the others. The favorite POW pop tune of 1943, Kremer averred, was the Bing Crosby hit "Don't Fence Me In." At a sun-baked city softball field, he also solemnly joined in singing a German anthem to fallen comrades.

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Prisoners tend a celery field near their camp in Northern California. Tens of thousands of POWs worked on farms and even in factories; the U.S. Government was reimbursed the minimum wage for their labor.

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Two of the former POWs attending had become U.S. citizens. One, Afrika Korps veteran Dr. Josef Gerster, is a cardiologist in Scottsdale and president of the study group, the Papago Trackers. A graduate of Heidelberg University, Gerster has on a wall in his fashionable home a family crest dating back to the year 1300. He counts as one of his life's proudest moments his son Kurt's initiation into his (and Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's) Prussian fraternal order, achieved in part by winning a brief ritualistic duel with cavalry sabers. He still has a German accent as well as memories of his two prison camp years in Atlanta, Nebraska. "When I wrote my parents where I was imprisoned," he likes to say, "they wrote back that they had finally read my 1941 Christmas gift to them, a German translation of *Gone With the Wind*, and wasn't it wonderful that I was in Margaret Mitchell's home town! The censor had cut the 'Nebraska' out of my letter."

At the opposite pole from Dr. Gerster stood Walter Janek, who lived in Dallas until his death late last year. His tinted sunglasses, bolo tie and certifiably good ol' boy speech made it almost impossible to believe he had lived the first 20 years of his life in Silesia. Janek and his German-born wife drove to the reunion in their lavish truck-and-trailer rig, bought when they retired and sold their two roller rinks in Dallas. He brought his scrapbook showing the burning vessels his sub, U-67, had torpedoed and a view of the sub after it was driven to the surface in the Atlantic.

"After a Texas television station ran a segment on me, I got a tip that my submarine had been sunk by two Texans, and they had the pictures to prove it," Janek said. "When I got in touch with them, they didn't believe I was a crew member at first. But when I asked, 'What went wrong with the lifejackets?' - they threw some down that missed us - they knew that I was telling the truth."

A reception for the public in the local Elks lodge included former camp guards Larry Jorgensen and Irvin Collins. "Aside from the tunnel," Jorgensen said, "what I remember most is my commanding officer giving blood to save the life of a POW who had cut his wrists when he was caught running away." Out of their chance wartime encounter, Collins and a POW named Hubert Spiessberger, a bartender at the officers club, became lifelong friends. "My wife and I visited his family in Germany, and he visited ours," Collins said. "Hubert was a wonderful gentleman. He just died this year."

When the war began, nothing could have been more remote than the prospect of such a gathering. From the start, our POW policy was driven by an intent to ensure the safety and well-being of Americans in Nazi

hands. So scrupulously did we hew to the 97 Geneva Conventions that guards at new POW camps were initially ordered to sleep in tents because the POWs had to - despite the fact that the guard barracks, unlike those of the prisoners, were ready for occupancy.

Faced with an acute manpower shortage on the home front, the United States soon overcame its fears of mass escape and put the vast army of POWs to work in the public sector - thus not only paying for the work program but democratizing large numbers of U.S. foes as nothing else could. Quips Baron Rudigar von Wechmar, an ex-prisoner in a camp outside Trinidad, Colorado, and now a member of the European Parliament, "Thanks to my experience in Kansas and Oklahoma, I am an expert at harvesting broom corn and killing rattlesnakes."

After the war, many German POWs couldn't wait to get back here. "There is no perfect country," admits Kurt Pechmann, a former 24-year-old machine gunner and frostbitten veteran of Stalingrad who was captured in Italy in 1944. Now a naturalized citizen and monument maker living in Wisconsin, Pechmann fervently believes "America beats by far anything. Oh, definitely."

The POW problem first surfaced here in 1942 after Britain, its tight little isles bulging with prisoners of war taken after Rommel had been beaten back from Cairo, asked if the United States could house 150,000 soldiers of the famous Afrika Korps. Initially, the U.S. Government was profoundly fearful. Our largest influx of foreign POWs to date had been 1,346 German sailors seized off ships in port at the onset of World War I. Despite their small numbers, a few hostile escapees were widely credited with blowing up New Jersey's Black Tom munitions plant in 1916.

The specter of such men breaking out not by the handful but by the hundreds or even thousands, and perhaps roving the country in an orgy of organized sabotage and violence, was chilling. Besides, a program to build facilities and recruit competent German-speaking personnel (a shortage never fully satisfied) would be expensive and distract from the scramble to get an isolationist, largely pacifist nation ready for war. Still, in September 1942, \$50 million was approved for construction of POW camps.

Two months later the United States invaded North Africa, and in 1943 POWs began pouring in by boat, convoyed past lurking German submarines. Von Wechmar's ship was one of four loaded with POWs when they were intercepted by a wolf pack of U-boats. "The captain told us over the intercom that he would try to radio the Red Cross in Geneva," Von Wechmar remembers. The German naval command radioed back instructions: if the POW ships would turn on all their lights they could proceed unharmed.

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Nazi propaganda, plus a skillfully faked Luftwaffe film of bomb-shattered American cities, had led arriving POWs to expect widespread war damage. Some were actually convinced that Hollywood set designers had been at work on the areas they were permitted to see. And here they were on a comfortable train rolling westward through endless countryside, so varied, so full of moving automobiles!

From the outset, American civilians oscillated between delight at the economic windfall of a new \$500,000 camp near their town and outrage at what, with some justice, they saw as the coddling of an enemy who might otherwise be killing their sons in battle. In Stephenville, Texas, an officer who bought Cokes for POWs he was escorting from one site to another was roundly cursed by a counterwoman. Letters to the government could be equally irate: "Put them in Death Valley, chuck in a side of beef, and let them starve," read one. Even less-vociferous Americans were eventually stirred by pictures of captive German generals splashing in a segregated Jackson, Mississippi, swimming pool, and the spectacle of POWs being served at the counters of Southern lunchrooms while black American soldiers were forced by Jim Crow laws to stay in the kitchen.

I remember seeing my first POWs in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on a sleepy afternoon in 1943. I was 12, delivering papers, when I heard the prisoners were parked in trucks on Route 66. I got on my bike and pedaled off. And sure enough, there they were, German soldiers. Members of the Afrika Korps. You could tell from their sand-brown desert uniforms of short-sleeved shirts, knee britches and long stockings, and the occasional square-cut panzer cap.

One of them caught my eye, a stocky young man with tousled blond hair. Suddenly glancing at me, he smiled and winked. He actually winked. A jolt—of shame?—shot through my body. I ducked my head and looked away. I did not look back until I heard the trucks grind into gear and rumble out of town.

As boys will in wartime, I followed every campaign on all major fronts, but I had no idea there were 30 POW camps in Oklahoma alone, including one for the notorious Waffen SS (Hitler's armed guard). Wherever the POWs found themselves, they were initially held in secrecy under a cloak of voluntary press censorship. Few Americans were ever really aware of their numbers - let alone of the paradoxical experiment in democracy their prolonged stay in this country would turn out to be.

They came in two great waves, one in 1942 and '43, the other after D-Day in June of the following year. Their sheer numbers swamped the first of 155 base

camps scattered around the country but mostly in the Sunbelt (to keep POWs away from militarily sensitive coastal areas and to minimize the cost of keeping them warm in winter). Tent cities handled the initial overflow. Armories, Southern California's Santa Anita racetrack, even (in Pechmann's case) a Madison, Wisconsin, ballroom were commandeered.

Like many of the other camps, Papago Park had been a decaying Civilian Conservation Corps camp (SMITHSONIAN, December 1994) from the Great Depression. Though 30 German officers at Camp Clinton, Mississippi, complained bitterly over the lack of barracks insulation (they weren't used to the South's heat and humidity) and lack of bathroom privacy, most POWs were sooner or later put in reopened military posts that duplicated the minimum standards of any American Army base.

The new camps housed up to 4,000 POWs each, in barracks heated by pot-bellied stoves and made of concrete and wood, with roofs of tar paper or corrugated tin. There were tidy grids of gravel roads and walkways, mess halls, workshops, canteens, infirmaries, recreation halls, hospitals, dental clinics, chapels, post offices, warehouses, and playing fields for soccer and volleyball.

