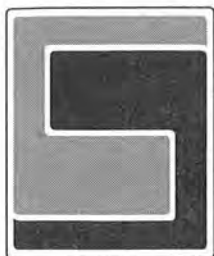


# FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

## ★★★★ Association, Inc.



VOLUME 59, NO. 3

www.69th-infantry-division.com

MAY — JUNE — JULY — AUGUST  
2006

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

P.O. BOX 4069  
NEW KENSINGTON, PA 15068-4069  
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## bulletin

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*\*Deceased*



Photos  
Submitted By:  
**Carl Yusna**  
17 Cove Street  
Old Saybrook, CT  
06475

See Page 2

## Bridge Building Exercises 269th Combat Engineers Camp Shelby



# Carl Yusna writes

17 Cove Street, Old Saybrook, CT 06475

**Stan Eskin** of the 269th Engineers, suggested I send you these pictures for the newsletter. My late father, **T/5 Joseph Yusna**, was with the 269th Combat Engineers. He served with both H&S Company and Company A. My father is sitting to right of the soldier with the camera in the barracks photo.

My father also served with the 29th Infantry Division for Army of Occupation duties. I spent June 5th and 6th, 2005 with Company D, 116th Infantry at their summer reunion in Salem, Virginia. On the morning of the 6th, which was the 61st Anniversary of the D-Day invasion, we visited the National D-Day memorial in Bedford, Virginia for a private memorial service and tour. The visit was led by D Company's Bob Slaughter who is one of the memorial's founders. The memorial is well done and a fitting tribute to those that took part in the invasion. Even though the 69th didn't take part in the invasion, it is a must-see place for all vets.

Last year I joined up with the 29th tour on June 6th, 2005 for the 60th Anniversary ceremonies at Omaha Beach. Omaha Beach is a place that all American veterans or non-veterans should visit.

If you are a 69er who also served with the 29th and are interested in their Association, you can contact them at:

**29th Division Association**  
P.O. Box 1546  
Frederick, Maryland 21702-0546



*Caption according to Stan Eskin: Of the four photos you sent me, the one with the Colonel, Light Colonel and the Captain at the Motor Pool brings back some memories since the Captain was promoted to Light Colonel. His name was **Colonel Everett** and he was in charge of the 269th Engineer Battalion. He also was my boss since I was orderly for him for several months before I moved on from H&S to Company A.*



# THE MAIL BOX

By **Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**  
Editor



*Company E, 273rd Infantry Regiment*  
P.O. Box 4069

New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068-4069

Telephone: 724/335-9980

E-Mail: danne345@aol.com

**Lynn Farrar**, 17516 92nd Avenue N.E., Bothell, Washington 98011-3602 — Btry. C, 881st F.A.: It was great talking to you about the Bulletin. Up here in the Seattle area I have found only one man who was a 69er besides me and he is not too enthusiastic. When I lived in the San Francisco area I attended the Western Round-up twice after my best pal "found" me and signed me up. He is gone now as well as **Lt. Reineke**, the forward observer in our party. I was jeep driver, **Hugh Milstead** was the radio man. **Walt Haag** kind of keeps in touch but my best correspondent, **Arthur Moore**, is sadly in a rest home with Parkinson's and his wife says he cannot do anything by himself anymore.

I have found three parties for whom I have provided road maps of where the Division was in Germany. I have the ADAK road atlas that shows every little town. It has been fun reading all the stories sent to you listing the towns and cities the units were in. I have some 250 to 300 different place names and have located all but a half dozen on the atlas maps. These maps are very detailed, better than any I have found over here. **Roy Savage** in Evansville, Indiana was very happy to get the set of some 26 maps, 9x12 inches, that are in color but my copy machine only has black and white.

If you care to look up past unit photos would you please let me know if you ever put one of Battery B, 881st FA Bn taken at Shelby in the Bulletin. I have a copy that now has some creases but is still in good shape. It is 9x21 inches in color. **Walt Haag** tried to think of most of the names as I had forgotten most of them. I got busted as CQ one night because the cooks didn't wake me and I didn't wake the Battery so I was sent to Battery C.

Here is the anecdote I told you about on the phone. After we took Leipzig we moved east to the Elbe River. As a forward observer party we were up with the infantry and came to the town of Wurzen on the Mulde River, west of the Elbe. The railroad bridge across the Mulde River had been bombed and was mostly submerged. This made it very difficult for the POWs coming from the east to get across. They were largely French nationals. We were with a unit of the 273rd

and somehow the officers found out I had 7 years of French in school, so they handed me a bullhorn and told me what they wanted the POWs to do. I thought I was doing an adequate job instructing them when a French nurse came up to me and said in perfect English, "Sir, please let me do the talking." A real put down! Later, after the end of the war, when our unit moved from the Leipzig area to Brake, a town north of Bremen on the Weser River, we were then a part of the 29th Division. The Army offered a program for qualified French speaking GIs to go to Paris for a 3 months course in French language and culture. I applied and was accepted so I guess my French was good for something. I was in Paris on Bastille Day and the end of the war in the Pacific and it was really something. Thanks for taking your time.

**Tom R. Smith**, 2301 South Lakeview Drive, #101, Clear Lake, Iowa 50428 — Hq. Btry., 881st F.A.: The most recent Bulletin contained an article where the writer referred to the WWII Europe ending reassignment of troops. As I remember the point system (length of service, dependents, awards, etc.), and the reassignments; (high pointers went home for separation, low pointers moved on to Berlin to return to the States for retraining) and those of us in the middle remained in Germany as the Army Of Occupation.

I cannot remember what the point allocations were for the various categories and what the breaks were for the differing reassignments. I think I can recall still being in Germany occupying when some of the low pointers from our outfit were separated from the service when the Pacific War ended.

If anyone could refresh my memory on the above two elements of the program, I would appreciate it. Thanks for your help.

**Robert L. Schueler**, 1484 Stahlheber Road, Hamilton, Ohio 45013 — 69th Recon: I want to thank you for the map you sent me. I have tried for quite some time to acquire a map of Shelby without much success. **Philip Bolte**, with whom I have corresponded said that a map or maps may be with his dad's papers at the Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks.

According to my First Sergeant, the Recon was on 41st Street, and our motor pool was on 4th Avenue. It is hard for me to believe that a map or maps of Shelby do not exist.

My last contact with **Philip Bolte** was in February of 2001. If you know of or if anyone reading this has any maps of Shelby, please contact me.

**George M. Flore**, 44-12 31st Avenue, Long Island, New York 11103-2251 — Co. L, 273rd: God love and bless you all this year. Thanks so much for all you do in getting the Bulletin to us all.

I wrote many letters in past years to officer/gentleman **William R. Matlach**. God rest his soul in heaven. Sir Matlach sent me many names and addresses of all

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## THE MAIL BOX

(Continued from Page 3)

69th Infantry Division, 273rd Regiment. I was Pfc. **George M. Fiore** WWII ETO 1944-1945 as #32901469 drafted in 1943 at age 18. Thanks to Sir **William Matlach**, I wrote to many of the men, especially the men from Co. L, 273rd Infantry, buddies that survived WWII. I got not one answer, and then I wondered if any, of our Co. L, 273rd men survived.

I do, as of now, keep in contact with our dear Company Commander Captain **James Castrale**. He was my C.O. in 1943 at Camp Shelby, Mississippi where 12,000 of us in the 69th Division trained for a year to fight the Japanese. Jungle warfare training 1943. Eventually, after Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall reviewed our 12,000 Divisional parade at Shelby, most of us were shipped overseas to Africa, Sicily, Italy Campaign and Normandy, Northern France 1944. 6,000 of us in the 69th were replacements after June 6, 1944 invasion of Normandy. A lot of us were replacements in the 175th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division who fought at Normandy Beach.

We were all together as a family of replacements in the 29th Division such as **Rene Welter**, Co. L, 273rd at Shelby 1943; **Francis Farnesi**, **Patrick Harrigan**, **Raymond Logan Smelley**, **Lt. Morehead**, **Lt. Jolly**. Captain James Castrale our C.O. at Camp Shelby went from WWII, to the Korean War and Vietnam, a 3-war tour as a Colonel Eagle. He is okay thank God, in Nebraska. I got a Christmas card from him.

I was good friends with **Sgt. Anthony W. Plasic**. He introduced me to the Association. He went all the way to the Elbe to link up with the Russian Troops before WWII ended. **Sgt. Anthony** was with the ammo bearers, heavy weapons with **General James Jolly** and **Colonel Castrole**. I remember Anthony and all of us from Company L, went to the chapel at Shelby in 1943 with **Father Stedman**, Chaplain, to say Novena of Masses on Monday nights. We were buddies at Shelby in 1943 but never crossed paths in WWII as we were in different Infantry overseas in the E.T.O.

**Anthony Plasic** passed to heaven a few years ago. He was from Pennsylvania and he and I were pen pals since 1943. He visited me with his son a few years before he passed away. We hadn't seen each other since WWII 1943 when we were training with Co L. It had been over 50 years since we saw each other. Sarge looked good, also a great golfer he was. He was sorry he couldn't climb those 18 holes with the steep hills to play any more.

I don't travel at all! I would like to ask a favor. If any buddies from Co. L, 273rd Regiment from Camp Shelby are still kickin', I would really like to hear from you. I read all the 69th Bulletins from cover to cover to see if I could see a buddy I was overseas with. I do write to **Colonel James Castrale** and **Sgt. Francis G. Lewalski** of Reading, Pennsylvania. Both from Co. L, 273rd, Camp Shelby in 1943. I was wounded on July 31, 1944 in Normandy, North France. God bless all.

## A Message from Paul and Dottie Shadle President and Editor

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



*President Paul Shadle and Editor, Dottie Shadle*

Greetings from Dottie and Paul. Due to an early cut-off date for the reunion this year, we felt it necessary to get another bulletin out before the cut-off date.

Due to the increased cost in mailing, we have come up with a few new procedures we will now follow. When the bulletin comes back to us as TEMPORARILY AWAY, we will no longer send one out first class. If you talk to your Postmaster and ask him to hold your third class mail, I am sure he will do so. If you are moving, please notify us of your new address. If a bulletin is returned to us with an ADDRESS CHANGE, we will no longer send one out first class to your new address. This new procedure will save the Division money over the course of the year.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the reunion at the Crowne Plaza in King of Prussia. Please make sure you make your reservations by July 15, 2006. I am sure we will all have a good time.

**NOTE: If the member of your family that was in the Fighting 69th Division is deceased and his name has not been in the Taps Section of the Bulletin, please let me know so that he may be added to Taps.**

## Members Removed from Roster for Various Reasons

Anthony Arace  
Melvin C. Arnold  
Arthur C. Babbitt  
Mrs. Betty Bender  
Gerald Beyler  
Mrs. Georgia Bratt  
F. Robert Brown  
Charles W. Calderone  
Curtus J. Danforth  
Elizabeth D'Aquila  
John J. Devink  
John P. Dow  
Norman Feinberg  
Henry Flickinger  
Charles C. Forrester  
Marquis L. Hall, Jr.  
Alex B. Herrera  
Kenneth W. Kallem  
Ferment H. Lindley

Bruce A. Livers  
Frank Mankiewicz  
Mrs. William H. Martin  
Michael Masullo  
Mrs. Rufus Maynor  
Robert Metheny  
William J. Munday  
Paul Murdock  
Wm. (Jack) Murphy  
Waclaw T. Nowakowski  
John Porogi  
Donald E. Rogers  
Mrs. Beyrl Shahan  
George Strull  
Charles E. Syers  
Howard E. Temple  
Morton M. Vitriol  
Russell R. Ziegert

### NOTICE

If you are **NOT** interested in receiving the Bulletin in the future, please let us know.

If you are still interested in receiving the Bulletin, please make sure you dues are paid in full and are up to date.

### MOVING

Please print your new address below:

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

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

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

Please send this form  
and your old address label to:

**PAUL SHADLE**

P.O. Box 4069

New Kensington, PA 15068-4069

Please allow six weeks advance notice.

## Giving credit where credit is due



This photo which we titled "**Great Shot**," appeared in the last issue of the bulletin on the back cover. It was submitted by **Merrill Embick**. The subject is Sergeant **Anthony F. Kasmarsik**, Squad Leader.

We were informed that the photo was actually taken by **Ted Snyder** of Company D, 271st Infantry. It is a classic and we thought we would let you know.

\*\*\*\*\*

### HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES!

Hope You Paid Your 2005-2006 Dues,  
and if not, you better mail it in  
because the New Dues Year is Upon Us!

### DUES YEAR FOR 2005-2006

August 1, 2005 to July 31, 2006

Regular Membership ..... \$10.00

Ladies' Auxiliary ..... \$ 5.00

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***Keep the Bulletin Coming.  
Send Your Dues in Today!***

Send Your Dues To:

**TREASURER**

**John Barrette**

P.O. Box 215

Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54495-0215

Telephone: 715/423-4921

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



# Sioux Cityan among U.S. soldiers who met Russians at Torgau

Submitted By: **John S. Tounger**

*Company D, 271st Infantry*

1 Pine Hills Court, Oakland, California 94611

**From the Sioux City Journal** By *Nick Hytrek*

The language barrier made it impossible to decipher what was being said.

But American and Soviet troops who met on the banks of the Elbe River 60 years ago today understood one thing: their days of war were coming to an end.

"We knew it was over with. We were happier than hell," said **Walter Prestage**, a retired Sioux City postal carrier and member of the Army's 69th Infantry Division that met the Soviet forces at Torgau, Germany that day.

Drafted in 1944, the farm boy from Akron, Iowa, had seen enough war.

After landing in England in November 1944, **Prestage** and other members of the 69th were flown into the Battle of the Bulge in December to reinforce Allied troops who needed the additional firepower of the water-cooled .30-caliber machine guns **Prestage** and his buddies carried.

After the German counter offensive had failed, the war turned decidedly. American troops raced across Germany, the meeting with their Soviet allies inevitable. Thankfully, **Prestage** said, the biggest dose of combat he'd seen was behind him.

"We'd advance 30-40 miles a day. There wasn't too much fighting," he said. "When you'd go into these little towns, they'd have white sheets hanging out the windows. They'd surrender.

"So we just kept on a-goin."

