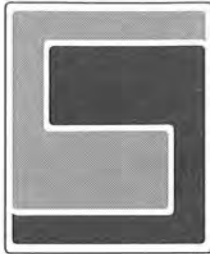


FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

★★★★ Association, Inc.



VOLUME 60, NO. 3

www.69th-infantry-division.com

MAY – JUNE – JULY – AUGUST
2007

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

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

bulletin

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Officials and Citizens of Germany recognized for paying tribute to The 69th Infantry Division

- Ceremonies held April 12 and April 25, 2007 -



Front row on the left, the former Honorable Mayor of Torgau, Wolfgang Gerstenberg, Herbert Schedina, Karl-Heinz Lange, Honorable Mayor of Torgau, Andrea Staude and Heinz Richter. Back row, on the left, Mark Scheland, U. S. Consul General Leipzig, Honorable Mayor of Strehla, Andreas Haberland and Dr. Uwe Niedersen.

(Continued on Page 2)

OFFICIALS AND CITIZENS OF GERMANY RECOGNIZED BY 69th INFANTRY DIVISION

Submitted: By **Joe Lipsius**

Headquarters 272nd Infantry Regiment

6314 Deerings Hollow, Norcross, GA 30092-1800

Telephone: 770/416-7725

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On April 12, 2007, Mr. Mark R. Rousek of the Leipzig U.S. Consulate General Office, delivered remarks for the United States government during ceremonies celebrating the 62nd Anniversary of the liberation of Naumburg, Germany from Nazi tyranny. As a representative for **Mr. Paul Shadle**, President, Fighting 69th Infantry Division Association, he also spoke to honor **Captain Juergen Moeller**, Captain QMC, Ansbach/Bavaria, Germany, for his contribution to memorialize the 69th Infantry Division. Captain Moeller authored three books on WWII and helped to establish a 69th memorial tablet in the Weissenfels, Germany Museum. Speaking for Mr. Shadle and all the members of the 69th, a plaque was presented to Captain Moeller in appreciation and in gratitude.

On April 25, 2007, a reception was held by the Honorable Mayor Frau Andrea Staude on Elbe Day in Torgau, Germany to honor the 62nd Anniversary of the WWII East Meets West link-up the United States and Russia. The U.S. Consul General Leipzig, Mr. Max Scheland spoke, as did Col. David Allwine, Defense Attache, U.S. Embassy, Berlin, Germany. In his remarks, Mr. Scheland, also representing Mr. Paul Shadle and the 69th, honored and thanked several officials and citizens for their part in construction and maintenance of The Strehla Memorial Park and the Torgau Memorial - scenes of two of the three linkups on April 25, 1945 - as well as for recording the story of the link-ups and the staging of Elbe Day.

On behalf of **Mr. Shadle** and members of the 69th, special plaques of appreciation and gratitude were presented to the Hon. Mayor Frau Andrea Staude of Torgau, the Hon. Mayor Andreas Haberland of Strehla and the former Hon. Mayor Wolfgang Gerstenberg of Torgau.

For their part in the construction of the memorials, recording the history of the linkups and the staging of Elbe Day, plaques of appreciation and gratitude were presented to Mr. Karl-Heinz Lange, Dr. Uwe Niedersen, Mr. Heinz Richter, and Mr. Herbert Schedina.

Consul General Scheland also delivered a special "Thank You" for **Mr. Shadle** and the 69th to all others who contributed time and money towards the construction of these two unique memorials.



Example of Plaque

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

Reunion time is nearing and we hope you have made your reservations by now. If not, you had better do it as soon as possible. The cut-off date for reservations is July 19th, 2007. We are looking forward to our visit to Salt Lake City, Utah and hope you will be joining us there.

The Division has presented 6 plaques to different individuals that have been instrumental in maintaining monuments, parks, and museums in Strehla and Torgau. We will have a copy of the presentations available at the reunion.

I have sent out questionnaires to the Board of Directors on what site they would like to see the reunion held at next year. The suggestion has been to go to Washington, D.C. The final decision will be made at the Board of Directors and Membership meetings in August at the reunion.

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.

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

George M. Haddad, 30180 Cheviot Hills Drive, Franklin, Michigan 48025-1552 — Co. E, 272nd: In the massive fire of July 1973 millions of army records were destroyed. The fire destroyed the major portion of records of Army military personnel for the period 1912 through 1959.

My rank as listed upon discharge in 1946 was incorrect and a few years ago I decided to try getting it corrected. It was like trying to get the earth to orbit in another direction. The fire eliminated any possible chance for verification and although I submitted three pieces of unimpeachable evidence as against zero from the National Personnel Records Board its stance remained in a rigor mortis position.

The board and its minions took a final stand that during WWII and the Korean War up to 1959 there had not been the rank of Sergeant-Major. I maintained that it existed and in my military listing table it is shown as #584. In my Form 100 which depicts the various duties of Army personnel at discharge it also describes the duties of that particular Sergeant-Major.

I would appreciate hearing from military personnel who served up to 1959 any testimony they can render relative to their experience with soldiers whose ranking was that of Sergeant-Major. I was fortunate in recently reading the story of a former GI in the April issue of another magazine who had been promoted to Sergeant-Major during that era.

I don't know how one effectively fights the bureaucracy when one has neither affluence nor influence, but I do know that when you have fellow veterans covering your back you have stalwarts who will be very hard to deny. All I need is testimony regarding the Sergeant-Major position and would appreciate your help. Please e-mail to gmhaddad@comcast.net or mail to 30180 Cheviot Hills Drive Franklin, Michigan 48025 or if you have questions the phone number is 248-855-3390.

Raymond (R.K.) Mann, 18535 Melissa Springs Drive, Tomball, Texas 77375 — Hq Co., 3rd Bn., 271st: I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all your hard work as editor of the bulletin. When it comes in the mail, all else comes to a halt. I sit down with it and don't get up until I have read every word and studied every picture! You are appreciated!

I have sent along this short story, that I think other members will find amusing.

69th Beans: In early February, 1945, my regiment, the 271st, had taken up its first combat positions in the vicinity of Hollerath, just inside the German border with Belgium. Although the winter snow was beginning to melt on clear days, it was still very cold. My unit, Third Battalion, must have been in reserve positions at this time because I remember that we in Headquarters Company were permitted small campfires during daylight hours. We would huddle around such fires until our faces were black from the wood smoke.

One of the boys in my A&P platoon was really "green," having little knowledge of living in the field. One day, this lad put a can of beans in the hot coals of our little campfire without first opening the can. Soon the predictable occurred. The can exploded, spraying us with scalding hot beans. As luck would have it, the GI who received the most of this unwanted shower was the platoon grouch. You know the type—always the first to gripe when things went wrong. At first the poor fellow just sat motionless, perhaps trying to decide what had happened to him, but when the perpetrator whimpered, "Aw, I was going to eat those," the victim sprang to his feet, shouting, "I'm gonna kill him!" Were it not for being restrained by the rest of us, he might have made the green kid our first casualty of the war.

To avoid embarrassing them, I have omitted the names of the two principals in this little drama. If they read this, they know who they are and I hope they get a chuckle out of remembering one of the lighter moments of a very serious time in our lives.

Norman White, 538 S. Lakewood Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74112, Telephone: 918-834-4376 — Hq., 2nd Bn., 273rd: I feel like I know you both just from the Bulletin and the nice work you both do.