POWs were issued dark blue fatigue uniforms with "PW" stenciled on the back in tall white letters (a good target, the cynical among them said). Then they were served their first meal. Recalled one prisoner later, "Such a menu: soup, vegetables, meat, milk, fish, grapes, coffee and ice cream! Never before in our military career had we been served a meal like that." An indoctrination as effective as it was unintended had begun (though Rudigar von Wechmar would later whimsically rue the "avalanche" of peanut butter sandwiches that came after the war in Europe ended, when the United States no longer had to concern itself with how American prisoners in Germany were being fed).

At first, typical duty hours for POWs were divided between routine military housekeeping chores and on-base technical, maintenance or administrative jobs (for 80 cents a day in wages and 10 cents a day military pay, all in scrip that could be spent at the PX or credited to their individual accounts). Dr. Josef Gerster recalls bluffing his way into a job as a lab technician that changed the direction of his life. "I wasn't planning on going to medical school, but I had been hospitalized with malaria, and the doctor had shown me my parasites under a microscope," he remembers. "When the camp authorities in Nebraska asked if any prisoner could identify malaria parasites on a slide, I got the job."

Now and again the workload expanded to include tasks their guards found peculiar. After POWs at Fort

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Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, were issued rubber-heeled boots that could not be smartly clicked, Prussian-style, they got official permission to machine-cobble their own highly clickable wooden heels. Beginning in July 1944, all camps were encouraged to cook the prisoners' national dishes, such as pig's knuckles, wurst and black bread, after blander American-style beef and white bread went uneaten. Some critics later accused the government of catering to the whims of its prisoners, but food waste fell off so dramatically as a result that one garbage collector in McAlester, Oklahoma, had to cancel his contract.

In his book, historian Krammer rather rosily pictures POWs after hours as sculpting chessmen from soap, manipulating math tables in their heads and racing cockroaches. In Mississippi, the more daring caught and skinned poisonous snakes to make purses they sold to guards. But group activities often made sitting out the war seem like one big endless summer camp: sports (Pechmann played soccer in an organized league); games; musical instruments; books and periodicals; letters and postcards; arts, crafts and theater; movies and concerts; exotic pets ranging from alligators to monkeys and parrots. On Staten Island, POWs grew and canned enough vegetables to last 650 men a full year. A prisoner in Mexia, Texas, used two Coca-Cola bottles as counterweights in making a clock that kept accurate time.

The ambitious also organized classes in every subject from bookbinding and Chinese culture to American Indian history and Hebrew. Or, with approval from the Nazi government, took correspondence courses from any of 103 U.S. trade schools and universities for full college credit back in Germany. Von Wechmar studied journalism through the University of Minnesota and became the United Press bureau chief in Bonn after the war, before embarking on a diplomatic career that ended as West German Ambassador to the United Kingdom. "I was never sent out on assignment," he jests of his two years behind barbed wire, "but I did learn how to write a news article."

Under the Geneva Convention POWs could be compelled to work for the host country with certain restrictions. Officers had to be kept in separate camps and could not be required to do labor (though many, like Von Wechmar, volunteered). Enlisted men were permitted to work anywhere provided the U.S. Government was paid the prevailing local wage and the job was physically safe, within their physical capacities and not directly related to waging war. (Sorting scrap iron in a foundry was allowed; turning it into tank parts on an assembly line was not.) They were used on railroads, but the labor unions officially

deplored "turning loose Nazi soldiers, skilled in demolition practices, to run amuck on the railroads."

The need for help on farms and in factories grew so grave that it was decided prisoners could be employed without tight security outside the camps. Eventually, tens of thousands of German prisoners at 511 branch camps in 44 states were working in canneries, foundries, quarries, lumber mills and coal mines. From California to the Carolinas, from the Dakotas to Texas, POWs were busy harvesting vital bumper crops that threatened to rot in the fields from unavoidable neglect. In Colorado, Von Wechmar was bused around to neighboring states to pick sugar beets and dig potatoes; in Wisconsin, Pechmann canned peas, processed hemp and cut asparagus. In Arizona, Walter Janek, one of those Germans whom a Huntsville, Texas, farmer had grouched didn't know "a stalk of cotton from a goddamn cocklebur," picked so little his first day he wasn't sent back for a second. Generally, their American employers found POWs efficient, well-mannered, intelligent, good-natured and industrious.

Ninety-five out of 100 eligible POWs went to work in 1945, saving U.S. taxpayers \$100 million that year in prisoner upkeep alone. As for security, the occasional guard, if one was even assigned to a work party, soon thought nothing of nodding off in the heat of the day or, to be on the safe side, detailing a POW to hold his loaded weapon while he napped in the shade.

And why not? What with POW proxy weddings at Camp Shelby to sweethearts at home in Germany, with flowers, wine for the bridegroom and beer for the guests; Christmas parties at Camp Maxey, Texas, with stollen and German tobacco furnished by the Swiss; contraband booze at Camp Rucker, Alabama, made from fermented fruit and potatoes; ubiquitous hot showers, washing machines and canteen privileges, "Hell," exclaimed the commander of one Virginia camp to a reporter, "you couldn't drive some of those fellows out!" Gerster remembers that POWs in Atlanta, Nebraska, called their camp *der goldener Küfig*, "the golden cage."

Less than 1 percent of the prisoners managed - or bothered - to escape. To dupe their captors, some used tactics now familiar to Americans from Hollywood POW movies like *Stalag 17* and *The Great Escape*: simulated enemy uniforms, forged documents, lifelike dummies. With enviable German efficiency, one escapee in September 1945 even employed as his checklist a magazine article by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover on the do's and don'ts of successful flight. (Do go alone, don't talk any more than absolutely necessary, et cetera.) The POW hitchhiked to Peoria, Illinois, and took a train to Chicago, where he lost himself in its polyglot population, married, became a father, started a downtown bookstore and eluded capture until 1953. Less successful were the two burly runaways in Texas

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who, dressed in khaki shirts and shorts, hitched a ride and were asked by the truck driver where they were going. Their fateful reply was worthy of that wacky TV sitcom *Hogan's Heroes*: "We're Boy Scouts going to an international convention in Mexico."

The only successful mass-escape attempt by POWs, from the dusty, mesa-spiked desert of Camp Papago Park, might as well have been designed by the American authorities to succeed. Among other things, the compound used for the breakout contained all the men in the camp with a history of attempted escape. As one of them later explained, "They locked us up with [other U-boaters] who had both engineering and organizational skills. They did not specifically forbid tunneling . . . so why not?"

The prisoners began in September 1944 by digging a tunnel entrance outside a bathhouse at a "blind spot" behind a large coal box where, using a coal shovel and a pick with shortened handle, they could work without being seen from the guard towers. Early on, a connecting underground passageway was constructed from the bathhouse so workers would appear to be arriving there to take showers or wash clothes. Soon, no more dirt could be spread on flower beds or flushed down latrines without danger of discovery. What to do? The U.S. officer in charge was persuaded to let them clear and finish a field for *faustball* (fistball), an Italian form of volleyball. Their American captors even furnished shovels and rakes. Now, every night, under cover of darkness, a visible pile of dirt — ostensibly an overflow from leveling the *faustball* field — was spread around its perimeter.

On Christmas Eve, while the POWs in the adjoining compound were creating a noisy holiday demonstration as a diversion, the 25 men drifted into the bathhouse and vanished belowground in twos and threes. Some were captured by guards almost immediately, while most were caught later by civilian and military police acting on tips from suspicious Arizonans who wouldn't buy the fiction that these were Dutch sailors straggling back to sea. Not one made it to Mexico.

The most notable solo escape by a POW was Georg Gaertner's. One of those who faced return to Russian-occupied Germany whenever the fighting stopped, Gaertner saw as his passport to liberty a freight train that passed Camp Deming, New Mexico, at the same time every other night. In September 1945, fearing he might be repatriated into Russian hands at any minute, Gaertner slipped under a fence while his fellow prisoners were watching the weekly movie, jogged four miles and hopped a slow-moving boxcar. Almost before he was missed, the train had arrived in the freight yards outside Los Angeles. Hunted by the FBI, Gaertner migrated north to the San Francisco Bay

area where he moved from job to job and, as an expert skier and tennis player, taught both sports under an assumed name.