With little resistance, the Americans quickly made it to Leipzig, where they needed three days to subdue German troops and capture the city. Then it was on to the Elbe River. All along, **Prestage** said, soldiers knew they'd soon be meeting the Russians.

"We knew they were up there somewhere," he said.



*Walter Prestage at age 19*



STAFF PHOTO BY TIM HYNDIS

*World War II veteran Walter Prestage of Sioux City was a member of the Army's 69th Infantry Division, which was the first to meet the Russians toward the end of the war on April 25, 1945. Prestage brought home photos and copies of the military newspaper Stars and Stripes that reported on the meeting.*

On April 25 in Torgau, a small city on the banks of the Elbe about 100 miles southwest of Berlin, an American patrol sighted Soviet troops across the river. The Americans crossed the river and met their allies. In the following days, U.S. Gen. George Patton and other officers showed up for more formal ceremonies, and soldiers from two nations mingled, communicating through smiles and gestures of congratulations.

"They couldn't understand English and we couldn't understand them. There was a lot of patting on the back. They smelled so bad you didn't want to get too close. Of course, we probably didn't smell too good either," **Prestage** said with a laugh.

Once all the formalities were over, **Prestage's** unit began preparations to be shipped to Japan to finish the war in the Pacific. But the war ended before **Prestage's** unit was needed.

Flipping through an album of fading photos, **Prestage** lamented that he hadn't taken more notice of the events happening around him during the war. For example, on its march through Germany, the 69th liberated a couple small concentration camps. **Prestage** said he can't remember the names of the camps, but he remembers the starving men inside them were happy to be saved.

He attributed the lack of awareness to youthfulness.

"I was just a kid off the farm. I didn't know too much," he said, laughing again.

"It didn't sink in until after I got home."

\* \* \* \* \*

**Walter Prestage**

1602 Ross Street, Sioux City, Iowa 51103

# 69th Infantry Division Association 59th Annual Reunion KING OF PRUSSIA, PA

**August 14th thru 20th, 2006**

**THE CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL**

260 Mall Boulevard

King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406

**Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.**

322 Madison Mews

Norfolk, Virginia 23510

This year, our reunion will be handled by the Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. Forms are on pages 10 and 11. Please read carefully and return to the address noted. The schedule is as follows:

## Monday, August 14th

**Early Bird arrivals**

1:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. **Reunion Registration Open**

7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Open

## Tuesday, August 15th

12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Open

2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. **Reunion Registration Open**  
Dinner and evening on your own

7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Open

## Wednesday, August 16th

7:30 a.m.-8:00 a.m. **Reunion Registration Open**

8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH  
COUNTRY *(description follows)*

12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Open

2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. **Reunion Registration Open**  
(additional hours will be posted  
at the reunion, if needed)  
Dinner and evening on your own

## Thursday, August 17th

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Board of Directors' Meeting

1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. HISTORIC VALLEY FORGE  
*(description follows)*

12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Open

6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Hosted Reception

7:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. Dinner Buffet

6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Cocktail Hour with Cash Bar

7:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Memorial Service

7:30 p.m. Banquet served,  
followed by music and dancing

## Sunday, August 20th

7:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m. Breakfast Buffet

Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices. Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time. *All tours must have a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.*

## **CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY** **FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.**

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less the non-refundable AFR registration fee (\$7 per person). Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less the non-refundable AFR registration fee. **Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard time, excluding holidays.** Please call 757/625-6401 or e-mail [cancel@afri.com](mailto:cancel@afri.com) to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **TOUR DESCRIPTIONS**

### **PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH COUNTRY**

**Wednesday, August 16th**

Enjoy a guided tour of one of America's most important inland cities, the English City of Lancaster. Your guide will explain the lifestyles of the 'plain people,' the Old Order Amish, from the cradle to the grave. Among the many sites you will see are courting buggies, one room schoolhouses, grossdadi's, and graveyards. Then visit a working Amish Farm to chat with the family and take a tour of the farm with 'Granddaddy,' who loves to share his expertise with the 'fancy people.' Homemade root beer, cider, and cookies will be available for sale as you browse the handmade quilts and crafts. Enjoy an authentic Pennsylvania Dutch family-style lunch at Good 'n Plenty Restaurant including Country Baked Ham, Fried Chicken, Roast Beef with vegetables, dessert, and beverages. Then continue the Amish tour through the farmlands as you learn the history, religion, and culture that enable the Amish to lead a simpler life.

**8:30 a.m. - Board Bus**

**4:00 p.m. - Arrive back at the hotel**

**\$60/Person includes**

**bus, guide, admission and lunch**

*(Continued on Page 8)*

## HISTORIC VALLEY FORGE

Thursday, August 17th

After having an early lunch on your own, board bus for a guided tour of Valley Forge National Historic Park. Your first stop is at the Visitor Center for a fifteen-minute film on the surrounding park. Then begin a guided tour of the extensive remains and reconstructions of major forts and lines of earthworks, the Artillery Park, Washington's Headquarters, and the Grand Parade where General von Steuben rebuilt the army and news of the French alliance was announced in 1778. These, plus reconstructed huts, memorials, monuments, and markers, tell the story of the men at Valley Forge who wrote an imperishable chapter in the history of America's struggle for independence. Your last stop on the tour is at the chapel and museum, which contains artifacts relating to the Revolution.

1:30 p.m. - Board Bus

4:30 p.m. - Arrive back at the hotel

\$31/Person includes  
bus, guide, and admission

\* \* \* \* \*

## PHILADELPHIA CITY TOUR

Friday, August 18th

Board bus for the "City of Brotherly Love." En route your guide gives commentary on King of Prussia and Philadelphia's Main Line. In the city, history comes alive as we stroll along brick walkways and cobblestone streets walking in the footsteps of our Founding Fathers. Among the sites on the most historic square mile in America are Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. Enjoy lunch on your own at the Reading Terminal, Philadelphia's Farmer's Market. Afterwards, drive by the Betsy Ross House; Elfreth's Alley, the oldest continuously occupied residential street in America; Society Hill; Benjamin Franklin Parkway; and Boat House Row, home of the Schuylkill Navy in Fairmount Park. There will be time to explore one of Philadelphia's newest attractions, the National Constitution Center. You will learn the story of the U.S. Constitution through more than 100 interactive and multimedia exhibits, photographs, sculpture, and artifacts.

*Note: The walking portion of the tour will cover approximately five blocks total. Please wear good walking shoes.*

9:00 a.m. - Board Bus

4:30 p.m. - Arrive back at the hotel

\$45/Person includes  
bus, guide, and admissions.  
Lunch on your own.

***Please sign up early for this Reunion.  
It promises to be a good one!***

## Combat Action Copy of Signal Corps Film

Submitted: By Joe Lipsius

Headquarters 272nd Infantry Regiment

6314 Deerings Hollow

Norcross, GA 30092-1800

Telephone: 770/416-7725

E-mail: annejoelip@bellsouth.net

Twenty five minute DVD disc or VHS (VCR) tape of the 69th in Germany, mostly in April, 1945. Made from actual Signal Corps 16mm and 35mm film. Scenes of flag raising ceremony at Fortress Ehrenbreitenstein, movements across Germany, actual scenes of entering and surrender ceremony of Leipzig, devastation of Eilenburg, climaxing with East Meets West at the Elbe River!

A DVD or VCR is available for a minimum donation of \$25.00, or more, to help maintain the 69th Infantry Website. The 69th Association will be sent \$1.00 for each bulletin inspired donation.

Make check payable to 69th Infantry Website and mail to Joe Lipsius at the address above. Send full name, postal mailing address, telephone number, e-mail address, if you have one, and your 69th Unit. Relatives send name of 69er and Unit, if known.

Be sure and specify VCR or DVD





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intentionally.*

## 69<sup>th</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION ON ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations). Your cancelled check is your confirmation. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee. All registration forms and payments may be received by mail on or before 7/13/06. Please make a copy of this form. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

**Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.**  
**322 Madison Mews**  
**Norfolk, VA 23510**  
**ATTN: 69<sup>th</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION**

### OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received \_\_\_\_\_  
 Inputted \_\_\_\_\_ Nametag Completed \_\_\_\_\_

**CUT-OFF DATE IS 7/13/06**

	Price Per	# of People	Total
<b>TOURS</b>			
WEDNESDAY: PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH COUNTRY	\$ 60		\$
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FRIDAY: PHILADELPHIA CITY TOUR	\$ 45		\$
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THURSDAY: DINNER BUFFET	\$ 32		\$
FRIDAY: PX BEER PARTY	\$ 5		\$
SATURDAY: BANQUET <i>(Please select your entrée)</i>			
ROAST SIRLOIN	\$ 35		\$
HERB ROASTED CHICKEN	\$ 35		\$
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UNIT \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST TIMER? (YES \_\_\_\_\_) OR (NO \_\_\_\_\_)

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ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTURE DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU STAYING AT THE HOTEL? YES ☐ NO ☐ ARE YOU FLYING? ☐ DRIVING? ☐ RV? ☐

For refunds and cancellations please refer to our policies outlined at the bottom of the reunion program. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9:00am-5:00pm EASTERN TIME (excluding holidays).** Call (757) 625-6401 or email [cancel@afri.com](mailto:cancel@afri.com) to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.

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**610-265-7500**

The Crowne Plaza Hotel is located at 260 Mall Boulevard, King of Prussia, PA 19406. The hotel is located near Valley Forge National Park and directly across from the King of Prussia Mall, which has over 400 shops and restaurants, including Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom and Bloomingdales. The Crowne Plaza offers spacious guest rooms, each with a coffee maker, iron and ironing board and complimentary high-speed internet access. Some of the other amenities include complimentary access to on site Bally Total Fitness, indoor pool, jacuzzi, an ATM machine, dry cleaning/laundry, and much more. The hotel offers handicapped accessible and non-smoking rooms, which are based on availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your reservation. Plenty of complimentary parking is available. Check-in time is 3:00pm and check-out time is 11:00am. Enjoy the hotel's restaurant, **Stirlings Restaurant**, serving breakfast lunch and dinner, in a relaxing atmosphere. Room Service is available.

The hotel is located twenty-five miles from the Philadelphia International Airport. Shuttle service is available through Tropiano at \$23 one-way pp and \$40 round trip pp. Proceed to the baggage claim area to collect your luggage; dial 19 on the courtesy phone to let Tropiano know you need the shuttle. Advance reservations for arrival and departure are highly recommended – (215) 616-5370 or (800) 559-2040.

The hotel has no parking available for RV's. For full hookup service, *Philadelphia/West Chester KOA* is approximately twenty-five miles from the hotel. Please call toll-free (800) 562-1726 for information, reservations, and directions. Please make your reservations as soon as possible due to limited space and availability.

Should you need a wheelchair while at the reunion, *ScotAround* rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call their toll-free number at (888) 441-7575 for details. All prices quoted include delivery fees.

**Vendors, Schedules, and Prices are subject to change.**

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**69th INFANTRY DIVISION HOTEL RESERVATION FORM**  
**REUNION DATES: AUGUST 14-20, 2006**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SHARING ROOM W/ \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. NUMBER (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ PRIORITY CLUB# \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_ APPROX. TIME \_\_\_\_\_ DEP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # OF ROOMS NEEDED \_\_\_\_\_ # OF PEOPLE IN ROOM \_\_\_\_\_ HANDICAP ACCESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SMOKING \_\_\_\_\_ NON-SMOKING \_\_\_\_\_ KING BED \_\_\_\_\_ 2 DOUBLE BEDS

In the event room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.

**RATE:** \$89+ tax (currently 8%). Rate will be honored three days before and after reunion, based on availability.

**CUT OFF DATE:** 7/13/06. Late reservations will be processed based on space availability at a higher rate.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled by 6:00pm the day before arrival. Adjustments to departure date after check-in, resulting in a shortened length of stay, will result in a \$50 early-departure fee. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

\_\_\_\_\_ AMEX \_\_\_\_\_ DINERS \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MASTER CARD \_\_\_\_\_ DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL \* ATTN: RESERVATIONS \* 260 MALL BOULEVARD, KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406



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intentionally.*

# Rotenburg

**Written By: Gus R. Wiemann**

*Company L, 271st Infantry Regiment  
and Headquarters Division  
7126 Canella Court  
Tamarac, Florida 33321-5342*

Our I and R squad was quartered in comfortable homes in a Leipzig suburb shortly after the 69th met the Russians at the Elbe. One morning we were ordered to pack and jump into a line of 2-1/2 ton trucks. As the trucks rolled down the street, Russian soldiers cradling submachine guns followed us. That drinking and dancing with them was over and the Cold War had begun.

After driving about 120 miles westward we found ourselves in a small village called Rotenburg, roughly 30 miles south of Kassel. Shortly after our arrival we were assigned quarters. Jan, a Dutch soldier assigned to us as an interpreter, and I, found rooms upstairs in a two-story, gray wood-frame house.

The owner, a retired elderly teacher, his wife and daughter, lived downstairs. From our windows we enjoyed a view of a green countryside as the house was perched on a hill. Contrasted with the past months of constant movement into Germany, Rotenburg was like a resort.

One day Jan and I decided to reconnoiter the area. After walking for nearly 15 minutes, we noticed a wooden wine-colored bungalow with a yellow door and two windows over window boxes filled with geraniums. On the wood-shingled roof was a painted flag, a yellow cross on a blue field. Jan, familiar with European flags, identified it as Swedish. We wondered what brought this flag to a German village.

As the small building was only about a hundred yards up a hill, we headed to the entrance. I knocked on the door and a feminine voice called out, "Come in." In a moment, a pretty young lady of about 25 came to the door and greeted us.

"You'll have to pardon my English. I'm German and secretary to Pastor Leander, who is Swedish."

She beckoned us to sit on a large sofa as she pulled up a nearby chair.

"You may be wondering how it is that this house is under a Swedish flag in Rotenburg. Pastor Leander, during the war, received permission from the German government to visit prisoner-of-war camps where he gave American and English soldiers toilet articles and mail. He also brought a phonograph with records which he played for the men. In gratitude, some of the prisoners of war built this house for him. We have some of the records here which I play sometimes. I don't understand all the words, but I like the music. One has a funny name, 'Kalamazoo.'"

"Yes," I answered. That's a city in a state called Michigan. It's the story of a fellow who is going to visit his girlfriend in Kalamazoo."