I was one of the replacements for men that was taken out of the Division around Christmas of 1944. I was in Company E for about 4 days under **Captain Dunlap**. Then they placed me in Hq., 2nd Bn., 273rd Infantry. Then in September of 1945 I was placed in Ordnance Company. That is where I came in contact with **Bernard Rothenberg**, **Gust Kootsouradis** and **Edward Smaldone**. In fact, **Smaldone** and **Kootsouradis** and I came back to the U.S.A. in June of 1946 for discharge on July 5th of 1946.

I had a very good friend in Company E. He was in Patrol #3 under **Major Fred Craig** in the Link-up with the Russians on April 25, 1945. **Jessie J. King** of Co. E of Liberty, Kentucky.

The late **Victor Ostrow** and I were in the same Company Hq., 2nd Battalion, 273rd Infantry. We bunked together for a couple of months.

I was born at Cassville, Missouri which is about 35 miles west of Branson, Missouri. We played high school basketball at Branson in 1936, 1937, and 1938. I understand why it would be hard to have a reunion in Branson. Have a nice trip to Salt Lake City.

A Message from our Vice President Dave J. Theobald

8401 Moravian Court
Sacramento, California 95826
Company F, 272nd Infantry Regiment

When I was in high school in Bloomington, Illinois, I used to write a column for the High School's newspaper called DAVE'S DAZE. I also happened to be sports Editor of the "AEGIS" (the school paper.) The column was mostly about sports which I didn't participate in because of my size. I weighed 145 lbs. in those days. I loved sports in almost any form but was not very physically organized and was cut from tryouts every time I tried out. Many times I was asked for four or five paragraphs to fill a gap here and there in the columns of the AEGIS. I kind of feel like that today.

I know most of you aren't interested in my favorite team, the San Francisco 49ers, although things seem to be looking up. The post Joe Montana and Steve Young teams have failed to make even the first round of the play-offs. But this year they have bolstered both offensive and defensive lines, had last year's first pick, Smith from BYU, as quarterback, and have one of last year's leading running backs. They will be better than last year, you can bet on that.

So what do I talk about if not sports.

First let me say that my wife and I have the good health and financial wealth to visit many countries. We have enjoyed several trips to Europe, circled South America and Antarctica visiting most of the major cities. We have explored Mexico, been through the Panama Canal, Alaska, visited Banff and Lake Louise and the Canadian Rockies and been every place we wanted to see except Ireland. But the trips we've made to the 69th reunions and the places we have visited on those reunions here in the good ole USA, are equal to the things we have taken in around the world.

Among the favorites, the Louisville Slugger baseball bat factory and Churchill Downs Racetrack in Louisville, Westpoint with their cadets on the Hudson River. Philadelphia and Liberty Bell, the Mansions in the South, the battlefield at Gettysburg, Niagra Falls, countless museums, the Amish farms, people and customs. Not once in numerous reunions have we been disappointed with the locations, and of course, seeing fellow 69ers. We look forward to our visit to Salt Lake City and hope to see you there. Take my advice, pry open those moth eaten wallets, enjoy a chance to say hello again to some of the fellows who fought beside you and anticipate a very enjoyable experience. We are not getting any younger.

Dave Theobald
*Pfc, Rifleman, First Scout,
Vice President*

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES!

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because the **New Dues Year is Upon Us!**

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69th Infantry Division Association 60th Annual Reunion

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

August 19th thru 26th, 2007

See Pages 10 & 11 for Registration Forms

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P.O. Box 4069

New Kensington, PA 15068-4069

Please allow six weeks advance notice.

Return of a hero

*A tribute to legendary
political cartoonist Bill Mauldin*

Submitted By: Jean Albano Broday

jean albano gallery, inc.

215 W. Superior, Chicago, Illinois 60610

www.jeanalbanogallery.com

From the Chicago Tribune Magazine By Rick Kogan

For half a century, cartoonist Bill Mauldin skewered the powerful and focused on the big issues of his day with wit, style and a bit of irreverence.

* * * * *

The name Bill Mauldin might not mean much to you. Fame fades. But if you are among those who served in World War II, he probably is one of your enduring heroes.

If you read newspapers and appreciate the sting and substance of editorial cartoons, Mauldin is an unforgettable master of the form.

"He is also a great, great artist," says Jean Albano. "I was absolutely blown away by his work."

The Jean Albano Gallery had more than 70 Mauldin cartoons on its walls from February through April 2007. Mauldin died in 2003, and this will be the first major exhibition of his work.

"It is amazing to me how timely some of these are," says Albano. "And they were drawn decades ago."

Mauldin was born in New Mexico in 1921, the son of a handyman and a housewife. He dropped out of high school and, with \$300 given to him by a grandmother, came here to attend the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts. He entered the U.S. Army in 1940 and started drawing cartoons about his fellow infantrymen.

His genius came alive in Willie and Joe, an endearing pair once described as "unshaven, listless, dull-eyed, cynical dogfaces who spent the war fighting the Germans, trying to keep dry and warm and flirting with insubordination." Studs Terkel called Willie and Joe "archetypal grunts, and [Mauldin's] cartoons were what the war was about to the American soldier. He was quite irreverent when it came to the brass." Soldiers would cut the cartoons from the pages of the Stars and Stripes newspaper and taped them inside their lockers alongside photos of Betty Grable, or carry them into combat.

Mauldin won the Pulitzer Prize for these drawings when he was 23. His first collection of cartoons, "Up Front," became a bestseller. He abandoned cartooning for a time, tried his hand at acting (he co-starred with WWII hero Audie Murphy in the 1951 John Huston-directed film version of "The Red Badge of Courage"), wrote a memoir and made an unsuccessful run for Congress in New York.

In 1958, he became the editorial cartoonist for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch the next year won his second Pulitzer. In 1962 he came back to Chicago to work for the Chicago Sun-Times and the following year drew

what many consider the greatest editorial cartoon ever printed.

It was November 22, 1963. He was at a luncheon event when he heard the news from Dallas that John Kennedy had been shot dead. Arriving at his little cubicle at the paper, he found a bottle of Jack Daniels that some colleague had left for him. He opened it and took what he later described to friends as a "big snort" and started to work.

His masterpiece took over the entire back page of the next day's paper, a drawing of the statue of Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial, his head in his hands, weeping. Unfortunately, it's not in this exhibit of original drawings, as Mauldin gave the original to Kennedy's widow, Jackie. It now hangs in the John F. Kennedy Museum in Boston.

For the next 30 years at the paper, and syndicated to hundreds of other papers, Mauldin took precise and inspired aim at dozens of powerful people and important issues, living up to the philosophy he expressed in his 1971 autobiography, "The Brass Ring." "I was a born troublemaker and might as well earn a living at it."

The Jean Albano Gallery will be selling the original cartoons for \$2,000-\$4,000 and some limited-editions Willie and Joe prints will go for \$100-\$300. A lot of the former and some current journalists, few with the kind of dough to buy the work, will surely show up and swap stories of drinking with and talking to Mauldin.

For those of us of a certain newspapering generation, Mauldin was, and remains, a god who also happened to be flesh and blood and so much fun to be around.

The Chicago Tribune currently has no full-time editorial cartoonist on staff, not since the great Jeff MacNelly died at 52 in 2000. I showed some of Mauldin's work to editorial page editor Bruce Dold. He smiled and said, "They don't make 'em like MacNelly and Mauldin anymore."

Would he hire Mauldin if he walked in the door today? "In a second," said Dold. "In a second."



"Tell th' ol' man I'm sittin' up wit' two sick friends."