Gaertner's story, as related in his book *Hitler's Last Soldier in America* (co-authored by Krammer), reads like a splendid suspense novel. Because he lacked papers, the tall, taciturn man of saturnalian good looks and charm lived in perpetual fear of discovery. He hid his past even from his eventual American wife, and contrived to lose important matches in tournaments at posh tennis clubs when he realized publicity on local sports pages might alert the FBI to his whereabouts. Once, he led a patrol of cross-country skiers 17 miles through a prolonged Sierra Nevada snowstorm to rescue 226 people who were trapped beneath 20-foot drifts without food or heat in a freezing westbound train — then fled in panic when he appeared in a group photograph on the pages of *Life* magazine for January 28, 1952. But the pressures of leading a double life eventually became too much.

Prisoners of war, in fact, hardly posed the menace to the outside world that had been imagined. The real danger, slowly simmering away in the camps themselves, was to one another and to Germany's future, and rigid adherence to the Geneva Convention was partly to blame. In strictly avoiding formal prisoner indoctrination, the U.S. Government initially failed to segregate either the Nazi hard core — estimated at less than one-tenth of the POW population — or party sympathizers, another third, from the nonpolitical majority. To be sure, camps had been set aside in Alva, Oklahoma, Huntsville, Texas, and Pima, Arizona, expressly for Nazis who acted up in ways that disrupted good order. Following the rationale that Convention rules must be observed in giving POWs a share of responsibility for their own care, many American guard units all but gave up their own day-to-day authority. After the war one former Army inspector confessed: "Who could best get a work detail cracking? The Nazi noncoms Efficiency in laundry . . . increased 150 percent. And beautiful work! I mean, shirts came out clean!"

As time went on, some camps became a virtual extension of the highly politicized German Army, and a few were virtually run by fanatics. With impunity, the more politically zealous flashed the stiff-armed Nazi salute (an act not required by the German government until after the mid-1944 attempt to assassinate Hitler). They organized readings from *Mein Kampf* and generally made their camps, as one historian put it, "hell for the anti-Nazis and the political moderates."

In one camp, guards of Jewish descent were so harassed that they had to be quietly withdrawn. It was feared that if such incidents were publicized, the fact that Germans were being guarded by Jews might

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be seized upon by the Nazis as a pretext for retaliation against American POWs in Germany.

On October 18, 1943, Capt. Felix Tropschuh, 30, was found hanging in his room at Camp Concordia, Kansas. Nazi "investigators" suspected him of informing their captors of a planned escape. He had been found guilty by a "court of honor" for writing anti-Nazi sentiments in his personal diary and placed in a room with a rope and chair by Nazis who stood guard outside until morning. Circumstances impelled the U.S. Army to rule suicide.

Two weeks later, Cpl. Johann Kunze was invited to a late-night meeting of 200 POWs at Camp Tonkawa, Oklahoma. There, behind barred doors, he was informed that they had gathered to expose someone accused of giving military information to the enemy: himself. Found guilty, he was battered to death with clubs and broken bottles. This time the five killers would be arrested, tried and found guilty. On July 10, 1945, they became the first alien POWs to be executed in the United States.

A month after Kunze's death, Cpl. Hugo Krauss awoke in the dark at Camp Hearne, Texas, to find himself surrounded by club-wielders who had entered his compound through a hole cut in its fence. He died six days later of a fractured skull. The attackers were never found. His crime: as a boy he had lived in New York and spoke Americanized English that was considered "too good."

Before it was all over in April 1944, at least seven prisoners at six camps in as many states, accused of treasonous acts ranging from consorting with the enemy to liking American jazz, would die brutally at the hands of their German comrades or by suicide enforced through death threats against their families. Another 22 suspicious deaths during that period were ruled "suicides" by Army investigators who had no firm evidence of foul play. At one point syndicated columnist Dorothy Thompson and *New York Herald Tribune* women's page editor Dorothy Bromley privately appealed to Eleanor Roosevelt to intervene. Appalled, the First Lady invited one of the administrative higher-ups in the POW program to dinner and politely cross-examined him. Could such stories of Nazi rampaging be true? He hesitated but eventually briefed her thoroughly "I've got to talk to Franklin," Mrs. Roosevelt said when he had finished.

At first the Army tried to hush up the stories, fearing again that they might trigger a Nazi reaction against American POWs. When muzzling failed, insurance statistics were trotted out in an attempt to convince the press that murder and suicide rates for POWs were actually lower than those of German civilians in peacetime. Unimpressed, journalists followed the real story. The *New York Herald Tribune* ran a guard's letter claiming Nazis at Breckenridge,

Kentucky, had created "a little Germany, where persecution . . . is thorough and violent." The only American response that one persecuted prisoner got there, the paper reported, was a bottle of scent from a sympathetic surgeon for dousing any nighttime assailant so that he might be sniffed out in the morning.

In late spring a committee of educators, churchmen, Congressmen and writers, including exiled German novelist Thomas Mann, called on the U.S. Government to segregate non-Nazis and reeducate them in the ideals of American democracy. On August 23, 1944, word finally came down. To lay the groundwork for democracy in postwar Germany, and using as a loophole Geneva Convention Article 17, which encouraged "intellectual diversions and sports, POWs would henceforth be given 'facts, objectively presented but so selected and assembled as to correct' a decade of virulent Nazi indoctrination."

Almost until the time that the last German POW left these shores on July 23, 1946, the U.S. Government struggled to put the Nazi genie back in the bottle. A task force known informally as the "Idea Factory" had begun to work on the Intellectual Diversion Program in the fall of 1944. Operating in total secrecy, it drew together a cadre of military and civilian intellectuals, along with 85 handpicked anti-Nazi POW officers skilled in language, communication and teaching. Their mission: to fashion an effective, discreet instrument of de-Nazification from literature, films, newspapers, lectures, music and art, culture and the history of Western democratic institutions. Thereafter it was to be used on the prisoners at large—vigorously and, if possible, deftly—without the POWs and their government being fully aware of its purpose.

The Factory screened books, plays and films, and turned them into German-language teaching aids. It translated camp newspapers into English so that the strength of Nazi influence on their content could be analyzed. As a chief tool for reeducation, the Factory created a national biweekly newspaper, *Der Ruf* (*The Call*), for POWs.

It was placed on sale at camp canteens for 5 cents starting in March 1945, just two months before V-E Day. A slickly styled but ponderous pastiche of news, politics, music, literature, biography and philosophy, it was so Germanic and erudite, editors joked, "that even Thomas Mann would find it difficult to understand." In the first issue articles on Allied bombing raids against Germany, as well as about the Yalta and Tehran conferences, shared space with an examination of the human soul as seen by Schiller, Goethe and Schopenhauer.

Nazi prisoners bought up copies of *Der Ruf* and burned them, threatened POW readers and posted signs that demanded of prisoners: "Boycott [this] shameful newspaper! Washington wants to make an experiment of us!" Within a year, though, *Der Ruf's*

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circulation jumped from 11,000 to 80,000. Monitored POW mail indicated that it was increasingly accepted as the truth. At Camp McCall, North Carolina, elections were sponsored in which two Democrat factions not only won, but sent an affidavit to the authorities asking that theirs be declared a "democratic camp" as a consequence.

Following Germany's surrender, POWs were required to watch films of Nazi concentration camp atrocities. Some prisoners watched unmoved or dismissed the emaciated bodies as German victims of Russian depredations. When surveyed, only one-third of 2,000 POWs would concede under questioning that the scenes were real, but the films had a greater impact than many would admit. A thousand POWs at Camp Butner, North Carolina, burned their uniforms. Prisoners at several camps collected money for the victims.

When the war in Europe ended on May 6, 1945, the Factory quickly turned its attention to training amenable POWs for possible work with the new American Military Government (AMG) in Germany. More than 3,700 non-Nazis—three-quarters of them either university graduates, white-collar workers or former civil servants—were screened from 17,000 applicants nationwide and given eight weeks of instruction in English, military government and history. At first, despite the presence of such outstanding POW graduates as Walter Hallstein, who went on to become rector of the University of Frankfurt and president of the European Economic Community in the 1960s, few of the Factory-reeducated ex-prisoners were employed by the AMG. But by 1947, six out of ten held responsible jobs.

Just how effective the hasty U.S. attempt at formal rehabilitation was remains a question. As one Factory officer quipped about his students, "Most of them know [now] that there is only one Superman and that he is an American reporter on the *Daily Planet*." Somewhat more seriously, later surveys showed that after the war, compared with the rest of the German populace, four times as many ex-POWs belonged to a political party. "Just watching how a democratic country is run, even during wartime, had an impact," Von Wechmar recalls. "I could have ended up dead or in Siberia instead of being among the many exposed to a free system."