Laughing, she said, "Oh, I see. By the way, my name is Marie."

"And I'm Bob and my friend here is Jan."

"Would you fellows like to hear a couple records?"

"Sure would, Marie, and I know Jan would."

Within a minute Marie pulled two records from a shelf and we listened to music I hadn't heard since I left the States. One was Glenn Miller's "At Last" and the other, "I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo." For a moment I was back home listening to Glenn Miller's last broadcast for Chesterfield cigarettes. He was telling all of us listeners that he was joining the Air Force, but would be back soon with the gang to play for us.

Almost an hour had passed. We thanked Marie and left. Within a week Jan was sent back to his unit in Holland. While waiting for a reassignment, I visited Marie a few times. We became friends and after I was transferred to the 29th Infantry Division, we corresponded. She wrote that Pastor Leander had returned to Sweden after closing the bungalow. Marie added that she had become engaged to a young man who was studying to be a doctor. Apparently, the only place that he could find to be trained was in a hospital in the Russian Zone.

She wrote that over the ensuing years, the Communist East German Government had restricted their freedom to the point that they decided to escape to the West. They left their apartment, taking only clothes for themselves and their two children to avoid suspicion.

During their escape they boarded a streetcar and sat separately from each other, one child with Marie and one with her husband. German Communist police stopped the streetcar and inspected the identification papers of the passengers. Suddenly the police took two passengers from the streetcar. Neither Marie nor her husband knew whether the two removed were from their family. A short time later, Marie, her husband and the children were reunited, relieved to realize that the police had not taken any of them, and were able to quickly escape into the American Zone.

Years passed and my wife and I, with our two sons, visited Germany. Our tour bus passed through an area of the Rhine where the 69th had battled its way over 25 years earlier. In a few days, our bus reached the Black Forest in southern Germany and we met Marie, her husband and their two children, both college graduates.

Today Marie and her husband are retired. Their son has taken over his father's medical practice and their daughter is a chemist.

*(Continued on Page 14)*

## Policing the Area

When the 69th began redeploying us in the late summer of 1945, it didn't necessarily mean that all of us were heading to the States. Some of us were sent to the 29th Infantry Division in the area of Bremen.

One day after joining the 29th, I happened to notice several German POWs policing the grounds surrounding our barracks. Something about the prisoners struck a humorous or satirical chord.

What follows was printed in the September 29, 1945 edition of the Division's newspaper next to the American Forces Network radio program featuring Yank Bandstand, Tommy Dorsey, GI Journal, Spike Jones and Guy Lombardo:

This morning we watched a detail of German prisoners tidying up our quarters. One of the laborers appeared especially disconsolate and this disposition was reflected in his work. We knew that this character spoke English quite well, so we decided to make with a psychoanalysis.

"Was ist los?" we queried.

The haggard figure in the seedy Wehrmacht uniform emblazoned with an Obergefreiter (corporal) emblem looked at us through watery eyes. He leaned his broom against a wall and tried to get out of his stooped position.

"Ach," Obergefreiter Schnuddel sighed. (He had answered to that name when the sergeant in charge of the detail read the roster.) "Once this camp was a good deal."

"I used to be mail orderly with Kompanie Fritzelknack (German army phonetic name for 'F') and had a good life. We could always go down to the Capitol Theater here in Bremen for the latest UFA Wochenschau (German Pathe News) and see how our troops were hurtling back Russians on the Eastern Front and Americans, English, Canadians, French, Dutch and everybody else on the Western Front.

"Then after the show we would visit the Soldaten (Pvt.), Gefreiten (Pfc.), Obergefreiten (Cpl.), Unteroffizier (Sgt.), Feldwebel (S/Sgt.) or the Stabsfeldwebel (Tech Sgt.) Klubs, depending, of course, on your grade." An excited gleam entered Obergefreiter Schnuddel's languid eyes.

Once a Gefreiter tried to crash our Obergefreiten Klub. Our Obergefreiter took him to an Unteroffizier and we never saw that little Gefreiter again. There was a rumor that he was listed on his company's morning report as being on temporary duty with an outfit stationed at Dachau, but nobody knows for sure.

"Some nights we'd hitchhike into Bremen to visit the German 'Achtung' Red Cross Klub. But usually our

company would send all its vehicles to the Mannschaft (EM) Klubs and so we'd have to walk back to camp, usually arriving back in time for reveille."

We noticed the sergeant in charge of the detail coming toward us, thanked Obergefreiter Schnuddel and left. As we looked back, we could see the sergeant waving his arms in the air and Obergefreiter Schnuddel picking up a good-sized butt.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Kandersteg

It was a little over 60 years ago when our outfit, still in Germany, was told that Japan had surrendered. Our first question was: "When do we go home?"

While we waited to board the ships, return home and pick up where we had left off, a wonderful thing happened. One morning after roll call our First Sergeant said, "We just got a notice from Division that while we're waiting to ship out we're going to get one week passes to these places: Paris, Brussels, Copenhagen or Kandersteg."

Nobody asked where or what Kandersteg was, but the Sergeant explained that it was a Swiss ski resort and that the passes would be doled out to ten of us each week. It wasn't clear how the ten were to be chosen, but when the turn came, I found that my pass was for Kandersteg.

Within a week I was on a Swiss train winding its way through the snow-capped Alps with about 50 GIs from other companies. Our train stopped at one town for about half an hour and we jumped off to walk around. For the first time in months, there were no bombed-out buildings. Well-fed civilians stared at us Americans.

A huge sign in the form of a clock hung over the entrance of a nearby store and a half dozen of us looking for Swiss wrist watches headed for the shop. As we came through the door, an elderly man sitting at a work bench looked up, bewildered by the sudden invasion. We had only five minutes left before our train was to leave. Within three minutes we picked out new stainless-steel automatic watches that showed the day of the week and ran back to the train.

After two more hours we arrived at a small station. The side of its little gray wooden waiting room bore a sign announcing "KANDERSTEG." Grabbing our bags, we hurried off the train and onto the platform. By the waiting room stood a short man wearing a gray suit. A black Tyrolean hat with a white feather in its band sat squarely on his head. He smiled at us and held up a rectangular white cardboard bearing the name Hotel Beveledere.

"Hello," he called. "Over here." We walked to him as he waved to us. "I have a bus to take you to your hotel." As we gathered before him and dropping our bags, he smiled again. "Welcome to Kandersteg! Is everybody here?" After counting us, he called out, "Follow me."

*(Continued on Page 15)*



## KANDERSTEG

*(Continued from Page 14)*

Picking up our bags, we trailed him to a small bus in a parking lot. Once inside, some of us sat on the floor as apparently the seating was meant for smaller groups. After chugging up a two-lane dirt road for about 15 minutes we pulled up in front of a three-story stone building.

Over its entrance it identified itself in bold black letters as Hotel Beveledere. On each side of the entrance was a window over a green flower box filled with red and white geraniums.

Opening the door, Anton hopped off the bus and stood aside until all of us joined him. "Follow me, gentlemen." We tramped into a small lobby where Anton led us to a reception desk. A pretty blonde lady in a flowered dirndl greeted us, assigned our rooms and gave us keys. Anton then led us up a few stairs to a hallway where we found our small rooms. Before we parted Anton called out, "Let's meet in the lobby at six o'clock and I'll take you to the dining room."

My room was just large enough for a single bed, desk and two chairs; in the bathroom were a sink and shower stall. Our trip had lasted two days and I couldn't wait to shower and change clothes. I tried taking a break on the bed. Even though the mattress was hard, I dozed off for about 15 minutes, but woke up shortly before six.

I was hungry and hurried to the lobby to find Anton. He was standing by the reception desk, talking to the blonde. When all of us had arrived, he guided us through a large sunny room featuring a large window and a view of white-capped peaks in the distance. Glass doors led to a veranda with iron-wrought tables and chairs.

Our adjacent room, oak-paneled, was also large but had no windows. A trophy head of an antlered deer presided over a bar with stools in one corner. About a dozen tables covered with white linen and place settings filled the room. As I didn't know any of the men in the group, I sat alone at a table near the entrance.

I had been seated only a few moments when a young lady in her middle twenties, speaking Swiss-German, walked through the entrance with a young man, saw me and asked if they could join me. I sensed that when they saw my uniform, they thought they could practice their English, which so many young Europeans spoke.

I introduced myself and the escort, also in his twenties, said, "I'm Hans, I'm from Bern on a short vacation from school."

Then the young lady, an attractive petite brunette, added, "I'm Jeanne. I'm a newspaper reporter from Bern."

A blonde, teenaged waitress with pigtails approached our table. She had the scrubbed good looks of a girl from ski country. Holding her order pad before her, she

said, "I'm Marie. I'll be your waitress." She appeared nervous, probably anticipating taking my order in English. However, after Jeanne and Hans ordered in Swiss-German, Marie relaxed and smiled.

"What are you two ordering?" I asked. Jeanne described it as a rolled piece of beef flavored with onion and parsley that is braised. "It's really quite delicious," added Jeanne.

"Jeanne, you talked me into it," I said. "How about a decanter of red wine to go with that beef? It's on me." Jeanne and Hans smiled in agreement and with a carefully enunciated, "Thank you very much," Marie left the table.

"By the way, Jeanne, I don't hear any accent in your English. Where did you learn it?"

"My mother is from New Jersey," she answered. "My dad was on business in the States, met her, they married and our home is in Bern."

"And I'm Swiss and going to med school," said Hans. "A few months ago I was on maneuvers in the mountains with my Army unit. We serve two to three weeks every summer. Our Army takes us at 20 and we serve every summer until we're 50."

"And how about you?" asked Jeanne. "How long have you been in the Army? Were you drafted?"

"No, I enlisted and I've been in about two years."

After I gave Jeanne and Hans some background on my home in the States and where our outfit had traveled in Europe, Marie brought the wine, followed shortly by our order listed on the menu as *roulade*.

"What did you do in the service?" asked Jeanne.

"I was in I and R, Intelligence and Reconnaissance. We scouted an area, looked for documents, maps, anything the Germans left behind."

Jeanne smiled. "Talking about intelligence, have you ever heard of an American named Allen Dulles?"

I shook my head.

"Up to now," Jeanne added, "his work here in Switzerland is not well known, but if it hadn't been for him, you probably would not be in Kandersteg, at least not yet."

"What do you mean?"

"Dulles worked with OSS. Through Swiss, German and Italian contacts he negotiated with SS General Karl Wolff, who surrendered all German troops in northern Italy almost a week before VE Day. So, you see, there were probably a lot of American lives saved in that time."

By this time our decanter was almost running on empty. As Marie passed our table I asked her to bring another.

Hans looked at Jeanne. "Tell him about the Japanese."

I smiled at Jeanne. "What about the Japanese?"

Marie brought a second decanter and each of us poured another drink.

*(Continued on Page 16)*

## KANDERSTEG

*(Continued from Page 15)*

"For the last few years I've been taking lessons in Japanese," began Jeanne. "In Bern there was a Japanese news agency. When I felt confident in translating German and English news reports, I went to the agency and asked if they could use a translator. There were three men in the office and after a quick conversation among them, they asked me, 'When can you start?' They didn't hesitate to pay me what I asked."

"Well for the last year I've been translating news out of Berlin and Washington to be forwarded to Tokyo. Beginning in the early part of this year my paychecks began arriving from Tokyo sporadically and then a month before the Japanese surrendered, they stopped altogether. General MacArthur froze Japanese assets and no money was allowed to leave the country."

"When I asked the men in the office about my pay, they told me, 'Jeanne, the only way you can get your money, is to go to Tokyo.' Then they all laughed."

Jeanne finished her drink and sat the glass down. "Gentlemen, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to catch some sleep. There's a train for Bern in the morning and I'm going to be on it."

As she arose from her chair Hans and I stood up. "Jeanne," I said, "it was good to meet you. Let me give you my address in the States and, if you have a chance, let me know how you are and what you're doing." I pulled out a slip of paper, quickly jotted down my full name, address and handed it to her. She studied it for a moment. "Sure, I'll let you know," and she tucked the slip into her purse.

Hans said, "Jeanne, I'll see you in Bern. I'm staying another day."

"Okay, gentlemen. It's been fun," and she walked out of the room.

I sat down and looked at Hans. "Aren't you and Jeanne staying here together?"

"Oh, no. We're good friends, but that's all. She has a boyfriend in Bern. Both of us wanted to escape from the city for a few days. You may have noticed that Jeanne is a very independent girl. She told her boyfriend that she was considering going to the States. He said, 'What do you want to do that for? They have no culture.' Her answer was, 'Give them time. They're not even 200 years old.'"

By this time, our second decanter was empty. We put a tip on the table and as we started to leave Marie came to clear the table. "Thank you, gentlemen. I hope you enjoy your stay."

In the morning I met Anton in the lobby. "Anton, what time does our group head back to Germany?"

"Sir, my schedule says that we meet in the lobby at one in the afternoon after lunch. Then we take our bus to the station for the train to the German border. There another train will take you back to your camp."

Thanking Anton, I decided to walk to what the hotel called the "Ski Station," located about a mile up a nearby mountain. Walking in the crisp morning air was refreshing as I followed signs pointing to the station where the skiers gathered. Reaching a clearing, I saw a few fellows from our group on skis heading down an incline of about 20 feet. Some wobbled, yelled and fell into the snow.

Standing on the side and observing the would-be skiers was our waitress. Walking over to her, I greeted her with "Guten Morgen, Marie." Dressed in a bright red ski suit, she answered, "How are you today?"

I nodded and asked, "Marie, tell me something. The only girl I've seen here is the blonde lady at the reception desk and you. Aren't there some more girls who live around here?"

She stared at the GIs who were throwing snowballs at each other and attempting to ski down the 20-foot incline without falling. Then she looked at me. "Yes, there are girls here, but when their parents heard that American soldiers were coming, they kept the girls at home."

"What, the girls are afraid of us?"

"No, it's their parents."

Then, as I said good-bye to her, I noticed that she was wearing a U.S. Army ribbon. Pointing to the ribbon, I asked, "Marie, where did you get that?"

"A soldier gave it to me."

Examining it a little closer, I saw that it was a good conduct ribbon. I also noticed that she was chewing gum.