Friendship Between Soldiers Spans Generations

Submitted By: Harold "Red" Patchen

Company A, 1st Battalion 272nd Infantry

801 Elm Street, Rome, New York 13440

The world can be a very small place. Case in point, the following story told by Schlegel first grade teacher Lynda Courage.

Over 60 years ago in England, two young men met while serving in the Army. One was a Protestant boy from Rome, New York and one was a young Jewish boy from New Jersey. They formed a friendship that was cut short when the boy from New Jersey lost his toes to frostbite during battle. But they never forgot each other. Many times while growing up I remembered my father speaking fondly of "Fuzzy" and wondering how he was doing and what happened to him.

Several years ago the 69th Infantry had a reunion and both now much older men attended. They rekindled the friendship they once had in England. During their conversations, both men shared not only memories of the war but also news about their families. During one of these conversations, the subject of their children came up. **Sanford "Fuzzy" Firsichbaum** (NJ) spoke of his daughter, Wendy Locke, who lived and taught in Webster. **Harold "Red" Patchen** (NY) shared that he had a daughter, Lynda Courage, who lived in Webster also but was teaching in Sodus.

When the reunion ended, my dad, Harold, called me to tell me about his newfound knowledge and I thought I might like to look Wendy up. Well, thanks to the internet, I was able to find her school email address and I sent her an email. I always wondered what she thought when she opened her email with the subject line: "Fuzzy's Daughter." She responded and we shared information about teaching via the internet. Eventually we met and had lunch a few times. We had a lot in common. I was teaching first grade and she was teaching second grade.

In the late spring of 2004, she shared with me that there were going to be some openings in Webster and specifically that at least one first grade position would be open at her school. I was perfectly happy teaching in Sodus but the opportunity to teach barely five miles from my home was too enticing. I applied and got an interview. Several days later I got the call that I was being offered a first grade teaching position right across the hall from Wendy. I took the position.

Wendy and I became better acquainted. Her daughter was having a party to which her dad was going to be in attendance. I was invited and had the distinct honor of meeting her dad whom I had heard so much about while growing up. I even had my picture taken with him. My dad was so thrilled to get that picture, as was Wendy's dad.



Harold's daughter Lynda Courage, Harold "Red" Patchen and Wendy Locke, "Fuzzy's" daughter.

In the spring of 2005 while Wendy and I were attending a teaching conference in Syracuse, she received a call that her father had passed away. It was a sad moment but one I was glad to be there for. I was able to contact my dad to share that his buddy from so many years ago had passed away.

During the summer of 2006, I had a party at my home. My dad was able to make the two-hour trip from his home and meet Wendy. She had brought along some Army memorabilia she had gotten from her dad's belongings and she and my dad had a wonderful time going over the materials. We were able to get a picture of the three of us together.

Chance meetings are not always just chance meetings. Red and Fuzzy grew up miles away from each other but managed to forge a friendship that lasted many years. Their "chance" meeting during WWII ended up in their daughters being friends even though they, too, had grown up miles away. It was amazing that I had just moved to Webster in 2000 from Central New York and was just beginning my teaching career and Wendy was in Webster from New Jersey with her family teaching. We had never met before our fathers rekindled their friendship. Technology led me to find her and now we are colleagues working together in the same school.

The meeting of two 19-year-old men over 60 years ago on foreign soil during a war has led to two women working together in Webster and sharing memories of our dads before we even knew our dads. The friendship of two young soldiers carries on. Wendy has a son, Bryant (a 2000 graduate of Webster Schroeder), serving in the Army and Lynda has one son, Joshua, presently in the Army Delayed Entry Program to begin serving when he graduates from Webster Schroeder High School in June of 2007.

**69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION
AUGUST 20 - 26, 2007
RED LION HOTEL – SALT LAKE CITY, UT**

Monday, August 20

Early Bird arrivals

Tuesday, August 21

Hospitality and Souvenir Rooms open

3:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open**

Dinner and evening on your own

7:00pm - 11:00pm Hospitality Room open

Wednesday, August 22

8:00am - 8:30am **Reunion Registration open**

9:00am - 4:00pm HILL AIR FORCE BASE AEROSPACE MUSEUM /
ANTELOPE ISLAND (description follows)

12:00pm - 5:00pm Hospitality Room open

2:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open** (additional hours will be
posted at the reunion, if needed)

6:00pm - 7:00pm Cash Bar

7:00pm - 10:00pm Dinner Buffet

Thursday, August 23

9:00am - 12:30pm KENNECOTT COPPER MINE (description follows)

12:00pm - 5:00pm Hospitality Room open

2:00pm - 4:00pm Board of Directors' Meeting

Early dinner, on your own, before tour departure

7:00pm - 9:30pm MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR REHEARSAL
(description follows)

Friday, August 24

10:00am - 4:30pm CITY TOUR / GARDNER HISTORIC VILLAGE
(description follows)

12:00pm - 5:00pm Hospitality Room open

Dinner on your own

8:30pm - 11:30pm PX Beer Party

Saturday, August 25

8:00am - 9:00am Continental Breakfast in the Hospitality Room

9:00am - 12:00pm Membership Meeting

9:00am - 12:00pm Ladies Auxiliary Meeting

1:00pm - 4:00pm Hospitality Room open

6:00pm - 7:00pm Cocktail Hour with Cash Bar

7:00pm - 7:30pm Memorial Service

7:30pm Banquet served, followed by music and dancing

Sunday, August 26

7:30am - 9:00am Breakfast Buffet

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 9:00am until 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time, excluding holidays.** Please call (757) 625-6401 or email 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.

69th INFANTRY DIVISION REUNION - TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

HILL AIR FORCE BASE AEROSPACE MUSEUM / ANTELOPE ISLAND

Wednesday, August 22

Hill Air Force Base Aerospace Museum is home to one of the finest collections of old and current military aircraft in America. On this tour, you will see over fifty aircraft including the B-17G "Flying Fortress," C-47 "Sky Train," P-51D "Mustang," and many more. Also included at the 40-acre museum is a film and gift shop. Lunch will be at the Hill Air Force Base Officers Club and will consist of a deli sandwich, pasta salad, fruit, dessert, and a beverage. Proceed on to Antelope Island, the largest of the Great Salt Lake's ten islands. Rich in scenic beauty and natural features, Antelope Island is home to deer, bobcats, coyotes, many varieties of birds and waterfowl, and a small herd of elk. The most famous inhabitant is the American bison. Originally introduced in 1893, this world-renowned herd now numbers 600, and is managed by the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation. As you drive the 7.2-mile causeway, take in the serene beauty of the lake as you approach the island. Upon arrival, stop at the Visitor Center, which includes interpretive exhibits, and a bookstore/gift shop. Snacks are available at Buffalo Point near the Visitor Center. Time permitting; your guide will take you on a short driving tour of the island. Please do not approach bison, as they are unpredictable animals and can be quite dangerous if they feel threatened.

9:00am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel

\$51/Person includes bus, guide, lunch, and admission.

KENNECOTT COPPER MINE

Thursday, August 23

Kennecott Copper Mine is the world's largest man-made excavation. One-half mile from top to bottom, this magnificent expanse could easily shelter two Empire State Buildings stacked one on another. Observe an operation whose cumulative sales from extracted ore exceed, eightfold, the yields of the Comstock Lode, the Klondike, and the California gold rush combined. On the way, learn about the Great Salt Lake, the Dead Sea of the Americas, and the explorers who discovered it. You'll also stop at the House of Copper Gift Shop.

9:00am board bus, 12:30pm back at hotel

\$23/Person includes bus and guide.

MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR REHEARSAL

Thursday, August 23

Temple Square is the most popular attraction in Utah with several million visitors each year. The tour will head to the intriguing domed Tabernacle, home to the world renowned Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the 12,000-pipe Mormon Tabernacle Organ. Though the building has a somewhat understated exterior, it is truly splendid inside. It has such extraordinary acoustics that a pin dropped on stage with a full crowd can be clearly heard in back – 170 feet away. Enjoy the world famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir weekly rehearsal.

7:00pm board bus, 9:30pm back at hotel

\$22/Person includes bus and escort.

CITY TOUR / GARDNER HISTORIC VILLAGE

Friday, August 24

Salt Lake City is a thriving cultural center and is a beautiful and vibrant city. Board the bus for a tour that will include stops at some of Salt Lake City's most famous sites. You will see Brigham Young's homes, the historic Union Pacific Railroad Depot, and the Utah State Capitol. Visit Temple Square, the symbolic heart of the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormons. The Square includes the six-spired Temple Tabernacle, Assembly Hall, monuments and the elegant gardens for which the area is known. You'll also see the Governor's Mansion and some of Utah's most opulent homes, built nearly a century ago. Lunch on your own at Trolley Square, a high fashion shopping, restaurant, and entertainment complex located in buildings that once housed the city's trolley transit system. Reboard the bus and drive through the University of Utah campus, home of Olympic Village and the ceremonies for the 2002 Winter Olympics, and enjoy the spectacular views of the city, valley, and Great Salt Lake. Visit the military museum located at Fort Douglas. There you will see displays tracing the history of the military in Utah. Our last stop will be Gardner Historic Village, a nostalgic cluster of old-time stores and a museum. From sofas to souvenirs, Primitive Country to Victorian, you'll find the goods to be of excellent quality and reasonably priced. The original mill is listed on the National Historic Register. *Note: Depending on the actual number of people registered for this tour, the route may differ for each bus.*

10:00 board bus, 4:30pm back at hotel

\$33/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch on your own.

Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled time.

All trips require a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.

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69th INFANTRY DIVISION 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 accepted). Your cancelled check will be your confirmation. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before July 19, 2007. After that date reservations accepted on space available basis. Please make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
PO Box 11327
Norfolk, VA 23517
ATTN: 69th INFANTRY DIVISION

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Check # _____	Date Received _____
Inputted _____	Nametag Completed _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS 7/19/07		Price Per	# of People	Total
TOURS				
WEDNESDAY: HILL AFB / ANTELOPE ISLAND		\$ 51		\$
THURSDAY: KENNECOTT COPPER MINE		\$ 23		\$
THURSDAY: MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR REHEARSAL		\$ 22		\$
FRIDAY: CITY TOUR / GARDNER HISTORIC VILLAGE		\$ 33		\$
MEALS				
WEDNESDAY: EARLY BIRD BUFFET		\$ 32		\$
FRIDAY: BEER PARTY		\$ 10		\$
SATURDAY: CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST <i>(There is no charge for this meal, but we do need a headcount – please indicate # of attendees)</i>			# of ppl:	No charge
SATURDAY: BANQUET <i>(Please select your entrée)</i>				
PRIME RIB		\$ 35		\$
CHICKEN MARSALA		\$ 35		\$
GRILLED SALMON		\$ 35		\$
CHILD'S PLATE		\$ 15		\$
SUNDAY: BREAKFAST BUFFET		\$ 17		\$
MANDATORY PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE				
Includes Hospitality Room, entertainment, and administrative expenses.		\$ 10		\$
DUES – NEW DUES YEAR IS AUGUST 1, 2007 – JULY 31, 2008				
REGULAR MEMBERSHIP		\$ 10		\$
LADIES' AUXILIARY		\$ 5		\$
POSTAGE AND BULLETIN DONATION (UP TO YOU)				\$
Total Amount Payable to <u>Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.</u>				\$

PLEASE PRINT NAME

FIRST _____ LAST _____ NICKNAME _____

UNIT _____ FIRST TIMER? (YES _____) OR (NO _____)

SPOUSE NAME (IF ATTENDING) _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

(Sleeping room requirements must be conveyed by attendee directly with hotel)

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? ☐ YES ☐ NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

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 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion.

RED LION HOTEL-SALT LAKE CITY, UT
(801) 521-7373 or (800) 733-5466

The Red Lion Hotel is located at 161 West 600 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84101. The hotel is approximately 15 minutes from the Salt Lake City International Airport. Call the hotel for accurate driving directions. The Red Lion Hotel is conveniently located in downtown Salt Lake City. All 392 rooms are equipped with high-speed Internet access, in-room movies, valet/laundry service, iron/ironing board and coffee maker. Recreational features include a heated outdoor pool, whirlpool/spa and fitness center. Handicapped accessible and non-smoking rooms are available. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservations. Parking is complimentary during your stay. Check-in time is 3pm; check-out is 12noon. The **Café Olympus** serves home style cooked breakfast, lunch, and dinner. **Sky Bar**, a members only nightclub, located on the 13th floor of the hotel, is the only rooftop nightclub in the city. All guests receive a complimentary membership to Sky Bar for the duration of their stay at the hotel. For a beautiful panoramic view of the city in a casual atmosphere, visit the **Charcoal Room Restaurant**, open Monday-Saturday for dinner. Room service is available.

The hotel provides 24-hour complimentary airport shuttle service to and from the Salt Lake City International Airport. The airport shuttle runs on the hour and on the half hour. Upon arrival at the airport, you will need to call the Red Lion, at 810-521-7373, to arrange for the shuttle pickup.

RV parking is available at the hotel, but no hookup service is available. For full hookup service for RVs, KOA Salt Lake City, 1400 W North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, is located approximately five minutes from the hotel. Call (800) 562-9510 or (801) 335-1214 for information, directions, and reservations.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheel chairs 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.

----- CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL -----

69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION - HOTEL RESERVATION FORM
REUNION DATES: AUGUST 21-26, 2007

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

TEL. # (_____) _____ FAX # (_____) _____

ARRIVAL DAY & DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____ # NIGHTS _____

OF ROOMS _____ # OF PEOPLE IN RM. _____ HANDICAP ACCESS _____ SMOKING _____ NONSMOKING _____

KING BED _____ 2 DOUBLE BEDS _____ If room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.

RATE: \$89 (single/double) + state and local taxes (currently 12.46%) . Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card (information below) or first night's deposit enclosed.

CUTOFF DATE: 7/19/07. Reservations received after this date will be processed on space & rate availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 24 hours prior to date of arrival.

RESERVATION BY PHONE: (800) 733-5466. Please inform the hotel that your reservation should be under the 69th Infantry Division Association reunion.

___ AMEX ___ DINERS ___ VISA ___ MASTER CARD ___ CARTE BLANCHE ___ DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

Mail to: Red Lion Hotel, 161 West 600 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

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Curtailing the Flow of Currency to the U.S.

Submitted By: **J. Leonard Schermer**

569th Signal Company

4800 North 68th Street, Unit 146

Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

Telephone: 480/947-0187

I found **Bill Drugg's** story, "The Old Currency Control Book," in the December 2006 issue of the Fighting 69th Infantry Division Association bulletin, particularly interesting. Money really did flow from the activity at the bridge on the Elbe River to the United States after the first payday following the meeting with the Russian. The 271st Regiment sent more money back to the United States than the entire earnings that payday of all the officers and enlisted men in the regiment. It drew the attention of the division headquarters staff and **Major General Bolte** sent word to **Lieutenant Colonel Dinsmore**, who was both the Division Inspector General and also in command of the Military Police Company, to look into the situation and see that this activity be slowed down. At that time I was assigned on temporary duty as an assistant to Colonel Dinsmore.