Many observers believe that contract labor performed by POWs outside the camps did more than Factory courses to rehabilitate their thinking. Like Colonel Nicholson and his British POWs who "showed" the Japanese how to engineer

and build a bridge in Pierre Boulle's classic, *The Bridge Over the River Kwai*, German POWs took pride in organizing and executing their assigned tasks with a minimum of outside supervision—and earned the lasting respect and affection of their employers as a result. East Texas farmer Lloyd Yelverton remembers: "They were just the best bunch of boys you ever saw in your life." Farm wives mended the POWs' clothes, taxed them to town and church, cooked meals for them and overwhelmed them with baked goods. Doting families later sent food packages to Germany and saw to it, when the POWs came back to visit, that they received the key to the city and were honored with a banquet or civic parade. There can be no doubt, either, about the deep sincerity of thousands of ex-POWs who moved back to America—among the 360,000 Germans who immigrated here between 1948 and 1960.

The last U.S.-held German prisoner of war was released on June 30, 1946. Surviving relics of the largest-ever foreign invasion of America are now few and far between. Most of the camps have long since crumbled into dust. Still, the memory lingers. Some years ago Rudigar von Wechmar, then West German Ambassador to the United Nations, brought his wife and daughter to Colorado to see his old camp at Fisher's Creek, near Trinidad. They could not find a single stick of it. As they were leaving, Von Wechmar, who had seen postcards in a drugstore depicting a peak that towered over his camp, stopped the car and asked his wife to run in and buy some. She returned saying the owner wanted to see him.

"Were you a POW here?" the man asked when Von Wechmar entered. "Why, yes," Von Wechmar said. "How did you know?"

The man laughed. "I was a farmer during the Second World War. I used POW labor. Only ex-POWs buy postcards of Fisher's Peak."



In 1945, a hidden camera at Fort Leonard Wood, MO recorded the expressions of German POWs as they watched a film of Nazi death camps.

The Day I Blew Up the Battery!

By **Ben Hart**

Battery B, 879th Field Artillery
170 Greenbrier Road
Sunbury, Ohio 43074

I am sending in this story about one of my loonier escapades in Battery B, 879th Field Artillery, during World War II in Germany.

When I read this, I can't imagine ever being crazy enough to do this but I did.

I just last month located **Rosario Marini**, the other lunatic that blew up the battery. I have sent his address on to Bob Kurtzman.

Keep up the good work on the bulletin!

* * * * *

While I was stationed in Camp Shelby I was sent to demolition school for a week of training. Supposedly as a result I would be capable of using or defusing explosives, mines, booby traps or what have you.

Early in combat in Europe, we found numerous Panzerfaust rockets. These were the German equivalent of our Bazooka, anti-tank, hand held rockets. I found that the front end of these things would screw off. Inside each was a couple blocks of T.N.T. explosives. They were about an inch thick and an inch and a half square with a small hole in the center.

Through sheer boredom I began to collect these blocks and in time I had a water bucket full of them. I had no idea what I would do with them but it became something of a hobby collecting them.

After we had been in combat for about six weeks we came to a small town. Since the Germans were so far ahead of us our Battery Commander allowed all of the Battery personnel to occupy houses. It was the first time since leaving Belgium that the gun crews had been inside a house and we were glad for the change. There were not enough beds for everyone. Since I was the smallest guy there I was relegated to a sofa for the night. Fine. Sure beats a hole full of mud. After a good night's sleep I awoke to find everyone else sleeping on the floor! Seems that all of the beds had bedbugs! My sofa was just fine.

The next morning the Battalion Commander appeared and was furious to see the gun crews having a chance to relax in relative comfort. He ordered all gun crews to leave the town and set up camouflaged positions at the edge of town. We were ordered to dig in the guns "for practice." That meant digging a hole five feet deep and nineteen feet in diameter to hide guns that would not be used against a fleeing enemy.

The Battery Executive Officer recognized that this was not only idiotic, it annoyed the hell out of the gun crews. He eased the blow by giving each crew one stick of dynamite and a blasting cap. The ground was as hard as a rock and he felt that the explosive might help.



Rosario Marini, Frank Demers and Hollis Lee Dobbins on the hill drinking Captain Holler's wine.

The first three crews fell to and started to prepare the positions. My crew, being independent thinkers, refused to start and contended that they would rather be court martialed than comply. The Section Chief, **Sergeant Bill McGee**, knew that the Battery Commander had a five gallon Jerry can of red wine fastened to his Jeep. He wandered down to the motor pool and "liberated" the Captain's wine and brought it to us to ease our anger.

Soon gun number one called to the exec that they were ready to blast. He ordered everyone back a couple hundred feet for safety and the number one Gunner set off the blast. It made a loud bang and blew a little dust but did little to help dig the hole.

Soon number two was ready but at the command to fall back the crewmen dropped back a few feet and turned their backs while the explosive was fired. Another puff and it was over.

When number three was ready no one left their position, just ducked their heads and waited for the bang.

In the meantime number four crew was sitting on a hill drinking the Captain's wine and refusing to budge toward obeying the order to dig in.

I remembered the bucket of T.N.T. I suggested to **Rosario Marini** that we go down and set the T.N.T. in a pattern and use it to open up the hard ground. By now he was about three sheets in the wind and was eager to do so.

We started by tying the T.N.T. every foot or so to a length of primer cord. This long strand of high explosive was buried in a series of holes in a spiral pattern forming a circle nineteen feet in diameter. The dynamite was attached to the end of the primer cord to set

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off the T.N.T. and the blasting cap was attached. The hotshot was up on the hill where the rest of the crew were polishing off the Captain's wine.

I notified the exec that we were finally ready to blast. By now the other crews knew that the single stick of dynamite would not do any damage so they simply stood their ground at the order to fall back. At the command to fire I pushed the plunger on the hotshot and almost died of fright. The whole world rocked from the explosion and rocks as big as coconuts were hurled skyward out of sight. I had the terrifying thought that I had just wiped out the whole Battery!

From the smoke and confusion the first thing that became visible was one furious Battery Executive. He came charging out of the dust cloud screaming, "Who the hell set off that explosion?"

I answered, "I did, Sir." "With what?" "Dynamite, Sir." "Where did you get the Dynamite?" "You gave it to me, Sir." "I gave you one stick of Dynamite." "Yes, Sir." "You set off a blast like that with one stick of Dynamite?" "Yes, Sir. You just have to know how to use it." "Well where did you learn to use it?" "You sent me to Demolition School before we left Camp Shelby. Sir." "Oh, yeah well don't let it happen again."

Third Platoon, Co. A, 777th Tank Battalion

John Koke, Co. A, 3rd Platoon, 777th Tank Battalion
114 Longfellow Street
Carteret, New Jersey 07008

Harry Keeney of Pennsylvania, and myself, John Koke of New Jersey. Other members of the 3rd Platoon not shown are Raymond Silbaugh of Wisconsin, Bill Schiller of St. Louis, Missouri and Alvin Percival of Colorado. I wish we could all look like our old pictures!

I believe this picture was taken high above the Seine river, perhaps Camp Lucky Strike.



Nolan Farrell writes of World War II Memory

Nolan Farrell

Battery C, 880th Field Artillery Battalion

R.R. 1, Box 606, Brookeland, Texas 75931-9647

I received the latest issue of the Bulletin. After reading some of the stories written by our buddies while in Germany, it inspired me to write.

We were stationed in a small village. I believe it was southeast of Leipzig, Germany, maybe three or four miles. I was First Cook. We worked from noon one day until noon the next day. A buddy and myself took off and walked into Leipzig which was not occupied at the time. German soldiers were still there. We told the German civilians we were from the American government and we wanted them to turn in all the guns, knives, and binoculars and mark their names and addresses on them. We were lucky we didn't get hurt.

We went back and told our first sergeant we needed a truck. He started to send a weapons carrier. We told him we needed a bigger truck. It ended up that we had two big truckloads.

Lowell McFarlin bought a computer and found me about a year ago, before the reunion in Lexington, Virginia. My wife thought it over and we planned a fast trip. It really turned out great. What a wonderful feeling seeing your old buddies after over 50 years. I have been in touch with three of them since. This is the third letter I wrote. I get excited, I guess.

Your old Fighting 69th Division Friend,
Nolan Farrell

Send In Those Stories!

Come on fellows, send in your stories and memories from your infantry days. Send us a story about the closest call you had. Or perhaps the funniest thing that happened to you when you were in the service. Also, send in your pictures.