By the time I reached the hotel lunch was being served. All I ordered was a Swiss cheese sandwich on pumpernickel and a bowl of chicken soup. After packing my bag I headed to the lobby and paid the blonde at the desk for only my meals as the Army reimbursed the hotel for our rooms.

Anton was standing in the middle of the lobby with some fellows from our group, again smiling, and saying, "I hope that you all had a good time. Tell your friends about Kandersteg."

Whatever number of the group was missing finally sauntered into the lobby. Anton surveyed the group, moving his lips as he counted.

Apparently satisfied that all were present, he called out, "Okay, follow me." We trailed him to the little bus in the parking lot and piled in. At the train station we jumped out and headed for the platform. Whatever time that Swiss train was to pull in, that was the time that it arrived, true to Swiss efficiency.

"Good-bye, fellows," Anton called out. Most nodded in response and boarded a passenger car. As our train left the station, Anton waved. Some of the GIs waved while others stared at the small homes on the surrounding hillsides.

*(Continued on Page 17)*

*Postscript:* About seven years after I had said good-bye to Jeanne, I was a civilian again at home and received a letter from her postmarked "San Francisco." It read:

"Hi! When I returned to Bern seven years ago I decided to go to Japan. It wasn't only the money that was owed, which really wasn't that much. But I also wanted to see Japan and its people.

First I went to New York City and was offered a job teaching English to American Indian children. Most of them spoke only their tribe's languages.

This job took me across the United States and finally to San Francisco. I put an ad in the paper offering to work in the galley of a cargo ship headed for Japan.

One late afternoon I received a phone call from the first mate of a ship headed for the Philippines. He said that the ship was scheduled to leave at midnight.

I told him that I'd be there, packed my things, gave my key to the landlord and took a taxi to the ship. When the first mate saw me, he said, "Did you bring any books?" He decided to pick up galley help in

Seattle. Luckily, I had packed books and sunned myself on deck all the way across the Pacific to Manila.

There I ran into the problem of getting passage to Japan. However, at the American consulate I ran into a man from Philippine Air Lines. He offered me a flight to Tokyo and a return flight to San Francisco if I would write a public-relations story for PAL. I agreed and wound up in Tokyo where I visited my former bosses and was paid.

When the Korean war was going on I went to the American Embassy and asked for a visa for Korea so that I could be a war correspondent. General MacArthur wanted only an American and Margaret Higgins won.

However, I found that the Japanese were hungry for news of the outside world. So I visited chambers of commerce in various Japanese cities and gave lectures on world news.

"Now I'm back in San Francisco and married. My husband works for an insurance company. Incidentally, I still owe PAL a story. If you should ever be in San Francisco, stop by. Sincerely, Jeanne"

\*\*\*\*\*

## Germany 1946



One Sunday morning on a stroll through Altdorf, I came across this Tyrolean-clad gentleman with his son. After asking him for permission to take a snapshot, we had a short conversation. He told me that he had been on a U-boat during the war, was captured in 1944 and spent much of his confinement in a New York City hospital. As we continued our conversation, he added that before the United States entered the war, his U-boat would lie in the waters just off Manhattan, observe our bright lights and listen to American swing music over the submarine's radio.



In front of a downtown Frankfurt store bearing the Barter Center sign is a long line of GIs and their dependents in 1946 waiting for the store to open. Displayed in the windows are fine china, jewelry or whatever valuables the Germans have brought to trade with the Americans. When the Marshall Plan generated the Germans' "Economic Miracle" the Barter Centers disappeared.



# The Stars and Stripes

Photos Submitted By: **Gus R. Wiemann**, Company L, 271st Infantry Regiment and Headquarters Division



This is a photo of the Stars and Stripes editorial and printing plant buildings in Altdorf, Bavaria, a village about one-half hour's jeep ride south of Nuremberg. During the Hitler era, Julius Streicher, the top Nazi in Bavaria, printed *Der Stuermer*, (*The Stormer of The Battler*), here. It was a fervently anti-Semitic and pornographic weekly. Streicher was executed following the Nuremberg Trial.



This newsroom photo shows the managing editor of the *Stars and Stripes*, Ken Zumwalt, seated on the lower right. Around a semicircular table in the background are the copy editors who edit stories from the wire services and write the "heads" for them. Seated in the middle of the table is the slot man who checks the editing and throws it into a box at his left. From here the stories are picked up and taken to the composing room where they are printed.

Incidentally, the slot man is John Livingood who was a soldier in World War I. At the time this picture was taken in 1946, he was a civilian.

**DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR NEXT BULLETIN IS**  
**September 30th, 2006 • Volume 60, No. 1**  
**September, October, November, December 2006**  
*Get Your Material In On Time! Write those stories!*

# California Western Chapter

Submitted By: **Stan Hawk**

10241 16th Avenue, Lemoore, California 93245



Officers of the California Western Chapter: Vice President Dave Theobald, President Stan Hawk, Secretary Homer Lind, Treasurer Lee Wilson.

## Co. C, 271st Infantry

Submitted By: **Lorenzo C. Piscitelli**

*Company C, 271st Infantry*

206 Stoney Way, New Fairfield, Connecticut 06812

I was drafted into the Army in September of 1944, and was sent to Fort Dix, New Jersey for ten days. From there I was sent to Camp Croft, South Carolina. After thirteen weeks of training, I had ten days of leave. After my leave, I then had to report back to Fort Dix. Some days later, we were leaving for New York to board the SS America going to England. From England we went on to a smaller English ship to France.



*I am the soldier on the left.*

## 2006 Long Beach Round-Up

The California Western Chapter of the 69th Infantry Division held their 2006 Round-Up at Long Beach, California on April 23-27. Due to a variety of circumstances, there were only 19 attendees. There was a group tour to the Aquarium of the Pacific on Tuesday. For the first time since the group began meeting, there were not enough members present for a General Meeting. The Board did meet and decided that a survey of the membership will determine the future of the organization. The traditional Memorial Service and banquet was held in the Seafarer Room of the Golden Sails Hotel in Long Beach on April 27th.

### Those who attended were:

**Bettie Bartholomew** ..... Rossmoor, CA  
**Harold and Nancy Faulkner** ..... Walnut Creek, CA  
**Tom and Lou Gallagher & guest** ... Long Beach, CA  
**Stan and Lois Hawk** ..... Lemoore, CA  
**Homer and Pat Lind** ..... Grass Valley, CA  
**Donna Philpott and 2 guests** ..... Sunnyvale, CA  
**Bob Pierce and son** ..... Hemet, CA  
**Dave and Jeanne Theobald** ..... Sacramento, CA  
**Lee and Jan Wilson** ..... Stockton, CA

After the Battle of the Bulge, we were replacements for the 29th Division. Crossing the Rhine River, we had to watch the river for floating bombs. Before we came to Leipzig, the Germans told us there was a cognac factory. We helped ourselves to the cognac and loaded up our tanks. The next morning as we had to leave, the tanks were gone.

Company C, 271st Infantry captured Torgau on the Elbe River. There we waited for about ten days for the Russians to meet us. The Russians had to cross the river to our side.



*Men enjoying cognac on the tanks.*





**Service Battery, 880th Field Artillery Battalion  
Camp Shelby, Mississippi — December 1943**

Submitted By: **Richard H. Carey**, 906D Moore Drive, Americus, Georgia 31709

Richard writes that he is in the second row, 6th man from the right. He also states that he has two of this photo and if anyone would like to have one, please write to him.



# Honoring American Liberators including the role of the Fighting 69th

Submitted By: **Ted Snyder**  
Company D, 271st Infantry Regiment  
3 Carolyn Court  
Syosset, New York 11791

*From the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC tribute to all US Army Units that rescued Concentration Camp sites, including the story of the 69th Division's discovery of a burning slaughter Site at Leipzig-Thekla, a sub-camp of Buchenwald on 19 April 1945. My buddies saw it and wrote about it.*

\* \* \* \* \*

For almost two decades, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the U.S. Army's Center of Military History have worked together to define, recognize, and honor all the U.S. Army divisions that took part in the liberation of prisoners from Nazi concentration camps and other sites of incarceration.

In February 1985, two Holocaust survivors, Sigmund Strochlitz and Benjamin Meed, then serving as co-chairpersons on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council's Day of Remembrance Committee, formally requested permission from the Secretary of the Army, John O. Marsh, Jr., to display in the future Museum the flags of all the U.S. units that participated in the liberation of the Nazi camps. They also requested permission to present these colors at the Days of Remembrance ceremony held annually in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C. Several weeks later, the U.S. Army agreed to cooperate with the Museum in this important joint program.

In 1985, the Museum and the Center of Military History recognized some army divisions as liberating units: the 3rd, 4th, 6th, 10th and 11th Armored Divisions and 42nd, 45th, 80th, 90th, and 103rd Infantry Division.

Within two years, this program generated so much interest on the part of veteran's associations that the Museum and the Center of Military History developed further guidelines and procedures for handling future requests for liberator status. It was decided to recognize units only at the divisional level; to accord the honor of liberator status on the basis of unit records housed at the National Archives and Records Administration, not oral testimony; to accord liberator status to those divisions arriving at the site within 48 hours of the initial division's encounter. To further facilitate



this process, requests for recognition were to come through a formal petition to the Center of Military History or the Museum from the divisional association or individual members of a division. As a result of these guidelines ten more U.S. Army divisions were recognized as liberating units: the 12th, 14th, and 20th Armored Divisions, and the 4th, 8th, 71st, 89th, 99th, and 104th Infantry Divisions, along with the 82nd Airborne Division.

In the 19 years since this program was inaugurated, the Museum and the Center of Military History have recognized 35 U.S. Army divisions for their heroism, gallantry, and help in liberating prisoners from brutal Nazi rule. Each year, the names and flags of these units are presented in a moving tribute at the U.S. Capitol Rotunda for the Days of Remembrance ceremony. In addition, the Museum displays 20 divisional flags at its 14th Street entrance. The flags are rotated so that all the liberating units' colors are prominently exhibited for the two million visitors who walk through our doors each year.

To commemorate the unveiling of the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., in 2004, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum once again honors the brave men and women who risked their lives to free their fellow human beings from bondage.

*(Continued on Page 23)*

## HONORING AMERICAN LIBERATORS

(Continued from Page 22)

### U.S. Army Divisions Recognized as Liberating Units by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Center of Military History.

#### Infantry Divisions

1st Infantry Division  
2nd Infantry Division  
4th Infantry Division  
8th Infantry Division  
26th Infantry Division  
29th Infantry Division  
36th Infantry Division  
42nd Infantry Division  
45th Infantry Division  
63rd Infantry Division  
65th Infantry Division  
69th Infantry Division  
71st Infantry Division  
80th Infantry Division  
83rd Infantry Division  
84th Infantry Division  
86th Infantry Division  
89th Infantry Division  
90th Infantry Division  
95th Infantry Division  
99th Infantry Division  
103rd Infantry Division  
104th Infantry Division

#### Armored Divisions

3rd Armored Division  
4th Armored Division  
6th Armored Division  
8th Armored Division  
9th Armored Division  
10th Armored Division  
11th Armored Division  
12th Armored Division  
14th Armored Division  
20th Armored Division

#### Airborne Divisions

82nd Airborne Division  
101st Airborne Division

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE ROLE OF THE 69th INFANTRY DIVISION

The 69th Infantry Division was formed in 1943 and deployed to England in December 1944. In late January 1945, the "Fighting 69th" landed at the French port of Le Havre and quickly advanced into Belgium. In February, it pushed into Germany, and by late March had crossed the Rhine River and begun its drive eastward to Saxony, where it captured the city of Leipzig on April 19th. Less than a week later, the division made contact with Soviet armed forces at Torgau.

During the fierce battle for Leipzig, the 69th Infantry Division uncovered Leipzig-Thekla, a subcamp of the Buchenwald concentration camp, on April 19th, 1945. The camp had been established in September 1943 to supply labor for the German war effort. At its height, Leipzig-Thekla held approximately 1,400 prisoners.

On April 18th, 1945, the SS guards had set fire to the barracks housing some 300 inmates and shot those who attempted to escape the flames. Upon arriving at the camp, the 69th immediately began providing for

the 90 to 100 survivors. Days later, U.S. Army Signal Corps photographers arrived at the site to document this atrocity. On April 28th, 1945, a U.S. Army Protestant chaplain reported that 325 male prisoners, who were too ill or weak to continue working for the German war effort, had been forced into oil-soaked barracks, which were then set aflame. Prisoners who attempted to escape the conflagration were shot by the guards or electrocuted on the electrified fences. According to the report, the swift advance of the 69th prevented the SS guards from committing a similar atrocity at a nearby camp housing some 250 women.

On April 24th, the newly installed Allied military government in Leipzig ordered the local German mayor to provide 75 caskets for the dead prisoners, floral wreaths for each coffin, crews of workers to bury the inmates at the entrance of the town cemetery, and 100 prominent citizens from Leipzig, representing the "City Government, Clergy, Civic organizations, Chamber of Commerce, and Educational Institutions including the University of Leipzig to attend the funeral services" on April 27, 1945. That day, the U.S. Army supervised the funeral, supplying Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant chaplains to perform the service. A guard of honor composed of survivors of the camp; 100 displaced persons bearing flags of the Netherlands, Belgium, France, the Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia; Allied officers; and 1,000 German civilians attended the ceremony.

The 69th Infantry Division was recognized as a liberating unit by the U.S. Army's Center of Military History and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993.

\*\*\*\*\*

### UPCOMING MINI REUNION

**October 11th, 12th, 13th, 2006**

## Midwest Group Meeting

**WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WISCONSIN**

**The Mead Hotel**

451 East Grand Avenue

Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54494

**Rate:** \$79.00 plus tax (single or double)

**Reservations:** Call or write the Mead Hotel at  
715/423-1500 or 800/843-6323

**Cut off date is September 20th, 2006**

**Program: Tours, Golf, Hospitality Room**

**Committee:**

**John Barrette**

930-25th Place

Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54494-3199

Telephone: 715/423-4921

**ALL 69ers ARE WELCOME  
TO ATTEND THIS MINI REUNION.**

# Your Battery's War Battery B, 881st F.A.

## - Part 2 -

As Recorded By: **George N. Custis**

85-59 87th Street, Woodhaven, New York 11421

14 February, 1945

A fifth section truck, on an ammo run, hit a mine and was blown up.