The Colonel came to me and said, "What are we going to do about this?" I looked at the printed regulations and there was nothing in the regulations that I could find that censured this type of activity. Colonel Dinsmore and I realized that some day there would be regulations but the war in Europe had just ended and this problem was a new one. My orders were to come up with some activity that would stop money in excess of what the regiment earned. We had two military policemen sent to every company in the regiment. They were instructed not to wear their M.P. arm bands and their hard hats and to report to the company commander stating that they were there as part of the inspector general's investigation. They were to take the records of the payday and make notes as to whom and how much each soldier in the company sent to the U.S. If the Company Commander asked any questions, they were only to say, "This looks bad." The results of this foray into each company's finances had the desired effect and on the next payday the amount of money that was approved by the company commanders were substantially less and it satisfied the Division Headquarters. Later the Currency Control regulations were put into effect.

We had to come up with novel solutions to several matters which the general staff wanted investigated at end of the war and on which there were no regulations. We had the situations at the end of hostilities of the killings of German farmers by Polish citizens who had been held as slave labors on the farm in the area, the rising venereal disease rate, and the effects of the bad bootleg whiskey that the Germans made and sold to the soldiers. We solved all the problems presented.

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!



South Florida Veterans Cemetery Approved

South Florida will soon gets its first veterans cemetery, a 313-acre site near Boynton Beach delayed for more than five years by enviromental concerns. More than 350,000 veterans live within a 75-mile radius; 1.8 million veterans live in Florida.

Submitted By: **Lester Hart**

Company C, 881st Field Artillery

197 Carefree Lane, Leesburg, Florida 34748-9298

The Day the Wheels Came Off the Nazi War Machine

April 25th, 1945

Submitted By: **William (Bill) Nettles**

2nd Lieutenant - Company A, 273rd Infantry Regiment

2800 W. Main Street, Cottage 303A

Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Telephone: 662/680-9632

The Battle of Leipzig was officially over at 0200 hours on April 20th, 1945, when the Germans, holding out in the Battle of Nations Monument, finally surrendered. There would be no rest for the tired troops of the 69th Infantry Division; however, as orders were immediately given to proceed east to the Mulde River and establish positions on the West Bank.

The 273rd Infantry Regiment was successful, on April 20th, in establishing defensive positions on the Mulde facing east. The 1st Battalion was generally located across the river from the city of Wurzen.

At Company A, 1st Battalion, we enjoyed a couple of days of rest, but knowing that things were not as tranquil as they seemed. We were used to being on the move and to be held up was welcome, but strange.

Reports from the 271st Infantry Regiment, located to the north, cited very heavy fighting at Eilenburg and Kultschau. The German Mayors and Unit Commanders had been ordered to defend their cities to the last man. American artillery had reduced these towns to rubble after hard and difficult fighting.

Where were the Russians? Rumors abounded that their units were approaching the Elbe River, located about twenty miles to the east. Orders were received that American troops were to proceed no further than 5 miles to the east of the Mulde River.

April 24 arrived slowly, as fog was heavy over the river valley. The officers of Company A (**Lt. Russell J. Haberman**, Company Commander; **Lt. William R. Nettles**, Company Executive and 4th Platoon Leader; and **Lt. Edward Lucci**, 2nd Platoon Leader) had a leisurely breakfast along the river bank. The only distraction was a dead German soldier floating down the river to be picked up later by the Quartermaster unit that tended to such things.

The sun broke through about 1000 hours and along with it went the tranquility of the moment. Orders to attack the city of Wurzen with the objective of eliminating any German forces and securing the city came from 1st Battalion headquarters.

Lt. Haberman chose the 1st Platoon, led by Technical Sgt. **Jack Hubbard**, the fourth platoon led by **Lt. Nettles**, who was also to lead the Company A Task Force. It is noteworthy that **Hubbard** had commanded the 1st Platoon since the death of **Lt. Charles Wright** on February 12, the first day of combat for the unit. **Jack Hubbard** was a fine platoon leader, having successfully led his unit through many battles.



*May 1945 - Grimma on the Mulde River
Lt. Edward L. Lucci, Lt. William R. Nettles
and Lt. Russell Haberman*

Lt. Nettles began formulating a plan. The foot route across the river was over a railroad bridge that had been partially destroyed by the retreating Germans. A dam with about two inches of water flowing over it was available for light vehicles, but not wide enough for night travel. Both bridge and dam were under direct observation of the German units in Wurzen.

The afternoon was spent in the loft of a big warehouse located on the bank of the river, with a good observation of Wurzen. Previous reports indicated German troops in and near the city. They were there and digging defensive positions on the perimeter of the city.

This prompted a request for artillery support which was promptly denied. What about artillery on call? Also denied. This prompted the old GI expression: What is going on? No answer was forthcoming.

It is of interest that **Lt. Lucci**, one of the best platoon leaders in the 69th Division, received instructions from **Lt. William Robertson** (1st Battalion S2 Intelligence Officer) to proceed into Wurzen after dark on March 24, 1945 to determine location and activity of German units. Ed reported, about midnight, to Robertson that he was in contact with a large force of German units who wanted to give up. He withdrew from contact, for this was too large for his small patrol to handle. Ed had also requested artillery fire for assistance but was denied. None of this information reached **Lt. Nettles**.

Before dawn on March 25, 1945, the Nettles Task Force of about fifty men crossed the broken rail bridge

(Continued on Page 15)

THE DAY THE WHEELS CAME OFF THE NAZI WAR MACHINE *(Continued from Page 14)*

without opposition. Organized in two columns with security front and sides, the unit headed for main street, still without opposition.

Reaching main street, with daylight breaking, the two columns headed east toward City Hall. Suddenly, a German officer, in full uniform, casually walked from a hotel and awaited the arrival of the lead American soldier.

This was the Commander of a Battalion with the mission of defending Wurzen. During the night, the Commander and the Mayor had decided there would be no defense of the city. The battalion, numbering over 1000, departed from the town going east in the early hours of the morning. The Colonel had stayed in town with the intent of surrendering to the American forces. We obliged and sent him to the rear, under guard.

The capture of the City Hall, without opposition, came next. At this point, the events of the day moved rapidly. Reports from air spotter planes cited a large column of people, filling the road from ditch to ditch, headed to the west toward Wurzen. This column had originally moved to the east, but upon encountering Russian units, had reversed direction and headed for the American lines. Subsequently reports would confirm Russian units at the Elbe River about 20 miles to the east.

First Lieutenant Russell J. Haberman, Company Commander of Company A, suddenly showed up on foot at City Hall. About the same time, air reports cited a German unit of self-propelled 88 guns approaching Wurzen. Haberman jumped into an Opel automobile left running by a German doctor who had disappeared rapidly into City Hall (only doctors had gasoline). As Haberman gunned the 4-cylinders, he loudly announced that he was on the way to capture the unit with the 88 guns. (Note: Haberman was armed with one 45 caliber pistol.)

About an hour later, Haberman reappeared at City Hall, sitting astride the long barrel of an 88 mounted on a tracked, self-propelled chassis with a full crew, including the Lieutenant Colonel Commander of the Battalion. Following Haberman were six other self-propelled guns with crews.