If you want to see more articles on your particular unit, then send them in. All of the material you see printed in the bulletin is sent to us by you, the members. We do not single out or show preference to any particular unit. It is just that some of the units send in material and others don't.

Also, if you have old newspaper articles from the 40's or even from the Stars and Stripes, send those in. They make excellent reading.

If you feel you can't write a story, properly, don't worry. We will edit it and reword it for you. When we are done, you will look like a professional writer! Won't your buddies be impressed.

So don't disappoint us, fellows. We are waiting to hear from you. Remember, you are the ones who make the bulletin what it is. Without you, there would be no bulletin.

Company D, 271st Infantry

Submitted by: **John S. Tounger**
#1 Pine Hills Court
Oakland, California 94611-1530

Photo right:

Pfc. John Younger on left.

Pfc. Frank Clark on right.

*Picture taken after the capture
of Leipzig on the outskirts.*

Photo below:

*Sgt. Max Foster of Company D,
April 26th, 1945.*

*Taken near Torgau. German
unit surrendering to us instead of
the Russians.*



Attention Anti-Tank Company, Headquarters, 271st Infantry Members

DOES ANYONE REMEMBER GEO MENTZER?

Geo would like to contact any officers, non-coms or anyone who remembers him from the service. He remembers a few names such as Bob Longenberger, Rhinehart and Rinker.

He states that he was a trucker. If you have any info for him or would like to write him, please do so at:

Geo Mentzer
616 Renova Avenue
Lebanon, Pennsylvania 17042

**SEND YOUR STORIES, NEWS MATERIAL AND PICTURES TO:
EARL WITZLEB, JR. *Editor***

P.O. Box 69, Champion Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or Phone 412/455-2901

269th Engineers

Submitted by: **Frank C. Nemeth** - 66 Gaping Rock Road, Levittown, Pennsylvania 19057-3410

ALL PHOTOS FROM THE ALBUM OF **JAMES EIBLING**

Hi Ya'll,

I hope you all are ready to make the next reunion this August in Danvers, Massachusetts! I am so sorry I didn't get to put something in the last 69th Bulletin. The deadline sort of slipped right past me. But from all the people I heard from at Christmas time, everyone is doing pretty good, all things considered.

I've sent a couple of photos from **Jim Eibling's** photo album to sort of refresh your memories of our days at Camp Shelby. Of course, everyone will always remember the chow lines and the lister bag of water while on bivouac in the woods. Who can forget the days when we had to go into the "gas chamber" to learn to clear and put the gas mask on, also to see who ran out first! The "water point" was a vital part of 269th Engineers H & S Company. They made sure we always had good drinking water and also for cooking.

So take care and I hope to see you at the reunion and the best always.

Your "ole" buddy,
Frank

P.S. Don't forget to pay your dues in order to keep getting the 69th Bulletin.



Chow Line



Gas Chamber



Water Point

**DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL
FOR BULLETIN VOL. 51, NO. 1,
September, October, November, December 1997
SEPTEMBER 30th, 1997 - *Get Your Material In On Time!***

John Dremel's writings of Company E, 273rd Infantry

John Dremel

3676 David Drive

North Highlands, California 95660

I am sending in this write-up of my experiences with Company E, 273rd Infantry. I do so with considerable reservations because though this is as I remember things, I'm sure others who were with me might remember the details differently. Other members of the 273rd have written about their experiences but, so far, have not mentioned a couple of "hairy moments" I remember. I hope that my story will strike a chord with others - I'm sure I wasn't dreaming it all. This was written as a part of a larger story in my genealogy in an effort to tell my children something of my life-childhood through adulthood.

* * * * *

I went overseas as a truck driver with the 95th Replacement Battalion. I had been driving a 2-1/2 ton GMC 6x6 throughout France for about 8 months when the Battle of the Bulge started.

Many of our infantry divisions were decimated and they needed replacements fast. **Surprise!** Five of us drivers were selected for infantry training (Our Motor Pool Sergeant included). We left the 95th Repl. Bn. January 15, 1945, heading for the infantry training camp set up by the Army in the woods at Compiègne, France. Compiègne was where the Armistices were signed between the Allies and Germany in 1918, and between Germany and France in 1940.

"And Into The Woods"

We were put into tents in the woods at Compiègne. There was snow on the ground. We were people taken from every type of unit in the Army - former truck drivers, company clerks, some medics, all sorts of support personnel, and even some Air Corps types. Replacements all. For the following two weeks we were given a crash course in Infantry weapons. We fired everything; rifle, pistol, "grease gun" (sub-machine gun), 30 caliber machine gun, light and heavy mortars, and bazooka. Our instructors were combat tested men, mostly recovering from wounds, who had been through D-Day and the French hedgerows in Normandy.

Then, "On the Line"

When our training period was over we were trucked Northeast through France into Belgium, then into Germany at Aachen. Just beyond Aachen somewhere, we were deposited at a Replacement Center. There, people like myself were being sent out in groups assigned to various infantry divisions. When my name was called, I was handed a 69th Infantry Division

patch, told to sew it on, and was then directed to get into the truck outside. We were driven for some time, eventually ending up well after dark, at the base of a forested hill. We were met by a GI there who told us to grab hold of a telephone wire which lay at our feet and to follow it and him up into the woods. That was our "path" to the unit in the darkness. At the top of the ridge there were log and earth covered dug-out emplacements barely discernible under the trees.

Our guide turned out to be the company runner, **Joe Aiello**. He yelled out, "Lieutenant, Lieutenant, the replacements are here!" Out of the darkness someone rapped the runner across the head hard and said, "Damn you. Call me **Tom** or call me **Maloney**, but don't you ever call me Lieutenant in these woods, do you hear me?" It seems officers were being targeted here. I was told then that I was now in the 2nd Platoon, Company E, 273rd Infantry Regiment, 69th Division. The division had just a few days previously relieved the 393rd Regiment of the 99th Infantry Division on the Siegfried Line and had suffered casualties taking the towns of Ramscheid and Giescheid. I was a replacement for that action. I had a fitful sleep in the dugout bunker.

Before daylight the next morning, we moved down out of the woods into a part of the Siegfried Line. We occupied the towns of Oberhausen, Blumenthal and some pillboxes in the area. Some days later the regiment was told we were going into reserve. In the middle of the night we started to march out, single file, through the woods on trails and roads of deep mud. We marched in the pitch-dark with a hand on the shoulder of the man in front of you so no one would stray or get lost in the dark. With daylight, we double-filed down muddy roads and marched until well into the afternoon. We were marching toward the Rhine River. The line stretched before me as far as I could see. I don't know when or how far ahead they were calling for our 10 minute breaks, but we, at my position, no sooner got word that the break was on when we saw the people up ahead of us rising and starting to march again. I guess it was because it just took time for the rear to close up the spaces between men but we no sooner got down than we had to get up again. We couldn't get off the road because of the signs all along the muddy roadside warning of personnel mines. This was a "really bad hair day" for me . . . having just got out of a truck a few weeks earlier!

And "Across the River"

We finally arrived at the reserve location, Kreuzeburg, late in the afternoon. At about that time, the Remagen bridge was found intact over the Rhine River by the 9th Armored Division. The Army wanted to put as much material and men over the bridge as possible before it collapsed. So, instead of settling down to rest, we infantrymen were immediately loaded

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JOHN DREMEL'S WRITINGS OF COMPANY E, 273rd INFANTRY

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aboard trucks and taken to Hilberath where we spent a few days with the Engineers rebuilding and improving a seven mile section of the Sinzig Luskirchen road as a supply route to the Remagen bridgehead.

While at Kreuzeburg, I attended my first and only Catholic Mass in the field. A Catholic Chaplain showed up at our area in a Jeep - I guess it was Sunday. All Catholics were invited to attend mass on a hill near us. The Chaplain used the Jeep's flat hood as the altar. His Assistant served Mass. It was well attended and, if others felt as I did, we needed the spiritual boost.

When we finished the road work and other units were across the Rhine there, we by-passed our planned rest and moved to the river. We crossed the Rhine by LCI's (Landing Craft, Infantry) South of Remagen. On the other side of the Rhine, my company boarded Sherman tanks, 11 Infantrymen per tank. We climbed the steep banks of the Rhine amid the grape orchards and from there my company spearheaded the 1st Army drive into Germany proper. Aboard the 9th Armored Division tanks, we covered about 60 miles a day. I was aboard the lead tank of our column.