The driver was **Boyd** and the assistant driver was **Barone**. **Lawler**, **Schaffer**, **Danziger** and **Arne** were in the back of the truck. They had just made an ammo run to Elsinborn, Germany. They had started that morning and were returning to the battery with 126 rounds of M-48 ammo.

On the way back that night it was very cold and very dark. To make matters worse, the road was a sea of mud. The truck was hub deep in the goo and they were using low gear, in low range and just barely able to keep moving with even that. It was completely black as no lights whatsoever were permitted.

It was getting close to 2245 when for some unexplainable reason, the truck slid to the left. As it began sliding off the road, the left front wheel hit a teller mine, and with a flash and a loud crash, it went off.

It's hard to get a clear picture of just what happened after that. **Boyd** and **Barone** somehow got out of the truck without getting hurt. **Barone** said that the truck jumped at least five feet in the air when the mine exploded.

When the smoke cleared away, it was seen that the front end of the truck just wasn't any more. The hood had flown stright up into the air and landed about forty feet in back, just missing **Metz's** truck. The left front wheel, tire and chain, just vanished into thin air. They were never found.

**Barone** said he saw a flash, felt himself being thrown up against the top of the cab, and then suddenly the windshield was all cracked up.

**Lawler** says that he distinctly saw three flashes. The first one caused by the mine, and the other two when **Arne** and **Schaffer** went by him.

**Metz** said that **Boyd** grabbed his carbine and ran up and down the road, looking out to the left and yelling, "Who fired that Goddam bazooka." **Arne** said, "That was a pretty loud noise, wasn't it?"

The men stood guard over the truck until 0300 the next morning when Service Battery came and towed them in.

"Custis"

\* \* \* \* \*

27 February, 1945

On this day, our FO party was in Ramscheid, Germany, near Hollerath. This little town laid just inside of the Siegfried line, and about 1000 yards east

of the International Highway, which at this point is the boundary line between Belgium and Germany.

There had been no action other than patrols on this sector for over two weeks, and it was decided that an attack would be made to capture the two towns, Gescheid and Rescheid. Theses towns were directly in front of us on the next hill, about 2000 yards away. They were on higher ground, however, and because of this, were able to effectively use small arms fire against us.

On this morning, our FO party consisted of **Lt. Redman**, **Cpl. Kriegsman**, **T/5 Starkey**, **Cpl. Hobbs**, **Pvt Weltman** and **Slimmer**. It was planned to lay wire as we moved up on the attack, hence the three wiremen in this group.

The jumpoff time was 0600. Although the objective was only 2000 yards away in a straight line, the group took "the long way around," going through the hills, taking advantage of all the shelter possible. Consequently they marched about four miles. They went around the town of Gescheid and approached it from the north.

Very little opposition was encountered until they reached a point about 300 yards from the assembly point, where leading elements encountered an enemy patrol. There was a short exchange of small arms fire, and the whole patrol was captured. There were no casualties to our men in this skirmish. The group then moved on to the assembly area. While there, Jerry fired mortars and 88's at them.

At 0900, **Redman** called for concentration number 72. This was a prearranged fire on the town of Reschied, about 1000 yards beyond Gescheid. Every gun in the divarty and the cannon company fired on this particular mission. 360 shells were fired in ten minutes, which is one shell every two seconds. **Cpl. Kriegsman** later reported that the concentration had a beautiful effect on the target. It was thought that there were enemy guns there and the effect on this target was to neutralize the guns.

When the concentration was lifted, the infantry walked into the town, standing up and firing everything that they had. The town was taken very rapidly and the casulties were very light.

The FO party moved into town, across an open field, while enemy artillery was falling all around. They took shelter in a communication trench, while **Lt. Redman** tried to find a temporary OP. The Jerries really began shelling the town then. Finally the party moved into the cellar of a farmhouse on the east edge of town, where they had perfect observation of both Rescheid and Kamberg.

**Hobbs** went out on what proved to be an all day job of checking our wire which had been laid on the way up. The only communication we had was **Starkey's** radio. The wire was out.

*(Continued on Page 25)*



## YOUR BATTERY'S WAR, BATTERY B, 881st F.A. (Continued from page 24)

**Lt. Redman** kept watch on Reschied all day, and while at the OP, was hit by a piece of shrapnel in his left hand. It was a serious wound and bled profusely, but he refused to be evacuated by the medics. He had it dressed several times and finally consented to go to the clearing station only after he was relieved by **Lt. Wilson** that night.

The Wire crew finally caught up to the OP the next morning, but they couldn't get the wire in because the TD's had cut it in a few places. It was decided to leave it out until the next morning.

At 2300, **Starkey** and **Kriegsman** began digging in an OP on the forward slope of the hill directly in front of them and looking into Reschied. However, they took off for that town before they were able to get to use it. That night they watched our shells fall into the town. The effects was good.

At 0500 the next morning, word came down from the Inf. Bn. that E Company would make the assault on Rescheid. To do this, it would be necessary to walk across 1000 yards of open terrain, with the enemy looking down our throats every inch of the way. The plan was to jump off at 1130 with Divarty firing a rolling barrage at intervals of 200 yards and the doughboys advancing behind it. At the very last minute, however, the time was advanced to 1100. For some unexplainable reason, the artillery was never notified of this change.

**Lt. Wilson**, with **Kriegsman** and **Starkey** were to make the jump-off with the infantry. The wire crew was to stay behind to follow with the wire when the town was taken.

The assembly area was to be on top of a hill southeast of the town. The Yanks were spotted immediately as they began to move, by the enemy FO's. The Jerries opened up with mortars and artillery at once. Everyone hit the ground hard and often. Suprisingly, there were no casualties to our group.

At 1100 we took off across a mined field, right behind our doughboys who were wonderful without artillery supporting them. Enemy artillery and mortars continued all through the assault, with the FO party right in the middle of things. About half-way across the field they were pinned down by mortars which came too close for comfort. **Lt. Wilson** decided to call for emergency artillery fire on the town, but for some unexplainable reason was refused by battalion.

The mortars lifted for a few minutes and the men continued cautiously, a few yards at a time. Just as they reached the edge of the town, the Jerries again opened up. Everyone hit the dirt, and the FO party jumped into a mound, that they later described as the "Sweetest smelling Horse s---, we ever smelled."

Soon the town was all taken except for a few snipers in some wrecked buildings. The FO party took shelter in the cellar of a temporary infantry CP until the doughboys had cleaned out the rest of the town and established their outpost.

The rest of the afternoon was spent in finding a suitable OP. The only place that would do was in a church steeple. The party fired some adjusting rounds and defensive fires around the east side of the town, to be used in case of a counterattack. None was attempted, however. The Jerries knew where the OP was, and anytime any shells fell near the area, they figured that we were doing the firing and they in turn would throw screaming meemies at the church steeple, and into the town.

In one instance, while the new party was getting oriented, the mortar company began adjusting. We hadn't fired a shell, yet they threw three barrages at us and forced us to temporarily leave the tower.

One thing we learned, was that the doughboys really have guts and will do any job they are given - and when they have the artillery behind them, they do it better.

"Custis"

\* \* \* \* \*

**28 March, 1945**

The FO Section, consisting of **Lt. Wilson**, **Cpl. Starkey**, **Cpl. Kahn**, and **Cpl. Hobbs** were in the town of Widdig on the Rhine, near Cologne three days, when the events described here took place.

The battery was in Sechtem, from which position we were able to fire over the Rhine. We were working with the 8th Division at the time. The Remagen bridgehead had been established for several weeks now and it was thought that the Germans would attempt to counter-attack across the Rhine. The whole west bank was reenforced along this sector. The rumor had it that there were five battalions of artillery supporting a regiment of infantry.

The FO section had relieved the FOs of the 86th F.A. of the 1st Army - a 155mm howitzer outfit, and at this time were working with the 8th Division Artillery. The battery did do a little firing. They had registered on several check points across the Rhine, and fired on a few targets that the plane was able to spot.

The OP in Widdig was in the top floor of a school-house. It was a three-story affair and was about three hundred yards from the waterfront. From the OP, it was possible to see far into enemy territory on the other side of the Rhine.

During their three day stay, the firing battery did some routine firing, while the OP received some mortar barrages and a little artillery fire. They were shelled at least once a day by mortars.

On this day, **Lt. Endres** and his party, consisting of **Sgt. McCrea**, **T/5 Matys** and **Pvt. Middleton** came up to relieve **Lt. Wilson's** party. After orienting the

(Continued on Page 26)

## YOUR BATTERY'S WAR, BATTERY B, 881st F.A.

(Continued from page 25)

later group, **Kahn** and **Hobbs** went to the house where they were staying to load the jeep. **Lt. Wilson** and **Starkey** remained at the OP and after a few minutes **Lt. Wilson** left for the house to assist in loading the jeep.

**Kahn** was loading the back rack and **Hobbs** the bedrolls on the front when suddenly, and without warning, a mortar shell landed to the right rear of the jeep about five yards away.

Both men were hit by shrapnel and thrown to the ground. **Kahn** tried to get up, but was unable for a minute. He felt as though someone had thrust a red hot poker into his back. **Hobbs** was bleeding from his right arm near the shoulder.

**Lt. Wilson**, seeing that the two men were hurt, went for medics. After a minute, the two men helped each other up, and as shells were still landing, went down into the cellar of the house. There they gave each other their wound tablets and **Kahn** dressed **Hobbs's** arm while stopping the bleeding with a tourniquet.

In the meantime, some **Hollanders**, who owned the house that the party was living in, seeing what had happened, came down to help them. They had taken the sheets off their beds and torn them into bandages. The daughter broke up a broom stick and helped apply the tourniquet to **Hobbs's** arm.

**Kahn** later said that although **Charlie** was in great pain, his only comment was, "Stuff, I'm bleeding bad."

The **Hollanders** then helped them onto some straw ticks that where laid and waited for the medics. After the medics did arrive, the men were taken to the 28th Regimental Medic station where their wounds were redressed.

From there, they were taken by ambulance to the 67th Evacuation Hospital in Bonn. It will be remembered that we crossed the Rhine at this point. In my talk to **Kahn**, he again said that although **Charlie** was obviously in great pain, he never said a word. He said, "Sing, now, you son of a b---h."

At this hospital, both men were operated on and **Kahn** had an interesting little story about the doctors who performed the operations. There were three doctors, Griffith, Grady, and Levine, who did the job. They were all from New York City. They had never lost a man, and up to that time, they had performed five thousand operations.

As the men were taken in to the hospital, they were greeted by a large sign over the doorway. It read, "YOU ARE BEING CARRIED IN, BUT YOU'LL WALK OUT." Both said that was the best morale builder they ever had. **Charlie Hobbs** was sent to a General Hospital from there, while **George Kahn** was sent to a convalescent hospital.

**Kahn** returned to the battery on 20 April, while at this writing **Hobbs** has not yet returned.

"Custis"

10 April, 1945

**Cpl. Dick Stoddard** was accidentally shot.

This morning the quartering party was alerted to go on reconnaissance to pick out a new billet area for the battery. The party was to report to the battalion CP at 0930.

At about 0915, **Dick** left me at the Exec's CP to go to the truck where he was to meet the rest of the party. **Boucher** laid his Belgian .38 cal. pistol on the tailgate while he put on his pistol belt. **Stoddard** picked up the pistol and looked at it. He then laid it down and **Kriegsman** picked it up.

In some unexplainable manner, the gun went off. The bullet hit **Stoddard** on the inside part of his right leg just below the groin. As **Freda** and **Kriegsman** rushed to his aid, **Boucher** rushed into the wire room and called for the ambulance, which arrived within five minutes.

**Stoddard** was taken to the 69th Division clearing station. He was later operated on and flown to Paris that evening. The next day, he was flown to England.

We had a letter from him about a month later. He said that he was getting along well and that he hoped that he would be able to come back to the outfit.

"Custis"

\* \* \* \* \*

18 April, 1945

The FO Section was captured by the Germans. In the section were **Lt. Wilson**, **T/4 Boucher**, **Cpl. Starkey** and **Pfc. Weltman**.

At 1600, today they moved out with a column of tanks of the 777th Tank Bn. towards Liepzig. On the tanks were the doughboys of the 273rd Infantry, F Co. The FO Section was riding in their jeep just behind the fifth tank. As the column was being formed, enemy mortar fire began to fall on the tanks. One shell landed on the tank just in front of them, wounding two infantrymen. Everyone hit the ditches. It was decided to move on, however, before another barrage came in.

Soon afterwards as the column rolled into Liepzig, enemy machine guns and PF fire was encountered. The first round of PF landed in front of the fifth tank, the second hit between the tank and the jeep and the third hit the tank itself. The jeep was pushed to the side of the road by the concussion. The driver swerved to the left to avoid hitting a wounded doughboy, and the tank went up on the curb. Enemy machine gun fire was turned on the jeep. There were machine guns at the nearby intersection; the men headed for a nearby house, kicking in the back door to get in. They had two wounded doughboys with them. None of the FO section were wounded.

**Boucher** and **Weltman** stayed in the cellar with the wounded men, while **Lt. Wilson** and **Starkey** stayed on the second floor to keep a lookout. The jeep was parked. The men left it with the radio still on. The

(Continued on Page 27)

## YOUR BATTERY'S WAR, BATTERY B, 881st F.A. (Continued from page 26)

men could hear their headquarters trying to contact them, but it would have been suicide to even try to get out of the house. They hoped that they would remain hidden until the Yanks moved up to rescue them.

Shortly after dark, a German soldier entered the house. He sprayed the first floor with a machine pistol. His idea was to make the occupants of the house, if any, surrender by having them think that he would spray the rest of the house. The Jerry left without any further firing. Then the artillery fire (American) began to creep closer. Every window in the house was blasted out by the concussion of the nearby explosions. Every time a noise was heard outside, it was necessary to waken the wounded, for they moaned in their sleep. Krauts were around the house all night, some even came in for water. The Americans stayed awake all night hoping that the advancing doughboys would come soon.