Haberman's Report: About a mile outside the city he encountered the unit traveling in a column. He blocked the path of the lead vehicle with his newly-acquired Opel and announced to the Commander that the American units were at Wurzen and he was prepared to give them safe passage. The Colonel accepted his offer and invited Haberman to ride with him. The Opel was abandoned.

It is of interest that a picture was made, but subsequently lost, of Haberman astride the 88 gun. It is also important that Haberman spoke German.

Soon after **Haberman** went 88-hunting, along came **2nd Lieutenant William D. Robertson** in a jeep with three enlisted men; **Corporal James McDonnel**, **Private First Class Frank Huff**, and **Private First Class Paul Staub**. This was the first jeep we had seen across the river.

After **Robertson** confided in **Nettles** of his mission, he was advised not to attempt the journey, citing the 5 mile limit and the air reports of thousands, including German army units who were headed for Wurzen and directly in his path. He acknowledged the advice but said he wanted to give it a try. The link-up with the Russians is now history.

It is of interest that **Robertson** was notifying the last American unit of his departure into enemy territory with the exception that he would be let back into friendly territory upon his return.

The mission of capturing Wurzen had been accomplished. As **Haberman** left with his 88's he casually announced that the task force would stay in the city, defend if attacked, and process any stragglers who came their way.

The elephant in this order would turn out to be the stragglers. Air reports identified several German units approaching Wurzen, including several other groups of unknown origin numbering in the thousands.

The first unit to arrive was Battalion-sized, composed of four companies, all armed with individual weapons such as rifles, pistols, bayonets, daggers and hand grenades. Each unit had wooden carts for supplies that were pulled by soldiers. Petrol was not available, nor were the vehicles to use it. The German army was headed to its demise on foot.

This unit was probably the Battalion that had left Wurzen the previous night. They had marched east toward the Elbe and had encountered the large column headed west after learning that the Russians were slowly approaching the Elbe. They simply went with the flow and turned around to return to Wurzen.

The arriving military units were directed off the road to deposit all weapons in one great pile against the wall of a large warehouse. Soldiers without arms were then assembled in groups numbering about 1,000, and then guided by two soldiers then returned to do the same for the remainder of the day.

For all others stragglers, a soldier was posted each half mile of the road leading to the bridge with instructions to keep the column moving. It was hoped that they would find assistance across the Mulde River.

From noon to sundown on April 25th, 1945, the stragglers were composed of German military units, German refugees of war, prisoners of war from all countries fighting the Germans, forced laborers from all countries occupied by the Germans, inmates of extermination camps, and a few odd characters not fitting any of the above.

(Continued on Page 16)

THE DAY THE WHEELS CAME OFF THE NAZI WAR MACHINE (Continued from Page 15)

The column moved slowly, for they had been on the move for days, and some for months. Those originally held by Germans had been released from camps, placed in the road under guard and marched east only to hit the Russians. At this point the Germans had released their control and joined the stragglers in moving west to reach the American lines.

The former American prisoners of war were an exception. Their spirits were so high that the inconveniences of the moment were ignored. They smiled, laughed, ran, hugged, and kissed any American soldier in sight. In many cases, they impeded the ability to keep order; all for a good cause, however.

The men of the Company A Task Force, in addition to processing and moving over 15,000 stragglers, encountered other activities during the day. One group reported the release of over 200 Jewish women from railroad cars at the local station. They were said to have performed housekeeping and other chores for German authorities.

Snipers harassed the unit throughout the day. Fortunately, they were poor marksmen. Late in the afternoon, two were captured and brought to the Company A Task Force Command Post that had been established in a large villa near the center of Wurzen.

Into every military operation a little levity must fall. During prior times, **Lt. Nettles** had restricted the 4th platoon to two souvenir pistols. In the course of this discussion, he was asked what he really wanted and he replied, "A pair of .44 caliber, long-barrel U.S. Army revolvers with pearl handles," thinking that there was no such in existence. In the middle of the afternoon, two grinning soldiers of the 4th Platoon came up to **Lt. Nettles**, asking him to repeat his desire of this souvenir. After promptly answering them, the two men revealed two long barrel .44 caliber revolvers made in Spain under U.S. Army specifications. The only flaw was bone handles. One pistol was later lost, but one is still in Nettles' care, a remainder of a great group of American soldiers.

Late in that day, large streams of smoke could be seen across the river where the stragglers had gone. They were resting, preparing meals, singing and dancing and in many ways, expressing their joy over being liberated. It was a comforting site.

Nettles retired, along with Technical Sgt. **Hubbard**, to the newly acquired villa that was to serve as the Company A forward command post for the night. Two German prisoners were also there and located in the back yard of the villa. Each prisoner was guarded by a soldier armed with an M1 rifle. The yard was large and was enclosed by a high fence with a large gate in the center.

Suddenly, the gate opened, allowing a jeep to enter containing eight soldiers; 4 American and 4 Russian. This was only the second army vehicle we had seen all day and a jeep with 8 grown men was a sight seldom seen. A jeep with a combination of Americans and long sought-after Russians was almost beyond comprehension.

Amid all of the gawking, a shot rang out. One of the prisoners fell forward on his face, to move no more. He had reached over, snatched the M1 rifle from his guard, placed it under his chin and ended his life. This young soldier had just witnessed the end of the Nazi dream to which he had devoted his life.

The jeep that had crossed through the gate was the same one that had crossed into enemy territory during the late morning hours. It now contained **2nd Lt. William D. Robertson**, **Cpl. James McDonnell**, **Pfc Frank Huff**, **Pfc Paul Staub**, **Major Anafim Larianov**, **Captain Vasily Nyeda**, **Senior Lt. Alexander Silvashko** and **Sgt. Nikolai Andreyen**. The link-up by **Robertson** with the Russians has been well documented.

This meeting was the first contact by **Robertson** with an American unit upon his return from the link-up at the Elbe River. This meeting took place at the forward command post of Company A, 1st Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment, in the town of Wurzen.

Noteworthy, is that this was the only unit across the Mulde River at Wurzen on April 25, 1945. All write-ups have, in error, cited this meeting as occurring at the Command Post of the 1st Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment, located on the west side of the Mulde.

After greetings, refreshments, congratulations and much conversation, the **Robertson** patrol left to cross the Mulde River to face the uncertainty of his reception.

Fortunately, for all concerned, the extraordinary accomplishment of **Robertson** and his men was accepted and endorsed by all as a great page in American history.

The men of the Company A Task Force rested well on the night of April 25, 1945. They had just witnessed the disintegration of the German army and the German government. THE WHEELS HAD JUST COME OFF THE NAZI WAR MACHINE.

69th Author to Attend Reunion

Sydnor Thompson of Battery C, 879th F.A., has published a book entitled, "*Sydnor Knows The Answer, A Memoir*." Sydnor will be at the reunion and will sell signed copies of the book on Wednesday, August 22nd and Thursday, August 23rd, 2007. A donation for each book sold will be given to the 69th Division Association.

THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE

By **Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**

Ladies Auxiliary Editor

P.O. Box 4069

New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068-4069

Home Telephone: 724/335-9980

E-Mail: danne345@aol.com



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Telephone: 248/357-4611

Carmen Sanborn, Secretary

333 Mechanic Street

Laconia, New Hampshire 03246

Ellen McCann, Chaplain

39 Mayflower Road

Woburn, Massachusetts 01801

A Message from your Auxiliary President, Jane Matlach

Dear Ladies of the 69th Ladies Auxiliary:

I hope many of you will be attending the 60th reunion in Salt Lake City. Please remember to bring the laprobes, toiletries, disposable razors, and stationery with you. These articles will be donated to the Veterans Hospital of Salt Lake City.