Our combat action in Germany proper was a series of ambushes by the Germans, with mad tank rushes, and occasionally attacks on large cities. Since we were spearheading, we by-passed some of the pockets of resistance in order to gain ground. I don't remember our route exactly but I do recall the names of some of the towns we took: Holzappel, Geissen, Hann Munden, Trebsen, Leipzig. God only knows how many villages we went through.

One of the guys aboard our tank was from one of the southern states. I don't remember his name or the state. Any how, he kept humming and whistling or singing a country-western type song that had the refrain: "I heard the crash on the highway, dear brothers, but I didn't hear nobody pray!" Considering where we were and what could happen, none aboard our tank was pleased with his choice of songs. He was shut up in a hurry.

We were aboard tanks pausing some distance out of Kassel when we heard from a driver in a radio equipped jeep that President Roosevelt had just died. We all felt like we had just lost a relative. He was the only President I could remember. Up until that moment the tank crews and the infantry were exchanging Nazi souvenirs, swigging from bottles of "liberated booze," and generally shooting the bull while the column was halted. The bad news threw a serious crimp in the activity.

"And Into The Ditch"

Soon we were rolling again. Aboard the lead tank, I saw up ahead that we were coming to a slight grade leading up into some woods. On the right side of the road I could see a line of hay wagons, tongue to tailgate, parked at 90 degrees to the road. Behind the

wagons was a farmhouse. On the left side of the road was an irrigation ditch parallel to the road. A cluster of houses sat on the right side opposite of the ditch.

When we got even with the row of wagons, there was a hell of an explosion on our tank just in front of me. I was squatted at the right side of the tank, even with the back side of the turret, luckily with no part of me extended over the side. A German bazooka (Panzerfaust) had hit my side of the tank, 3 or 4 feet ahead of me, right at the driver's position. The tank lurched to a stop and all of the infantry scrambled off and ran for cover. Most to the opposite (left) side of the tank.

I jumped off on the right side, ran around the rear of the tank and jumped into the ditch running along the left side of the road. I looked back, directly across the road, and saw that I had run right in front of a German soldier firing back toward the column. I fired a round at him. He disappeared so I don't know if I got him. I tried a second shot at another target but my rifle was jammed and wouldn't take a load. It seems that, in my squatting position on the tank, I held my rifle propped upright between my legs, with its barrel at an angle extended over the side. A piece of shrapnel from the Panzerfaust hit my rifle's piston rod (cartridge gas-ejection) and it was cut in half. I could fire the shell in the chamber but the rifle would not take another round. So, I laid there in the ditch water unable to do much more than watch what happened around me. We, of the lead tank, were surrounded.

The tank crew, those that could, came out of the tank through a trapdoor in the bottom and were in the ditch with me and our company runner, **Joe Aiello**. A couple of the tankers were badly burned and the odor of their burns filled the air in the ditch. Not pretty. Beside the tank, huddled along its lefthand tracks, were 5 or 6 infantry-men. As I watched, one of them

turned his head to look at me. He smiled and, at that instant, a white spot appeared in the middle of his face. He doubled over and covered up his face and, when he removed his hands, I could see that his nose had been clipped by a bullet. I believe that the white I saw was bone the instant the bullet hit. We called him "Nose" (**Danny Redmond**) when he returned from the hospital later.



Raymond Futrell and Daniel Redmond (Borna, Germany).

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Suddenly, **Jimmy James** of my squad, got up from beside the tank, scrambled aboard and climbed in. The tank was smoking so you knew it was on fire internally and the ammo would be "cooking off" at any time. Despite the yells of warning, he got inside and fired the cannon at some target straight up the road. He then climbed out, cursing and coughing. He then went to the rear of the turret and began firing the 50 caliber machine gun mounted there toward the same general area that the cannon round went. But, he got so busy firing that he forgot about adjusting the guns "head-space." It jammed from the heat of firing. **James** scrambled back to cover beside the tank. He later received the Silver Star Medal for this and other actions.



Jimmie J. James, Los Angeles, CA (Borna, Germany)

James was from Los Angeles with only a grandmother left to his family. He always wore a white silk scarf around his neck, pinned in place with a silver skull and crossbones insignia he'd taken from an SS trooper. He carried a German P-38 pistol and had abandoned the GI Issue M-1 Garand rifle for an Italian Beretta Machine pistol. He was a sight!

The second tank in our column tried to come up to our position to give us cover under which to get out of the German trap. One of our platoon sergeants stood behind its turret firing its 50 caliber into the Germans as the tank came barreling up. When it got about 50 feet from us on the road, there was an explosion at the turret level. Another panzerfaust coming from the same direction as the first one had hit the utility box mounted on and behind the turret. It blew the sergeant bodily through the air to the left side of the road. He came flying off, still in a standing position, with his hands in front of him as if he were still clutching the machine gun. He hit the ground in a pile and was dragged to cover by some nearby GIs. The box that

was hit held all the accumulated souvenirs of the tank crew. (A truly monumental loss to the crew). The tank immediately retreated and I could see the other tanks and infantry fanning out in a skirmishers line.

The Germans were concentrating their attention on the attacking force so they apparently were content to just let us lay in their pocket. When the attack started though, the Germans began a withdrawal. I tell you the truth when I say I could have touched some of them when they went by us in the ditch. From the ditch, one could reach up over the bank about 2 feet in height and touch or reach through a picket fence running parallel to the left side of our ditch. The Germans retreating were running right along the opposite side of that fence. You know, of course, I had **no** interest in touching them!

I think we were in that ditch for two or three hours. I had an idea that I might die there, but my thoughts and worry then were, strangely, only of the anguish my death would cause my parents.

It was late afternoon when the infantry finally came through our position, I went to the aid station to get warm and to get another rifle. Along with others, the Sergeant that was shot off the second tank was there with busted eardrums and some shrapnel but was going to live. There was a mopping up operation that night and in the morning we took the town on the other side of the hill.

"Back Over The Side"

Because we lost a number of men in my platoon, plus a tank, another platoon took the lead tank. My platoon was put aboard a 6x6 truck to follow the tanks when we moved out again. We left the area in the night. I don't know why.

Anyway, we had about 20 GIs standing up in the back of the truck hanging on to the side boards. No canvas cover. The truck driver was supposed to follow the tanks ahead by following the tank's red "cats-eye" blackout tail light for his reference point in line. In the very dim light, I could see the tanks climbing an embankment ahead in order to get up onto the German Autobahn (Hitler's super highway). They were going up the bank at nearly a 90 degree angle and then were swiveling to the left on top onto the road surface. Our truck started up the eight or ten foot high shoulder to get on to the Autobahn when, at the top, the driver must have lost his reference tail light. He started his turn too soon. The truck, now at an angle on the embankment, started to roll over on its left side. The weight of the GIs plus their high center of gravity pulled the truck into a full roll-over. When I felt it starting to roll, I jumped. The guys in the middle of the truck had no place to go, much less places to jump.

One of my few friends had his rifle barrel jammed into him. We lost more people there. In the dark, we

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took all of our bedrolls apart so we could make the injured comfortable on the ground until help arrived. Bedrolls were where we all stored any souvenirs we had. So, the ground was strewn with personal effects and everyone's accumulated Nazi souvenirs, mine included - lost in the darkness. I don't remember how we left there.

I was getting my German idiomatic phrases from a little booklet the Army issued us. In it were phonetically spelled words for "hands up" in German, and so forth. I was searching a home in a town and I encountered a woman and her daughter in there - frightened to death. "Nicht Schiessen" they cried (Don't shoot). I tried to calm them by telling them that I wouldn't shoot, so I said "Ich Nix Schisse Du." They started to laugh and wouldn't quit. Our Company translator explained that what I had just told the ladies was what I wouldn't "do to" them. A small difference between 'sheees' and 'shiiiis' in this pronunciation. So much for booklearning.

And "Off and Running"

After receiving replacements along the way, we were again aboard 9th Armored tanks approaching a town I think was Altengroitzsch. The town sat out in the open surrounded by wide flat farmlands. In the distance beyond the town were some wooded hills. We were "tooling" along, fat, dumb and happy, when all of a sudden big black puffs of smoke were bursting at treetop level over the road ahead of us, each burst closer than the other and coming our way. Great clouds of dust arose in the roadway with each burst of shrapnel. The Germans had the road zeroed-in and their 88-millimeter Anti-aircraft guns lowered to fire flak airbursts at our column.