The morning came and they were spotted by a civilian who informed some SS troops. Fortunately, they did not believe the story. An American doughboy drove up and stopped at the corner, apparently because he saw the jeep, and the tanks. He was instantly killed when an SS trooper shot him through the head. Around the tanks were wounded and dead Americans. The wounded were rounded up by the SS and taken to the monument nearby. For sport, they fired shots into the ground at their feet and over their heads to make them move faster. The FO section decided that it would be suicide to surrender under such conditions. However they were spotted again and this time forced to surrender. They were surrounded and greatly outnumbered, and the Jerries threatened to fire PF into the house. As they were moving out of the house, one of the doughboys who was shot in the hip, was shot in his other leg for failing to move fast enough. The men were brought to the monument and put on the second floor. They were given some medical aid and a small amount of food.

One of the medics gave **Boucher** a pistol to protect themselves against the SS, saying as he did so, "SS no good to Americanos." Another soldier, who appeared to be around 21, told, in sign language, that when the Americans came, he was going to surrender.

When the shelling started and the Jerries thought that the Yanks were really coming, he gave his pistol to **Weltman**. Several minutes later an officer passed by and noticing that the guard had no pistol, made **Weltman** give it back. Later, the same man indicated to **Weltman** and **Boucher** that when he had surrendered, he would hide the pistol behind some books so that the Yanks would still be able to get it. All this went to naught however, for the capture was affected too fast and the German did not have time to hide it. An American infantry officer got the pistol as the Germans were marched out the door.

During the day, **Lt. Wilson** was approached and asked to aid at the monument. Finally at 0100, the Kommandant was prevailed upon to surrender, and the FO section and other prisoners were released. There were seventeen in all.

This was the last pocket of resistance in our sector. When the Liepzig Monument fell, we had accomplished our mission in Liepzig. Later that day the 2nd Division captured their part of the city, and thus fell the Third City of Germany.

The attack on the city was launched by the 2nd and 69th Infantry Division of the 1st Army. As protection for this operation, the V Corps had sent spearheads of the 9th Armored Division to protect the north and east flanks.

The 69th bypassed the city to the south, turned north, and attacked from the east. The original plan called for the attack by the 271st from the southeast, while the 272nd attacked from the east. The 273rd, less two battalions, was to be in reserve. However the Jerries lowered their 88's anti-aircraft guns and used them as direct fire weapons. This caused the plan of attack to be changed. The 271st was slowed to such an extent that the 273rd had to be launched against the southeast section of the city.

The 273rd, after moving to the edge of the city against moderate opposition in suburban towns, launched its attack at 1400. After the attack had been in progress a few hours, orders were received to seize the city hall by an Armored column while the doughs cleaned up the rest of the city. This task force was to consist of tanks, TD's, and Co. F, 273rd. This is the very same column, after much fighting, and with much speed, reached the city hall, only to find it waiting for just such an action. A fight ensued all through the night, until 0930, the next morning, when the Jerries finally surrendered the city.

Meanwhile, the Red and White Battalions were advancing through their sectors, cleaning out pockets of resistance, of the enemy. Organized resistance virtually ceased, in the city, when the two battalions and the task force captured the center of the city. The only remaining pocket was the Volkerschlacht Monument, where the high Nazis and a few remaining SS troops decided to make their last stand. This is the monument that was the prison of the FO Section.

This monument was built in the late 19th Century to commemorate Napoleon's defeat in 1813 and with a few alterations had been turned into a fortress. The fortress was pounded by artillery and turned over to the 1st Battalion, 271st for cleaning out. Heavy sniper fire caused the doughs to withdraw, however. Later a captured German General, two Americans officers and one EM went into the monument under a white flag to seek the surrender of the force defending it. After consideration the monument was surrendered

(Continued on Page 28)



## YOUR BATTERY'S WAR, BATTERY B, 881st F.A.

(Continued from page 27)

at 0100, the next morning. Liberated from it were 15 American EM, 2 officers, and two French correspondents captured from the task force.

With the capture of Liepzig, the Germans lost their third most important city - one filled with ammunition plants and many other factories necessary to the war effort. Most important, however was the blow to their National pride for the Volkerschlacht monument commemorated the dead of the last battle fought on German soil before this war. Now the battle-scarred monument will ever serve to remind the German people that no nation, no matter how fanatical its beliefs in race or leader, can trample on the liberties of an aroused world.

An interesting side light to the battle for the monument was brought to light by the FO section when they returned from capture. It had been planned by the high command, (American) to pour 1000 gallons of gasoline around the monument when resistance was encountered there. Then the artillery would fire WP shells into it, setting the whole building afire. It was expected that the gasoline would run down into the subterranean caverns beneath the tower, and in that manner, burn out the few remaining Nazis there.

When the CO of our battalion learned of that plan he was at the forward OP. He immediately got in communication with the Divarty CO, and told him that there were some Americans in the tower, including the FO section from his battalion. The Divarty CO, then got in touch with the Division Commander and had the whole plan called off, thus saving our boys a very hot time, to say the least.

It is interesting to note that the American high command thought more of the lives of a few American Boys, than taking the tower a few hours or even days sooner. I wonder if the Nazi high command would have done the same thing.

### "Custis"

\* \* \* \* \*

25 April, 1945

We met the Russians this afternoon.

This afternoon, a patrol from our combat teammates, the 273rd Infantry Regiment met an advanced party from the 173rd Regiment, 58th Guard Division, XXXIV Corps, Fifth Russian Army, at Torgau, Germany.

Many events took place shortly before this meeting, but I will relate the ones that concern only us. To properly tell the whole story, it is necessary to go back to 20 April, when the battery was in Polenz, Germany. On this day a class, in FDC procedure was being held, in the battalion CP, by the S-3. **T/3 Buckles** and **Cpl. Custis** attended from this battery. While at this class, a report came in to the effect that it was thought that our observation planes had sighted the Russians about 24 miles away.

The next day, the battalion was suppose to have a service practice, in the afternoon. About 1100, an order came down from Divarty cancelling the service practice. No explanation was given, but it was thought by our S-3, that the Russians being directly in front of us may have had something to do with it. Should they have broken through the German lines and made a rapid advance, they would have been directly in our line of fire.

On the 23rd of April, the battery was in Altenhain, Germany, and I happened to be in the CP, when things began to happen.

At about 1000, a telephone call came in for the S-3. It was from our liaison officer. He said that he was on the other side of the Mulde River, and that about 50 Allied PW's just came in. He wanted to know what he should do with them. The S-3 told him to stay there with them, and that he would contact the Infantry Regiment and have them send some men down to take them off his hands. Before the S-3 had a chance to call Regiment, the liaison officer called again to say that now there were 150. About five minutes later, after talking to Regiment, the S-3 got another call, saying that now there were about 1500 PW's there and that they were coming in by the hundreds. He said that the place looked like Time Square during rush hour. He was told to separate them according to nationalities and report the numbers of each.

About an hour later, the harassed officer called and made the amazing report that he had over 13,000 PW's there, including 7000 Americans and British soldiers. It seems that as the Russians advanced, the Germans released a lot of prisoners, who in turn tried to come to the American lines.

On the morning of the 24th, reports came in that the Germans were evacuating the town of Oshatz, of civilians. This town was our base point. It was said that the Germans expected the Russians to arrive there that afternoon and that they were going to try to defend the town. Late that day, observers reported that they saw red smoke rounds land in the distance. This was the signal that the Russians were going to use to identify themselves. We were to use green smoke, and each of our guns had several rounds ready.

The historic meeting took place the next day, in the manner described in the first paragraph.

### "Custis"

\* \* \* \* \*

1 May, 1945

A poll was held today, to determine what will be known as the "Big Ten" of the battery. A form was given to each officer and man, on which ten subjects were listed. Each man was asked to write back on each subject, the man that he thought best fit that subject. Listed below are the results of this poll.

(Continued on Page 29)

## YOUR BATTERY'S WAR, BATTERY B, 881st F.A.

(Continued from page 28)

### 1. Most Handsome:

1. Cruse, Clyde T., Pvt.
2. Wilson, Sherman F., 1st Lt.
3. Matys, Emil H., T/5

### 2. Best Dressed:

1. L'Anglais, Jean E., S/Sgt.
2. Cody, John J., T/5
3. Freda, Joseph W., S/Sgt.

### 3. Best Liked:

1. Starkey, Andrew D., Sgt.
2. Sampson, Leonard A., T/5
3. Custis, George N., Cpl.

### 4. Biggest Griper:

1. Davidson, Lothar, Pfc.
2. Pastore, Henry G., Pfc.
3. Thomas, Roscoe D., Pvt.

### 5. Biggest Chow Hound:

1. Barone, Carl D., Sgt.
2. Koshinsky, Robert J., Pfc.
3. Hughes, Lucian K., T/5

### 6. Most Likely to be a Thirty Year Man:

1. Lewis, Benjamin C., Pvt.
2. Barone, Carl D., Sgt.
3. Cruse, Clyde T. Pvt.

### 7. Noisiest:

1. Thomas, Roscoe D., Pvt.
2. Kahn, George P., Cpl
3. Pastore, Henry G., Pfc.

### 8. Quietest:

1. Arne, Leslie T., Pvt
2. Stanley, Claude, Pfc.
3. Frazier, Emory T., T/4

### 9. Best Sleeper:

1. Nichols, Frank, Pvt.
2. Arne, Leslie T., Pvt.
3. Hill, Edward V., T/5

### 10. Loudest Snorer:

1. Nelson, John A., Sgt.
2. Custis, George N., Cpl.
3. Roe, Fred W., Pvt.

"Custis"

\* \* \* \* \*

11 May, 1945

We arrived at Leuna, Germany at 1045, after a trip of 45 miles.

Today, the battery took over the administration building of the great Leunawerkes of the I.G. Farben Industries. The plant covers about 15 square miles, and was engaged in the manufacture of saltpeter, fertilizer, alcohol, synthetis soaps, and synthetic gasoline, benzine, oils, and rubber.

The silo in which the saltpeter was stored has a capacity of two and one half million tons; a whole freight train can be loaded in about an hour by the use of an elaborate system of conveyors and belts.

The werkes were bombed many times. The first raid came on May 13, 1944. They were all night raids except for the last few which were devastating daylight raids by the Americans.

The plant finally ceased operations around the beginning of 1945. The great daylight raids were the final deciding factor in closing the plant up, for up to that time, they were able to keep production at about 70% of normal.

The administration building was much too large for the use of the battery, so we occupied some magnificent office suites on the second floor. The building was luxuriously furnished and there was a small theatre on one end of the building on the second floor, complete with two up-to-date projectors. The firing battery occupied the dormitory on the second floor of the fire station nearby.

There were also many laboratories in the building, complete with libraries on many technical subjects.

On the first morning here, we checked the entire building. We found that the second floor was the best so we decided to occupy that section. While we were checking up on the building, some workmen approached us and wanted to know if we intended to sleep there. When we told them that we did expect to do so, they went away. Soon, however, they returned and in a few minutes, dozens of them were carrying up beds from the cellar. This was a very pleasant surprise as we thought that we would have to sleep on the floor.

We were stationed here to keep out the Polish and Russian PW's who had gotten into the building before we arrived and really looted the place. We were also to see that no one took any records out of the buildings. American techicians were being flown here to go through these records and try to discover any secret formulas they may have hidden.

We also established an outpost on the main road between Merseburg and Weissenfels. There we checked all civilian traffic and picked and turned over to the Military Government anyone without a pass. In this manner, we picked up many deserters from the German Army who had changed to civilian clothes.

We patrolled the streets and the plant in the jeeps, and had stationary guards around the tanks in the factory. This was discontinued after a short time, however.

About ten days after we arrived and had time to explore and realize just how big the plant was, we were told that we would have to make an inventory of every bit of equipment in the plant.

We began by counting the railroad cars, and what they contained, and dividing them into different classes. The exact number was not available at this writing but they must have run into the hundreds.

"Custis"

*(To be continued in the next issue of the bulletin)*



# The Congressional Medal Of Honor

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

*Written by: Mike Ferranola*

As you prepare to read this article history divulges that the Congressional Medal of Honor is the highest military award for bravery that can be given to any individual in the United States of America. The award was established by Congress in 1861 and first presented in 1863 as a means of recognizing members of the Armed services who displayed gallantry while in combat.

As reported, the first ever to receive the Medal of Honor were the survivor members of the Andrew Raiders in the midst of the Civil War.

In April 1861, a failed mission to hijack a confederate locomotive behind enemy lines ended in a wild train chase and capture. Out of twenty-five volunteers for the mission, eight escaped, three were reported missing, eight were executed and the remaining six were released after serving a year in the confederated prison camp.

On March 25, 1863, the remaining six survivors met privately with the Secretary of War before an introduction to President Lincoln. At such time they were praised for their bravery and daring actions and were promised to be renowned as heroes. The Secretary then stepped into an adjoining room and returned with a small medal and conveyed to the band of men that Congress had appreciated a new law to have medals minted and awarded to all six men. The Raiders would be the first to receive this military award. This presentation, without a ceremony or fanfare, was the first presentation of our country's Medal Of Honor. The Medals awarded wasn't just the highest honor a serviceman could receive, it was the only one at the time.

Because of no criteria, the Medal of Honor could be petitioned by the men themselves, and in the years ensuing the Civil War, it became increasingly common for veterans to do this. Although a majority of the men deserving of some display of recognition, the Medal Of Honor was the only assimilation available, and was used to acknowledge both the distinguished and inconspicuous.

In 1876, following the slaughter of General Custers troops at Little Bighorn, officers in the command of detachments that survived the massacre had recommended their entire units for the Medal Of Honor and was repudiated by the higher echelon. As previously stated, the Medal of Honor was not intended for ordinary good conduct, but for noticeable acts of gallantry. In review of some cases, only 24 men were eligible to receive the Medal of Honor for their gallant actions at Little Bighorn.

Nevertheless, this was still a large proportion by today's standards, but the idea of awarding this medal to groups as a whole was finally challenged.

In an effort to rarefy the ranks for the Medal of Honor, a Medal of Honor legion was formed in 1890. The group, which consisted of Medal of Honor holders, was ready to defend the award against abuse and to present a clear distinction between the Medal of Honor and the Certificate of Merit.

On July 9, 1918, Congress passed legislation providing language that would ensure that the Medal of Honor could only be awarded in legitimate instances. The clarification of such awarding states: "The President is authorized to present, in the name of Congress, a Medal of Honor to a person, while an Officer or enlisted man of the Army, shall hereafter, in action involving actual conflict with an enemy, distinguish himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty."