And remember that we share a small gift with each other at the Saturday morning Ladies' Meeting. This will be the 55th reunion that I have attended and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

The War Years

Ladies, please send in your memories of the war years and we will include your stories in the Ladies Auxiliary pages. I am sure that many of you have interesting stories to tell. Send them to Dottie Shadle at the above address. Thank You.

- In Memoriam -

"LADIES' TAPS"

KATHERINE ELEY

widow of **Cliff Eley**

Battery C, 880th Field Artillery Battalion

PATRICIA WESTLAKE

widow of **John A. Westlake**

Company E, 272nd Infantry Regiment

JOAN SCHULTZ

wife of **Mel Schultz**

Anti-Tank, 272nd Infantry Regiment

5501 Wild Rose Lane

Milford, Ohio 45150-2622

PAULENE MILLSAPS

wife of **Archie Millsaps**

Anti-Tank, 271st Infantry Regiment

15665 North Lupina Place

Tucson, Arizona 85739-8792

Planning Underway for a 2008 Guided Tour to Europe

Tentative Dates: May 15th to May 30th or June 2, 2008

Tentative plans by: **Joao Freitas**, *American Express Guided Tours Service*
and **William E. "Deacon" Snidow**, *Company B, 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion*

Dear Mr. Shadle

President of the 69th Infantry Division Association,

Let me introduce myself. My name is **Joao Freitas** and I have had the pleasure and the distinguished honor of working with this Association for the last 25 years, making travel plans for our very successful and fun oriented tours of Europe and Russia accordingly.

As you know, we are planning another tour in 2008 at the request of many members and I am hoping you will also be joining us a year from now. The tour departs on May 15th, 2008.

I spoke with Mr. Snidow who informed me that the next newsletter publication will be coming out in June. Therefore, I am sending you this itinerary, as it continues to evolve, for you to kindly include, if possible in the upcoming distribution.

The tour rate will not be available until August-September time frame as the dollar continues to fluctuate back and forth against the Euro.

I certainly look forward to seeing some of the veterans and their families who have become over these 25 years an extension of my family as well.

Thank you for taking this request into consideration and do look forward to meeting or speaking with you in person someday!

Sincerely, **Joao Freitas**

Sign up early! Limited space available.

A deposit of \$500.00 is required to join the tour on a first come basis. We have currently 12 people on deposit and we will take 45 total.

Fly to Berlin on May 15th, 2008: Visit Berlin, Potsdam, Torgau, Strehla, Leipzig, Cologne, Rhine River cruise; be at Margratten and Henri Chapelle cemeteries.

Memorial Day: Paris, Euostar train to London and much more! Details later.

Only one bus, so there is limited space. Guarantee your trip with your \$500 refundable deposit.

**To make reservations
and for contact information,
I can be reached directly at:**

American Express Travel

Attn: **Mr. Joao Freitas**

1801 International Drive, Suite 3202

McLean, VA 22102

Phone Direct: 703-893-3550, Ext. 210

or: 1-800-553-6509, Ext. 210

E-Mail: joao.r.freitas@aexp.com

Fax: 703-790-0588

(Continued on Page 19)

PROPOSED HOTEL LIST – MAIN TOUR

DAY	DATE	CENTRE	HOTEL NAME
Friday	16 May 2008	TORGAU	Central Hotel (or Wenzelshof Hotel)
Saturday	17 May 2008	TORGAU	Central Hotel (or Wenzelshof Hotel)
Sunday	18 May 2008	TORGAU	Central Hotel (or Wenzelshof Hotel)
Monday	19 May 2008	BERLIN	Park Inn Berlin Alexanderplatz
Tuesday	20 May 2008	BERLIN	Park Inn Berlin Alexanderplatz
Wednesday	21 May 2008	COLOGNE	NH Koeln Hotel
Thursday	22 May 2008	COLOGNE	NH Koeln Hotel
Friday	23 May 2008	BRUSSELS	Royal Windsor Hotel (5* deluxe)
Saturday	24 May 2008	BRUSSELS	Royal Windsor Hotel (5* deluxe)
Sunday	25 May 2008	CHARTRES	Novotel Chartres
Monday	26 May 2008	CAEN	Mercure Caen Centre Hotel
Tuesday	27 May 2008	PARIS	Opera Cadet Hotel
Wednesday	28 May 2008	PARIS	Opera Cadet Hotel

Note 1. Hotel accommodation is subject to availability. At this stage no reservations have been requested.

Note 2. Rooms at the Central Hotel in Torgau are primarily double bedded rooms. A certain number can be converted into twin-bedded rooms (double bed + single bed) and the additional cost of this extra bed, which is minimal, is reflected in the tour price.

Note 3. Alternative or additional accommodation may be required at the Wenzelshof Hotel, just outside of Torgau.

Note 4. The Royal Windsor is proposed because of ridiculously low weekend rates. (= Friday and Saturday, but not Sunday). Should the tour dates in Brussels change it may be necessary to use a hotel in keeping with the grade of the hotels in other centres and, perversely as it may sound, possibly at a supplement.

2008 GUIDED EUROPEAN TOUR

(Continued from Page 18)

ITINERARY - MAIN TOUR

Friday May 16th, 2008 - EN ROUTE / TORGAU

The service of the tour manager and touring coach commence at Berlin airport. Arrive Berlin - transfer from Berlin to Torgau by touring coach. Afternoon excursion for wreath laying at Strehla (cost for one wreath included). Welcome cocktail reception at the hotel or nearby suitable venue if not possible. Overnight accommodation at the Central Hotel in Torgau.

Saturday, May 17th, 2008 - TORGAU

Breakfast at the hotel.

Full day coach use for:

- AM wreath laying ceremonies in the Torgau area (cost for four wreaths included).
- PM visits to Riesa, Hartenfels Castle and Gradlitz Stud Farm.
- Welcome dinner (including wine and coffee) at the Goldener Anker Restaurant.
- Overnight accommodation at the Central Hotel in Torgau.

Sunday, May 18th, 2008 - TORGAU

Breakfast at the hotel.

Full day coach use for:

- Visit to Wiessenfels (activities included to be confirmed/no costs included).
- Guided sightseeing tour of Leipzig including visit to Thomaskirche and the Old City Hall (additional activities to be confirmed/no costs included).
- Overnight accommodation at the Central Hotel in Torgau.

Monday, May 19th, 2008 - TORGAU / BERLIN

Breakfast at the hotel.

- Travel from Torgau to Berlin with en route sightseeing of Potsdam including a guided sightseeing tour of Sanssouci Palace. (Sanssouci is usually closed 1st and 3rd Monday of each month so this may need to be changed).
- Overnight accommodation at the Park Inn Alexanderplatz in Berlin.

Tuesday, May 20th, 2008 - BERLIN

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Half day guided sightseeing tour of Berlin by private air-conditioned local coach [touring coach/driver rest day] including a visit to the Checkpoint Charlie Museum.

Note: no cost included for Frederick The Great Castle, which is considered to be Sanssouci Palace and that has already been visited.

- Optional excursion to the Pergamon Museum.
- Overnight accommodation at the Park Inn Alexanderplatz in Berlin.

Wednesday, May 21st, 2008 - BERLIN / COLOGNE

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Travel from Berlin to Cologne.

Note: This is a full day drive with very little time for additional sightseeing and it would not be possible to include Potsdam on this day and it is not recommended to include the Cologne sightseeing this day.

- Overnight accommodation at the NH Koeln Hotel in Cologne.