Of course, the first thing the tankers did was to slam their hatches closed. The infantry was then left "naked" on top to fend for themselves. It was obvious to me that the infantry was the Germans true target. We all jumped off and ran like hell trying to make cover of the town. We also had to dodge our tanks which were scattering and swerving all over the place trying to avoid the AA fire. Air bursts were churning up clouds of dust in the fields around us as we ran. We finally scrambled into the town. There was no resistance at all in the town.

It seems the Germans in the hills did not want to shell their own town in order to get us. We hunkered down in town then and waited while the brass decided where the 88's were located and who should go shut them up. We would have to cross lots of additional open space on the way to the 88's or our next objective so we GIs assumed that the tanks would go first, with

infantry to follow. But NO! It seems tanks were less expendable than we were. We were told we were to move out into the open, with the 88's still active in the hills, while the tanks kept to cover in town. But, thank God, just before we got into position we heard aircraft overhead. They were our P-47 "Jug" fighters. The P-47's had apparently been called by radio and they began strafing runs on the hills. Soon we were told that the German observation post was destroyed and some of the 88's were silenced. We moved out then, walking behind the tanks, uncontested.

To "Thumb a Ride Home"

We were constantly picking up German prisoners of war. One day when we captured about 15 of them, the Lieutenant put me and one other GI in charge of them. We were supposed to march the prisoners back to the last town we passed through and turn them over to the MP stockade that the Army had just set up there. Meanwhile, our unit would continue its forward drive. We were supposed to catch up to the unit at their night stop. They didn't say how or where. They just said "catch up."

We got the Germans on the road and started them back for the stockade. On the road we were passed by a tank outfit going the other way toward the front. Some of the tankers asked if we would like to turn the krauts over to them. It scared hell out of the prisoners. Undoubtedly because they remembered their tankers massacre of Americans at Malmedy. I'm pretty sure the tankers were just "pulling the krauts chain."

About half way to the stockade, a jeep pulled up behind us. An MP sergeant was driving it. He asked what we were doing with the "krauts." We told him. He told us to get into the jeep, and then he yelled "SCHNELL." He drove the jeep into the butt of the rear Kraut and kept doing it until the line of them were trotting merrily along. He obviously developed this delicate touch from long experience. After we turned the bunch of tired krauts over to the MPs at the stockade, we were on our own. Where do we go? We decided to follow the road in the direction our unit went. It's strange. There is an eerie, lonesome, feeling behind the lines. There is a lot of activity but there is also a sort of quietness. I must have gone nuts! I really wanted to get back to the unit, with its familiar faces.

The buddy and I started hitchhiking out on the road. All kinds of units passed us by until finally, a self-propelled howitzer (cannon mounted on a tank-like body) stopped. We asked and were assured that their unit would be joining up near our regimental sometime in the night. We climbed aboard and rode with them toward the front.

Somewhere, I don't know where, the howitzer we were riding, along with a couple others, stopped atop a high bluff. Below the bluff you could see for miles. Out in the middle of the "vista" you could see a rather

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prominent crossroad - a four-way country road intersection out in the wide open. The howitzer driver said he had orders to cover the crossroad in anticipation of the Germans going that way in their retreat. They got into position and "ranged" the target area. My buddy and I were shown what to do to help. They took down shell casings, showed us how many bags of powder to put in each casing, and then they put the projectile on the loaded shellcases. We began to load and hand shells up to the gunner. They "zeroed" in on the crossroad. Sure enough, the Krauts started coming from the right arm of the road towards the intersection.

The gunners timed their shots and laid round after round into the corner just as the German vehicles got there. We were up there all afternoon, loading and hoisting rounds to the gunner. It was hard work. Finally, they were ordered by radio to proceed to their nights rendezvous with their main armored unit. True to their word, we found our unit there in the same vicinity.

I can't account for it but, there are a lot of periods in my infantry time that I don't recall at all. I draw blanks trying to remember actions in certain towns, how we got there or left there. We, the GIs, were never in on the grand plan so days just blended together for us. I remember the "good," the strange, and the personal things most. Like, in the attack on Han Munden, I was running across a river on the top of a narrow weir. I was running hunched over with my rifle held at about knee level when the thought struck me . . . *I saw some German soldier in the newsreels back home doing just the same thing, in the same posture, somewhere early in the war. What the hell am I doing here?*

Back "Home" Again

Again, things work out for the best. Because E Company had lost people, we were not on tanks in the attack on Leipzig. F Company rode. The city's most prominent landmark was the Monument of Nations. The monument was massive. It had several hundred Storm Troopers in it when our troops aboard tanks attacked. Lead tanks were destroyed and some infantry aboard were reported captured and held in the monument. The Germans were making their "last stand" and so our troops bypassed the monument and it was subjected to fierce artillery barrages. 155mm shells just seemed to bounce off it. We went on to take the rest of the city. My Company's objective, I understand, was the Sports Palace against dug-in enemy positions. Three days later, the Germans in the monument finally surrendered to save further bloodshed.

My platoon left Leipzig aboard a "liberated" German firetruck - a Mercedes Benz with an "Eee Awww, Eee

Awww" sounding siren on it. We rode it to a defensive position on the Mulde river where we were told we were to await the arrival of the Russians.



Riding out of Leipzig on a liberated German firetruck.

The area between the Mulde and the Elbe rivers was a "no man's land." We were not to enter the area because the Army was fearful that the American and Russian troops might mistakenly shoot at each other in an open encounter. We sent patrols across the Mulde regularly. German troops were being captured in droves coming across the Mulde from the Elbe. They were retreating from the Russian army advances. These Germans were somehow surprised that we took their guns. They thought the Americans would join them in fighting the Russians. Mind you, some of us Americans truly believed that we'd have to fight the Russians sooner or later, too. That was a fact. But we hoped we could keep it to *one war at a time!*

Finally, on 25 April 1945, a patrol from my company made contact with the 58th Russian Guards Division at Torgau. It was an historic event.

The Germans continued to fight on other fronts but our "linkup" with the Russians pretty well spelled the end of combat for the 69th Division. We went back to clear out a large town that we by-passed just before Leipzig but that was it for us. When we got back from that town search, we learned that **Jimmy James**, the guy who climbed into the burning tank during one of our early ambushes, had killed himself accidentally.

He was the recipient of the Silver Star Medal, showing guts on a number of occasions. He was left behind during our town search because he broke his hand in a fight with his best buddy while he was drunk. It then seems that, while we were gone, he went "fishing" at a nearby pond, shooting at fish with a German P-38 pistol. We believed that he dropped the pistol when he tried to change hands or something.

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JOHN DREMEL'S WRITINGS OF COMPANY E, 273rd INFANTRY

(Continued from Page 44)

The pistol went off, the bullet hitting him in the groin area, killing him. It goes to show, I think, that when it's your time to go, you're **gone!**

On May 7, 1945, **V-E Day**, the Germans signed the unconditional surrender document at Rheims, France. They then moved us off the Mulde river and into the city of Borna.



*Tex Bevil, Ernie Pearson and Charles Brewster
Borna, Germany*

This Place is "Occupied"

Borna is a fair sized city about 29 miles out of Leipzig. Our company moved into a neighborhood with nice big shade trees lining both sides of the street. The Army gave the Borna civilian population in our billeting area a couple of hours to get out of their houses so that we could move in. The time was short on purpose. They didn't want the Germans to have enough time to remove furnishings - only their smaller valuables and personal property. The Germans then had to find a neighbor or a family member to move in with while we occupied their houses.

The street on which my company was located had two and three storied buildings on the opposite side from our buildings. They had inside "johns" but to take a bath you had to heat water and take it to a tub in the basement for the actual bath. We were finally sleeping in beds - not on sidewalks or floors or in shattered buildings. It was good!

In Borna there was no duty per se. We stood formations and did guard duty at a roadblock near town. We also had physicals in preparation for going home, if we were lucky and had enough points. They could also have been for our shipment to the Far East to fight the Japanese. You needed 85 points to go home. You got points for years of service, months overseas, combat, each medal received, wounds, etc. I had 60 points.

While at Borna, our company sent a truck to a brewery near Leipzig every Friday. In the evening, the truck would drop off a large keg of beer at each platoon location and we'd have a platoon "beer bust." This was the only time in my days in the infantry that I really became acquainted with the guys in my squad and platoon. I didn't drink, but a beer did taste good occasionally.