Equally significant was the establishment of alternate awards, which replaced the Certificate of Merit with the Distinguished Service Cross, and created the Silver Star - a value that did not meet the requirements of the Medal Of Honor could still be honored. Therefore, the temptation to use the country's highest award for lesser circumstances was terminated. In provisions for disputing whether an individual is entitled to a Medal of Honor, each of the armed services had set up regulations which would permit no margin of doubt or error. The deal of such an accomplishment must be proved by incontestable evidence by at least two eye witnesses and must be so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes gallantry beyond the call of duty.

Apart from the notable honor it conveys, there are certain small privileges that accompany a Medal Of Honor. It's recipients can, under certain conditions, obtain free air transportation on Military Aircrafts within the Continental United States on a "space available" basis. Recipients' children are eligible to attend any of the military academies without the standard appointment from a member of Congress. The recipient is also qualified to receive a special pension of \$400 per month regardless if receiving another pension. The Medal of Honor is presented to its recipients by high officials "In the name of the Congress of the United States," and for this reason it is sometimes called a Congressional Medal of Honor.

As a rule, the Medal of Honor may be awarded for a deed of personal bravery or self sacrifice above and beyond the call of duty only while the person is a member of the armed forces of the United States in action against an enemy of the United States.

Throughout the 2nd World War, more Medals of Honor were awarded to the dead than to the living with similar proceeding in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. As of now there are 3,456 Medal of Honor recipients in which only 147 are still living.

*(Continued on Page 31)*



## THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

*(Continued from Page 30)*

The Medal of Honor was originally designed during the Civil War to represent the valiant efforts of the Union Army, Navy and Marines. However, over the years, the medal became a historic symbol of the bravest of the brave and in respect to those who have earned it. Throughout the years, very little was done to change its design.

In 1782, George Washington established the "Purple Heart," formerly called the "Badge of Military Merit." The Badge of Merit consisted of a heart made of purple cloth and was awarded to soldiers in the Revolutionary War for unusual bravery. The modern Purple Heart was substantiated in 1932, and awarded to members of the armed forces who had been wounded or killed in action.

In 1862, the United States was the first branch of service to have the Medal of Honor sanctioned and blueprinted which also included the Coast Guard and Marine Corps. It was then followed expeditiously by the Army's version of the award. Prior to the authorization of the United States Air Force Medal of Honor, the Army's version of the Medal of Honor was presented to the recipients of the Army Air Force.

Further rationale reveals that Dr. Mary E. Walker, a graduate of medicine, had devoted herself with much patriotic fervor to the sick and wounded soldiers and for also enduring a hardship as a prisoner of war, was the first female ever to receive the Medal of Honor.

A quote from General George Patton once said - he would have given his immortal soul for the Medal of Honor, and at least two other inhabitants of the White House-Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson told recipients, that they would have rather had the Medal of Honor than be President of the United States.

Nevertheless, when presentations of the Medal of Honor are held at the White House, it is customary for the President-the Commander in Chief of all the Armed Forces-to salute the recipients who then returned the salute. It's been said when a recipient is wearing the Medal of Honor, he is generally the one saluted first, regardless of rank.

On August 24, 1921, a bill was signed by President Warren G. Harding to have the Medal of Honor awarded to an unknown American soldier. The Medal was then pinned to the flag draping the coffin of the unknown soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. The President then pinned decorations presented by Great Britain, Italy, Romania, France, and Poland onto the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The ceremony was attended by dignitaries of each of the Nation's whose country's authorized their highest award to be placed on the tomb. During the World War I Era, special congressional action allowed the Medal of Honor to be presented to unknown soldiers of nations that had been our allies.

On March 4, 1921 an act was approved awarding the American Medal of Honor to unknown British, Italian, French and Romanian soldiers. The medal was additionally awarded to unknown American soldiers of World War II and to the unknown American soldiers of the Korean and Vietnam conflict.

As reported, no one can receive a Medal of Honor for acting under orders, no matter how heroically he carried out orders. The Medal of Honor is reserved strictly for those who act out of their own accord and out of complete selflessness. Nevertheless it is these rigorous conditions that set the Medal of Honor apart from all other military commendations.

Conclusion: According to statistics the total number of Medals of Honor awarded to recipients since inception is 3,412. The breakdown is as follows:

U.S. Army - 2,342, U.S. Navy - 744, U.S. Marines - 300, U.S. Airforce - 16, U.S. Coastguard - 1, and the unknown soldiers 9. Through all the traditions that makes America unique, the Medal of Honor is the only one that inspires the most pride. Again, it isn't an honor given easily and it isn't something anyone in uniform can prepare for because their actions are usually spontaneous and always inspiring.

\*\*\*\*\*

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# 3rd Gun Section Battery A 880th Field Artillery

Submitted By: **Delmar Jeffries**  
525 East Spring Street, Apt. 19  
Bluffton, Indiana 46714-3735

The large picture shown below is of the 3rd Gun Section of Battery A, 880th Field Artillery, 69th Division taken at Camp Shelby, Mississippi in May of 1944. **Sergeant Bombardier** of Kansas was our Chief of Section.

I am upper left, **Wright** is upper right, **Gerth** is next to him, **Gilliland** lower right, next is **Egley**, next is **Goldstein**. Partly hidden is **Dunn** and one of the other two is **Creese**. The other man, I don't remember.

Photo right: Back of photo reads May 1944, Camp Shelby, Mississippi. "Sarge and I."





# Robert Weinstock

## Ten Years Later Part II

*Company H, 273rd Infantry*

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Some members of the Fighting 69th Infantry Division may have read my recollections published in the Bulletin, titled "Ten Years Later."

Brace yourself, because there is more. Here I am attempting to lint gather the remainders from my tour of duty: training in the 69th at Fort Dix, and my three years in the U.S. Army, 1955-58, somewhat dismissing order of occurrence; still, tracking down events and sightings, and reflecting on them.

**SIGN ON.** In the beginning (September 1955) I could and should have gone to my draft board and asked to be inducted immediately. Instead, I had just come out of a Time Square theatre showing "*On the Riviera*" (Grace Kelly, Cary Grant) when I walked into the recruiting booth in the middle of the square - probably the most famous of all such services location - and allowed myself to be casually recruited into a three rather than two year hitch.

Volunteering in those days carried, for an overwhelmingly non-volunteer army, a kind of low life designation - "RA" rather than "US" - before my serial number, a dead giveaway to the two year draftees that I had been had (although it was possible to sign up and become a two year "RA"). We Regular Army types had almost all taken the bait for three years or longer. Obviously Cary Grant would have signed on for only two years, and also gotten the girl.

**CURIOSITY.** One of the barn like buildings that we trainees double-timed past in Fort Dix had a bold sign featuring 4F's, but not the usual sort. It read "Find Em', Fix Em', Fight Em', Finish Em.' I don't recall ever having heard an explanation of what "fix" meant in that context (I assume it means to immobilize the enemy). Which would mean there is some infantry division unit(s) that do 'fixing' as a specialty. True? I am, by the way, neglecting but not forgetting the other 4F's that made their way around the barracks: We all know what they were.

**GENERAL FOR A WHILE.** While unit training for two weeks in Vilseck, Germany, with the 280mm Atomic Cannon outfit I was a member of, one cold grey day, I was assigned to stand lonely guard duty at a road crossing, across the road from a tiny German farming settlement. Behind me was some drainage and the inevitable intensely tilled field, worked virtually right up to the road. There I stood and paced, grew cold and waited, 'guarding a cross roads,' where the immense lumbering cannon would turn, returning to base, and waited for the pick up truck or deuce and a half that followed it.

It was a long stand, probably well over an hour, me and my M-1, hanging out, hoping for my cannon, crew and supporting vehicles. The two big guns in the

battalion were towed in suspension, between cabs, maybe 8-10 feet high at either end, with drivers, or locomotive and a caboose at the end.

The only attention paid to this miserable sentinel (me), came from the local boys, (Nazi Bratzi - none of their sisters, the Nazi Schatzi - were present) who circled, pranced around, told jokes, had no smokes, and sometimes peppered me (almost entirely without a clue where Deutsche was concerned) with questions or comments, almost entirely in German. That was a little surprising, since most Germans, even der junge seemed to have a fair command of English. Of course I'd never been at a place as tiny or as remote as this, and never was again.

The boys, off and on less than a dozen, though never as much as half that at once, must have ranged from about age seven to earliest teens. Of course I hadn't much conversation for them in any case, but the language barrier turned me into a silly or somber 'ja vohl-er' when I attempted to make some effort across der kultur gap. Still after sessions of imaginative umlauting und sprekenze with one or another of these Wehrmacht cap wearing, lederhosen or corduroy clad kids, one would direct remarks and, fairly obviously, questions to me and I would nod, or try a few words of make believe Field Deutsch, to very little effect.

One direction of their oft repeated curiosity that I finally grasped was questions about what kind of "auffitzier" I was. The choices seemed to be "unter" or "uber" officer and I responded affirmatively to both on different occasions. This went on a bit, with the boys wandering back and across the road to where they lived in two story grey-brown seemingly mud daub homes; a tiny improvement over the American Quonset hut of the prior decade.

Finally, after a long time, when a group of them were jabbering at me, and it had become a little annoying, I whipped my M-1 off my shoulder and held it in a sort of menacing present arms stance, doing my best to glare at them and semi shouted "Ish bin ein Leutenant GENERAL" (rhymes with 'ven' in venerable or a social disease) "de nomme bist Von Schmeneral! Herr General VON SCHMENERAL!"

That broke it off. They both retreated in numb Teutonic obedience, und schlappenze knickers mid der giggles, but they pretty well ended the third degree, and disappeared back into their tiny corner of Der Fadderland. In a few minutes I saw, in an open upstairs window, one of the lads, presumably with der mutter, looking out at me. I could hear a little of the chatter and her voice carried just enough that I think I could hear her interrogative, something like, "Das ist ein general?" as in "that grunt - a big shot?"

Of course I'm certain both knew - or believed - I was sprechen nonsense, but I loved the thought that maybe some of das kinde und family, with a kind of rural Germanic gullibility, literalness and unending

*(Continued on Page 34)*



## ROBERT WEINSTOCK TEN YEARS LATER PART II

*(Continued from Page 33)*

reverence for authority might half believe that I was in fact undercover brass who had been annoyed by Hans und Fritz into unmasking himself.

Within a few minutes the cannon came lumbering past, followed by my pickup truck that took me back to our Coleman type stove fired temporary squad room, rest and chow.

MOM'S AWAY! The rigors of army life was interrupted nicely for me several times over my three year hitch as my parental units, chiefly my mother, found ways to be and time to spend with me now and again; as I fought my way through peace time service, at home and abroad. I should add that my parents had been divorced in 1943, after which my mother, an RN with the New York City Health Department, joined the U.S. Army Nurse Corps on May 1, 1943, a tour of duty that included four gallant Atlantic voyages aboard the Hospital Ship Wisteria.

After discharge in 12/45 she returned to the NYC Health Department, and by 1956 she took an early retirement and that year re-upped so to speak, joining the officers corps of the United States Public Health Service, until her final retirement.

My second eight of basic training - artillery - a cycle that was interrupted by my transferring from Fire Direction Control and dropping out of the competition to attend OCS, was at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. By early '56, during my second half of my second eight, Mom tripped on down to Fort Smith, Arkansas just outside Chaffee and I used an overnight or weekend pass to meet her there. We bussed into Hot Springs, past a row of spas or health restorative hotels, featuring the local waters, to a downtown hotel. The only thing I recall from that evening is that for some reason or other I felt the need to wash my GI drawers, figuring I could dry them before dinner, on whatever heating device was in the room, but they remained thoroughly wet till the next morning. I ate dinner wrapped in a bath towel, under my OD's.

Next stop, my first TO&E post, was Fort Carson Colorado. By this time, July or August 1956, I was just finishing up the course that turned me into a CBR instructor and Mom was quits with the NYCHD, awaiting assignment with the USPHS that fall, and was reprising a trip she had made after nursing school, with her sisters, in 1927 to California, eventually for a stay (including private duty nursing) in San Francisco - her location as she recalled when Lindberg made his flight to Paris.

She had ample time again, traveling by train (they went via the Panama Canal in the 1920's) and was probably in Colorado Springs well over a week, maybe. I'm certainly uncertain but she might have done some private duty in town.

Nonetheless we got around a lot, helped by a Sergeant Thompson who I had teamed and kind of palled up with in the CBR Class. He had wheels and drove us through the nearby spectacular Garden of the Gods. Mom and GI made it by bus for a visit to the Broadmoor Hotel, in or near Colorado Springs.

Later, downtown in the springs, we stopped by the American Legion Post and had a still favorite picture of her taken, schmoozing the bartender. It may have taken some leave to do so, but we also tripped along to Denver and stopped at the Brown Palace Hotel. It was from there that she picked up the memorable observation car on the Southern Pacific to Frisco.

Come early October '56 the Eighth Division was due to embark for Germany. I arrived on leave in Brooklyn around mid September. Mom may have been in Washington absorbing the do's and don'ts of her new career as an advisor to the government of India. I don't recall.

The apartment she and my Aunt Roseanne and I lived in prior to the Army (except, in my case, on weekends with Dad in Brooklyn) in Stuyvesant Town in Manhattan was still home to Rosie, but I think I stayed with Pop, and I know he and I went to see a last Brooklyn Dodgers game (I got in free, in uniform) at Ebbets Field. A Farewell to Bums.

I do know that I hadn't been in Germany, stationed at Schawbisch Gmund for maybe a month when Mom stopped there for a few nights. I had a pass to say hello and so long for the time being, and she moved on to India for the USPHS.

By my next parental visit, summer 1957, I was, I think, stationed in Geissen. This was a well planned more or less two weeker - regular summer vacation from his job for Dad and leave for me. I met him in Frankfurt where he picked up a Volkswagen, maybe the first and last Volks for either of us - at least I don't recall ever being in one again, despite the popularity of the beetles in the U.S. in the 1960's and into the 1970's. Pop and I took off more or less for Italy, via a corner of Austria and Switzerland.

It was a fine trip, including hairpin turns in the Italian hills or Alps, strolling the Bridge of sighs in Venice, Lake (probably) Lucerne in Switzerland; the sights in Munich that recalled the rise of Hitler. On the Road Again. I recall feeling a little cramped and much less secure than I had riding or driving deuce and a halfs, even quarter tons or jeeps.