It seemed that every time we went to formations the Germans in the buildings across the street would hang out the windows to see what was going on. We showed them. Once, when we were ordered out in formation with nothing on but our boots and our rain ponchos - headed for a medical "short arm" inspection - we turned to march off, and some of the guys opened their ponchos and "flashed" the assembled gawking German men, women and kids. Since no fraternization was allowed in Germany, I couldn't understand why we had to have this kind of examination anyway. *GIs wouldn't fool around if they were told not to, would they? NOooooo!*

It turned out that Borna was scheduled to become included in the Russian Occupation Zone. This was according to the Allied armies agreement for the occupation of Germany. Just as soon as the news was announced to the populace, the Germans in town got extremely nervous. They feared the Russians because of the rumors, fairly rampant and all true, of the Russian's harshness and their wantonness in regards to women. When we got orders to vacate Borna, and as we boarded trucks to go to the American Occupation Zone, Germans begged us to take them with us, especially a lot of young women. They tried to climb aboard our trucks as we were leaving. There were tears and wailing but not much sympathy from the GIs. "The Rooskies are coming!," we all yelled.

Looking For A "Ticket" Home

From Borna we went to a little farming village called Beenhausen. Where that is now I have no idea. We were killing time because our Division was scheduled to go home with all 85 pointers. Those with less than 85 were sure to be transferred to other units.

The best memory was getting the news that the U.S. had dropped the Atomic Bomb on the Japanese and that they had surrendered. We, who most likely would have been sent to the Far East to fight the Japanese, were especially glad.

The German civilians in Beenhausen were ordered out of their houses just as they had been in Borna, and my platoon was set up in a farm house on the edge of town. We played baseball and volleyball out in the farmers field adjacent to the house. It was August and it was hot. We needed gym-type shorts. We looked around the house and finally decided that the window

(Continued on Page 46)

**JOHN DREMEL'S WRITINGS
OF COMPANY E, 273rd INFANTRY**

(Continued from Page 45)

curtains would do nicely (remember, the Germans couldn't remove furnishings!). We pulled down the curtains, cut them up by a hastily drawn pattern, and sewed them into the prettiest yellow gym shorts you ever saw. We all ran out of the house together towards the playing field and, from across the road, there came the anguished cries from the hausfrau, "*Oh, No, my new curtains!*" War is Hell!

My lasting memories of Beenhausen are few. One was that, as we lined up for chow in the evening along one of the lanes, an old German farmer would herd a horse-drawn "honey wagon" the length of our chow line on the way to his fields. The cart was a large barrel-shaped tank. In the tank the farmer had pumped the fluid from beneath his barn's manure pile. He took it to his fields to simultaneously water and fertilize his crop. It stunk to high heaven. We believed he was doing it on purpose to spoil our meals. The third time he tried it he was met with rifles and ordered to come earlier or later, **or die**.



Fidel Ferrar, Cecil Beshore, John Dremel, Ray Futrell

Anyway, I was sitting on 60 points and just waiting to learn where I was headed from there. Then, in the middle of August, we were told that they had finally loaded up the 69th Infantry Division with all 85 point-ers in an across the board swap with the 29th Infantry Division. Then the points required to go home with the division changed about three times. First it was men 38 years old, men with 85 points, and black troops with 60 points. Requirements changed finally to men

of 40 years old and men with 75 points, with most of those men from the 7th Armored Division. The blacks still needed 60 points.

The 69th Division was headed home - **without me**. All of us lower point men were loaded on trucks and shipped out to units that were filling up with like numbers of point men.

I really got the shuffle. I went first to the 3408 Ordnance; then to the 300th Ordnance; then to the 195th Ordnance; and finally to the 9th Ordnance. These units were each loading up with higher point men and then shipped out for the U.S. **without me**. It wasn't all bad though. Since I had been a truck driver once, each of the Ordnance units gave me driving chores while assigned to them. I was given a 4-5 ton semi-tractor and drove all over the American Zone moving surplus equipment and stores to ordnance depots and disposal sites. I drove a great deal of Germany.

Finally, on December 7, 1945, I was transferred to the 84th "Railsplitter" Infantry Division. This Division was comprised of 60 pointers and above. I was finally on my way home!



Pete Peterson in Beenhausen



Becker, John Dremel, Wilzinski



Jacob Edwards and Desoto - Borna, Germany



Tex Bevil, Ray Futrell, Charles Brewster



Paul Peterson near Leipzig



S/Sgt. Jesse Haynes near Mulde River in Germany



The Third Platoon in a beer session — Borna, Germany

Whose Publication is this???

We want to continue sending the BULLETIN to interested members of the 69th Inf. Div. Assn.

However, if this publication routinely goes from the mail box to the waste basket, we need to halt this unnecessary waste.

About one-half of our members pay their annual dues, plus additional gifts to support this publication.

The costs of publication continue to escalate. Plus it costs \$1.25 per copy for any BULLETINS returned due to poor address. This is wasted spending.

You can support the BULLETIN by paying your dues of \$10.00 per year. If you have not already paid your dues for this year, **PLEASE DO SO NOW.**

In the unlikely event that you are no longer interested in receiving the BULLETIN and wish your name removed, please notify:

Robert Kurtzman
P.O. Box 105
Wilmot, Ohio 44689

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS AND COMMUNICATION SCHEDULE

May I just make note to all leaders of Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, and T.D.'s to get your Activities Schedules to **Earl E. Witzleb, Jr., Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or R.D. #3, Box 477, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606**, as soon as possible. We try to work at least a year ahead, as we only put out three Bulletins a year. When mailing in this information, do send your organization's name,

1997

August 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 1997
69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION
50th ANNUAL REUNION
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Suffield, Connecticut 06078-1416
Telephone: 860/668-0066

Committee Members: John and Ellen McCann, George and Jennie Vasil, Robert and Irene Bishop, Robert and Jean Ross, Edward Gallagher, Robert Crowe, Stuart Mandell, Erwin and Carmen Sanborn

LET'S GO MEMBERS, LET'S GET TO A REUNION BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!!

(Continued on Page 50)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(Continued from Page 49)

AUGUST 14th, 15th, 16th, 1997
69th CAVALRY RECON TROOP
Lawrence Welk Resort
Branson, Missouri

Committee:

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Independence, Missouri 64052-2962
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Mike Moscaritolo
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* * * * *

AUGUST 17th to 24th, 1997
BATTERY C,
724th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Danvers, Massachusetts

To be held in conjunction with the
69th Infantry Division National Reunion

We will have a Dinner Meeting Friday, August 22nd, 1997. The place and exact time will be announced later. It is requested that all who plan to attend this dinner meeting contact **Coy Horton**.

Coy Horton

1705-A Highview Street
Burlington, North Carolina 27215
Telephone: 910/227-7785

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER 9th to SEPTEMBER 12th, 1997
C-BATTERY
880th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Hope Hotel and Convention Center
On the Wright Patterson Air Force Base
Fairborn, Ohio (Dayton Area)

Committee:

Robert Williams
1407 Narragansett Boulevard
Lorain, Ohio 44053
Telephone: 216/282-2810

Lowell McFarlin
Box 236
Jeromesville, Ohio 44840
Telephone: 419/368-7363

SEPTEMBER 30th, 1997

Deadline for news material and pictures for:
Bulletin Volume 51, Number 1
September, October, November, December 1997
Bulletin expected mailing date is late November or early December
GET YOUR INFO IN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!!

* * * * *

1998

JANUARY 31st, 1998

Deadline for news material and pictures for:
Bulletin Volume 51, Number 2
January, February, March, April 1998
Bulletin expected mailing date is late April or early May
GET YOUR INFO IN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!!

* * * * *

APRIL 19th to 23rd, 1998
CALIFORNIA WESTERN CHAPTER
1998 SPRING ROUND-UP

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Rates for members start at \$59.00.

For further information write to:

John Tounger, Chairman
One Pine Hills Court
Oakland, California 94611
Telephone: 510/531-8011

* * * * *

69th INFANTRY DIVISION
ASSOCIATION
51st ANNUAL REUNION
Houston, Texas Area

A committee of 22 members in the Houston, Texas area has been assembled. The first committee meeting was held May 17th, 1997.

Further information on this reunion will be available at the Danvers Reunion and will appear in the next issue of the bulletin. The committee has already prepared a complete plan including tours, events and prices that will be presented to the membership.



“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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West Point, Georgia
AT - 271st

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Ambris E. Oliver
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Caruthersville, Missouri
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H & S - 724th F.A.

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"Taps"

(Continued from Page 51)

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