After an entirely mess hall diet (I occasionally slipped off base for a schnitzel, but hadn't for some time - saving for the trip, but I needn't have. Dad picked up almost all the cost, the food, from South Fatherland to middle Italiano was rich, varied and compared to Mess Hall Grub - to die and worth living for, three times a day. If Europe is alienated from us now, it was all unity then and just the food seemed easily worth have fought World War II over. There was

*(Continued on Page 35)*

## ROBERT WEINSTOCK TEN YEARS LATER PART II

*(Continued from Page 34)*

so much of it in so many finger lickin' locations but I have only one certain memory of a restaurant (Famous, for me Nameless). That is to say while in Rome we had pasta in the restaurant where Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford had presented the owner with golden serving implements. That was some specy-spicy meat a ball.

Mom had frequently said that Pop was a frustrated artist. He had studied art when he was young, turned out several nicely done paintings - whereas I keep trying, but cannot get the hang of most of the technical aspects of painting.

So, we took in the Vatican, the Uffizi Gallery (is that Milan?) the bridges and canals in Venice, Michaelangelo's David, sloppy architecture and run down ruins from Pisa to Rome, enough upscale slumming to last a lifetime, some more meat-a-ball in Bolzano, the urp, gas, works. It was while traveling the fairly narrow road to Rome, much traveled by trucks, including swaying tandem trucks, which always gave me a little jitter, including on the autobahn, that I finally prevailed on Dad to let me drive the Volksy for a little while.

I had an army license and, though not regularly assigned, had driven jeeps to 2-1/2 tons without difficulty. We changed places and I began 'driving' that is to say I drove a little and weaved a lot, since the control, the steering wheel on the VW, which Pop took to without difficulty, had nothing like the heft or grip that turned Uncle Sam's wheels, and I drove loosey-goosey curvilinear style, roadside to maybe across the (temporarily unoccupied) center stripe. Almost immediately my old man wanted me to pull off the road, but I tried to stick with it, scared and fighting for control, for many seconds, until one of those tandem trucks, driven as it appeared, by a from way down the boot dark skinned Italian, occupied the opposite side of the road, bearing down, closing the distance, tandem swinging loose, as they all did, swaying along behind.

I continued to circle my wagon, appearing I guess to that hard driving teamster, likely as not, to be umbrago and unable to decide which side of the road I preferred to travel on. I was probably near freezing up behind the wheel when my father demanded loudly, "Kid, pull over to the side of the road." It worked. I stopped and we muttered our particular thanks.

I never before or after heard my father use a racial or ethnic epithet, but like many of us, a good fright connected him to his surroundings and culture, and, the emotional undertow brought down the house. "God damn kid," he said. "You must have turned that Guinea white!"

We changed places all the way back to the airport in Frankfurt.

In early 1958 Mom finished an assignment of about 15 months in India and transferred to Libya, when we still had a base or bases there. We corresponded about

getting together in Europe, come early summer, especially to attend the 1958 Brussels World Fair. I couldn't have imagined how soon I would see her.

In fact, within weeks of her arrival in Libya her driver, a third country national (non-Libyan driving an American in Libya), driving her in the desert, fell asleep at the wheel, careened into a ditch and left her with serious injuries. She was found by passing British medics, who transported her to an American or allied medical facility.

I got the news from my CO, and permission to visit her immediately in a service hospital she was being airlifted to Southern Germany, where she began her, apparently, fairly rapid recovery.

I spent about four or five days visiting her, ratcheted and slung up in bed, and seeing her doctors who provided reassurance. I wish I could recall where I stayed then. I presume it was some enlisted men's quarters, although I may have lodged with a psychologist, Major Kahn, Mom had become fond of.

We kept our date in July, 1958, although we missed connections at first, but finally met in Paris. Swinging right into the language of the 1960's and apparently forever beyond, we DID the Follies, the Awful Eiffel Tower, shopping for clothes, markets, vive Le Food French and light on the artistry de Paris.

Which brought us by train or plane to a crowded Brussels, filled with amusements, everything in fact except anything resembling a hotel or really comfortable place to stay, which gave us a few anxious hours. We were finally placed in a not so lavish private home with a friendly owner. The tiny room was a walk up with a trip downstairs to the (clean) outhouse. The mattresses were - for perhaps the only time in my life-straw filled and if you moved certain ways you could feel little pricks to remind you of it.

The Brussels Worlds Fair was brief for us - I think just a part of a night and much less than a full day because, unlike in Paris, something or other internal, and maybe a kind of prop and straw lag, was disagreeing with Mom. We did get up onto whatever contraption was the Brussels Fair centerpiece and at least part of the American pavilion, but didn't make it to the early closing Soviet exhibit (Boo!), which were much remarked upon competitive exhibits.

Actually if there was anything about Brussels that gave it an emotional tug, that was the owner of our walk up, who spoke okay English. In a brief conversation of welcome, and probably a few pointers about the fair, just across the street we fell into some discussion of the war. It was only about 14 years past for the Belgians and our landlord became very emotional, tearing up as he described his own and the feeling of the Belgians out in the forest not so very far away during the Battle of the Bulge, and the suffering and sacrifices the Americans were making in the Bulge at the time. No exact word of his remains with me, only

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## ROBERT WEINSTOCK TEN YEARS LATER PART II

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a clear thread of the conversation, but his feelings and emotional attachment to the American boys dying to liberate his nation, is indelible. It is sad to know with much certainty that that sort of attachment with Europeans must be rare today, existing almost entirely among what the French would probably call "Les Anciens." Pardonez Mon Francais!

Probably not one in a thousand GIs who moved from post to post and served both stateside and overseas ever had as much in-service contact with his parents, particularly his mother. For me the visits from home, helped to kill the homesickness. I loved the way Mother phrased it decades later, when we were recalling those days, world traveling. She had been, she told me, "a camp follower."

Fort Chaffee Reville: Our trainee squad leader, a good sized oaf and pretty much perpetually mean mouth was at the head of my rack (one of the few times I had a lower) moments after lights on, just as I was stretching my arms - and there he was screaming in my face, commanding me to get up - in which I was trailing my bunk mates by about five seconds.

I reacted, trying to push him away and he slammed me back down and made a few disparing or threatening remarks and was gone, thankfully forever. There was no upshot, but evidently I had touched a nerve. I remember it because I was probably as frightened as I ever was in the service, except for two occasions when I might have been killed in training and duty accidents - mentioned in my earlier submissions.

BIBLIO SCHATZI - I had at least one encounter in Germany, 1957, prior to my last post, that might remind some WWII GIs of the Fighting 69th of the Germany they broke into in 1945.

Unlike I guess a large majority of those I served with, I made frequent use of base libraries where and whenever I could. I am a little hazy now on pinpointing exactly where this particular library was, although pretty certain of the when (1957), and I think I was in Bad Kreuznach (am der Nahe - that's a river).

At this base the library was midway between the ground level commo section I was assigned to, and a well patronized snack bar that we pretty much took breaks in. For all its location, and judging by maybe scores of my visits, the library was badly under utilized.

Had they taken the time to stop on the way to coffee and Danish my comrades in arms would have discovered a - its not far fetched to say - a beautiful young German woman who spoke nearly flawless English, had a glorious smile, skillful proportions, with the sweetest, most helpful manner. I think her name was Maria.

Short and semi-sweet, I tried for a while to make that small library my home sweet home. Maria knew a lot of her stock, the history, biography and fiction she had read or generally familiarized herself with, and

that gave us some conversation - although I made it a point for quite a while to spend most of my time at das biblio just reading, not quite wanting to let on that, good books or not, she was the real attraction.

Her hours were probably from around 9-5, with another lady on duty later and while I was a regular or 'the' regular I made sure that I spaced my visits, stayed away more than I came, to be around this adorable older woman, who might, might, Oh Hell, it couldn't happen.

Well its not a story with a storybook ending, but over several months I did get to talking with her, learning a little about her schooling, the discipline it took for her family to survive, together, the fear that came with the war, and yet the kind of relief that most Germans had when they understood that things would be all right, with the Allies there.

I never pushed any political topic or tried to investigate just what she and her family really believed, knew or felt about those years when a German was either fully complicit, trapped in what must have been a nightmare for some - or some combination, living in a world where Germany seemed to have been after the First World War, and yet intelligence and humanity must have dictated that the masters of the Third Reich were saying and probably doing dreadful things in the name of the German people.

All I knew for certain after a while is that she was very happy to have her job, and that things seemed to hang together for her, although I didn't ask any personal question about her life and relationships. Maria must have sensed that my developing interest was not founded entirely upon bookish pursuits or cultural or historical insights. I even felt a little guilty that I might be interested in a woman who was other than a good old fashioned American Girl.

In fact its almost certainly true that I wasn't really falling or head over heels for her, for although several guys who lived off base had married Germans, that fact was a huge drawback for me. I couldn't imagine Maria and I as the real object of one another's affections. On the other hand she was there, I was there, she was beautiful and kind and what was there not to want to enjoy, re the company of 'Maria(n) the Librarian.'

Cutting past the chase - after many visits and first name informality, and after I had established some familiarity with downtown, wherever it was, and talking about it with her, it must have been pretty obvious to Maria that I was on the verge of suggesting that we meet somewhere less enlightened such as a restaurant or beer garden that performed some dancing or even noisy stomping around music.

We never got there. Quick like a bunny, with no earlier suggestion that she was not wholly at liberty (and her fingers gave nothing away) Maria found it wise or convenient to mention something about her finance or husband, who was, donchaknow a medical student.

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## ROBERT WEINSTOCK TEN YEARS LATER PART II

*(Continued from Page 36)*

I saw and spoke with Maria several more times in that little library, but for the moment covered my deflation pretty well, saying something like, "That's great. You're going to be a doctors wife."

Since I wasn't scouring the local bars on 'schotze patrol,' I have to admit that even though I was uncertain about what I might want from Maria, there must always have been that lurking sensation that maybe I would just 'get lucky' just this once and somehow it would be all right with her and God in his Heaven. But then I knew I would be holding my fire for the duration.

There was an earlier and also memorable encounter of Maria's - one that you've all heard in person, or heard of before, but at least I never heard it from another German.

It was about her meeting with the first Americans who came across her in 1945. I think she said she was age 16 - and he was an 'older' American officer. I know she said she answered a lot of his questions about things locally and finally he asked her if she could tell him where to find the town's Nazi.

"I am a Nazi" Maria told him, apparently without hesitancy or shame. She said he smiled and gave her the then famous answer "you're the first Nazi I've met in Germany."

COUNT OFF! You may recall that back in Fort Dix, in the 69th, our marching song was The Fort Dix Boogie, which went: "Pick 'em up and put em down. Forty inches all around. That's the Fort Dix Boogie. What a cra-azy sound!"

In Arkansas there was no marching song, but at Dix there had sometimes been a Heidi Ho and Heidi Hi, sing it low and sing it high, that's the Fort Dix boggie' chant used. So, toward the very end of my cannoneer cycle I concocted a little ditty and convinced whoever was marching my platoon to have a go at it, one time. It began like the Boogie, but the rhythm changed part way through: "Heidi Hi and Heidi Ho. Sing it loud and sing it low. Make it sound like cannoneers. Sheddin' tears and drinkin' beers. That's the Cha-a-ffee Chant!"

The overseas version, allowing for political change, must have ended something like the cadences of World War II: "If I die on the Russian Front, etc.

LESS MESS, SOCCER SHOCKER - In Germany we were no longer assigned to KP, since those jobs were handled exclusively by Germans. Yet at one of the barn like mess halls I chowed down in, the mess sergeant, not a bad sort, put up a sign one evening asking for volunteers to do some painting for a few hours. There was some sort of scaffolding at the back of the hall where we would work.

That sounded to me like something a little different, sort of fun and while we were eating the mess head moved around suggesting a little recreation right out of Tom Sawyer. After he retired there was a murmur

to the effect that volunteering for something that sounded like fatigue duty would be a violation of the enlisted man's solemn obligation to avoid any detail not transmitted in the form of a 'do it or else' order.

There have been times in my life when I have gone against the tide of opinion and I probably rarely have suffered for it. Again, there have been times when I haven't applied myself to something I ought to have regarded as an obligation to perform and learn from, and been sorry for it. Re the mess hall call to work few hours of free time I may have taken counsel of a fear that I would have been seen as some sort of traitor to my rank, or just dropped the subject mentally.

The opposite sort of encouragement from the sergeancy occurred one year at around Christmas time. A notice was put up in my barracks allowing that as a sort of touchy-feely good will gesture anybody who wanted to could take off for a few hours at certain times to go downtown and join in soccer games with local orphan children. I believe a note was added, suggesting bringing candy or other sweets.

The result was that members of the battery did show Christmas spirit embodied in doing good, having a swell time and being off work. Not for the commo section however, where despite his inability to stop us from going the section sergeant was adamant that he would not look with favor on any such good hearted, and to his way of thinking, goof off gestures on our part. Courageous below and in total ignorance of the call of screw duty, nobody bucked him; we all stayed put.

Note to reader: the recent tragic terror bombings in London bus and subway lines recalls to mind a squad member - a bright if oft miserable sort, British born, with vivid memories of the London Blitz (he must have been about age five at the time, but a Blitz is a Blitz).

Memorably he regaled us with what might have been the most enjoyable item of the DEFIANCE OF THE BLOKES:

"I don't want to join the navy ('noivy')  
I don't want to go to war  
I just want to sit around  
Piccadilly Underground and-  
Fornicate me bloomin' life ('loife') away! ('awoi')!  
And fornicate me bloomin life away!"

When one of use had to stand guard duty and was buffing up a spit often a demand would rise for: "soldier, what is General Order Number One?" The response never varied: "To walk my post from flank to flank, and take no crap from any rank! Sound off!"

No, my time in the service wasn't mostly low grade scatological humor, but we had our share. The bad comedy didn't end with the Good War.

To all who served in the 69th at risk of life and limb, I wish to express my gratitude for the enduring freedom that your perilous service sped along, and that to this very moment is still threatened. It has been, still is, a hard peace, yet you did your job without stint or question and we have lived in the shade and light of your service.



## "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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