Thursday, May 22nd, 2008 - COLOGNE

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Morning Rhine cruise with lunch included.
- Afternoon sightseeing tour of Cologne including a visit to Cologne Cathedral.
- Dinner (3-course meal with 2 beers per person) at a local beer keller.
- Overnight accommodation at the NH Koeln Hotel in Cologne.

Friday, May 23rd, 2008 - COLOGNE/BRUSSELS

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Travel from Cologne to Brussels with en route visits to the cemeteries at Margraten and Henri Chapelle (cost for one wreath included at each cemetery).
- Orientation tour of Brussels on arrival.
- Overnight accommodation at the Royal Windsor Hotel in Brussels.

Saturday, May 24th, 2008 - BRUSSELS

Full breakfast at the hotel.

- Full day excursion to Brugge including a guided tour of visiting to the Basilica of the Holy Blood, Cathedral and Memling Museum.
- Overnight accommodation at the Royal Windsor Hotel in Brussels.

Sunday, May 25th, 2008 - BRUSSELS/CHARTRES

Full breakfast at the hotel.

- Travel from Brussels to Chartres.
- Afternoon visit to Chartres Cathedral (subject to being able maneuver around any church services).
- Dinner (3-courses excluding beverages) at the hotel.
- Overnight accommodation at the Novotel in Chartres.

Monday, May 26th, 2008 - CHARTRES/CAEN

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Travel from Chartres to Caen with en route sightseeing of Bayeux including a visit to the Bayeux Tapestry.
- Sightseeing of Caen including a visit to the Normandy Memorial Museum.
- Overnight accommodation at the Mercure Caen Centre in Caen.

(Continued on Page 20)

2008 GUIDED EUROPEAN TOUR

(Continued from Page 19)

Tuesday, May 27th, 2008 - CAEN / PARIS

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Morning excursion to Omaha Beaches for wreath laying at the American Cemetery (cost for one wreath included).
- Travel from Caen to Paris.
- The services of the touring coach terminate on arrival in Paris.
- Evening Bateau Parisien dinner cruise (including wine and coffee) with roundtrip quayside transfers by private air-conditioned local coach.
- Overnight accommodation at the Opera Cadet Hotel in Paris.

Wednesday, May 28th, 2008 - PARIS

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Free day.
- Evening "Soiree Panache" dinner at the Lido (including dinner, show, wine and coffee) with roundtrip quayside transfers by private air-conditioned local coach.
- Overnight accommodation at the Opera Cadet Hotel in Paris.

Thursday, May 29th, 2008 - PARIS / EN ROUTE

Buffet breakfast at the hotel.

- Depart Paris
- The services of the tour manager terminate at Paris airport.

Company A, 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion

Submitted By: Richard J. Brown

215 Mankin Avenue, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania 19006-8707



Richard Brown - Germany



Back Row: McDevitt, Cavanaugh, Shockley, Blake
Front Row: Goldberg, Unknown, Menkins



Left to right: E. Wolfe, Lieutenant Nowels, Lieutenant Molin



Pete Leva, Richard Brown, George Bailey

Tanker Stories

By: Charles W. Ray, Jr. (Billy Ray)

Honorary Member, 777th Tank Battalion

12622 Huntington Field Drive

Houston, Texas 77099

Telephone: 832/328-0649

E-Mail: charleswrayjr@prodigy.net

Note: The information here comes from numerous published sources, from word of mouth, letters to me, and from historical documents researched at the National Archives in College Park.

* * * * *

Assembling Task Force Miller

April 1945: A task force was required to perform a critical mission which would enable the Combat Teams of the 69th Infantry Division to move forward rapidly. **Lieutenant Donald B. Miller** of the 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion was given an assignment to form a Task Force to carry out this mission. The task force was called Task Force Miller. The mission of Task Force Miller was to clear the area between Lutterberg and Oberode of enemy resistance. The towns of Lutterberg, Laubach, and Oberode were key objectives. The actions of this task force are covered in the next few paragraphs. The units that would be assigned to Task Force Miller are as follows:

- 777th Tank Battalion, Company A
- 777th Tank Battalion, Company D
- 2 light tank platoons
- 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion, Company A
- 661st Tank Destroyer Reconnaissance Platoon
- 273rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Companies K and L

West of Lutterberg

6 April 1945: By 2030, 1st and 3rd Platoons, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion arrived at a point west of the town of Lutterberg.

6 April 1945: Headquarters Platoon and 2nd Platoon, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion, that were with Battalion Headquarters at Kassel, moved up highway #496 and assembled west of Lutterberg with 1st and 3rd Platoons, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion and became part of Task Force Miller.

6 April 1945: I, K, L, and M Companies, 3rd Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment moved up to Speele on highway #3 on the West bank of the Fulda River. They crossed the Fulda River at Speele about 4 miles west of Lutterberg. They moved East toward Lutterberg where they met up with A Company, 777th Tank Battalion.

6 April 1945: I, K, L, and M Companies, 3rd Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment were also assigned to Task Force Miller. L Company, 3rd Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment maintained the bridgehead over the Fulda River at Speele and protect the rear of the task force while the task force accomplished its mission.

6 April 1945: A Company, 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion crossed the Fulda at Kassel and met up with Task Force Miller west of Lutterberg.

6 April 1945: The Reconnaissance Platoon, 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion joined the Task Force west of Lutterberg.

6 April 1945: 2 light tank platoons, D Company, 777th Tank Battalion teamed up with Task Force Miller west of Lutterberg.

6 April 1945: So now, approximately 25 medium tanks and 100 men from A Company, 777th Tank Battalion, along with about 10 light tanks and 50 men from 2nd Platoon, D Company, 777th Tank Battalion and 250 infantrymen from K and L Companies, 273 Infantry Regiment are ready to move out as part of Task Force Miller.

With the men and equipment from the 777th Tank Battalion, the 273rd Infantry Regiment and the 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion, the Task Force operations begin.

Task Force Miller

6 April 1945: A Company, 777th Tank Battalion was assigned to move with K and L Companies, 3rd Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment as part of Task Force Miller. Since L Company was previously assigned to maintain the bridgehead at Speele, I believe that the writer meant I Company instead of L Company.

The following paragraph, records how the first attack on the town of Lutterberg unfolded, and is added here from the 273rd Infantry Regiment History. Quote:

"April 6, 1945 — The 3rd Battalion (273rd Infantry Regiment) crossed the Fulda River at Speele and moved out to attack Lutterberg. K Company led, followed by I Company and M Company. L Company remained in Speele to protect the bridgehead and follow later. Strong resistance was met in Lutterberg. Machine-guns, rifles, and 88's mounted on Tiger tanks stopped the Battalion. The first attack was repelled. I Company was deployed on a flanking movement from the left. Under a heavy preparation of marching fire, K Company and I Company attacked Lutterberg late in the afternoon. The town (of Lutterberg) was taken. The (Tiger) tanks had withdrawn, but 45 prisoners were taken."

Note: The prisoners captured by A Company, 777th Tank Battalion eventually made their way back to the watchful eyes of the 106th Infantry Division.

6 April 1945: 1st and 3rd Platoons, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion then moved to edge of Autobahn, east of Lutterberg for the remainder of the night.

Note: No other action is recorded for Task Force Miller on 6 April 1945.

7 April 1945: At some time in the morning, Colonel Miller's Task Force departed Lutterberg and began clearing the area from Lutterberg to Oberode.

(Continued on Page 22)

TANKER STORIES (Continued from Page 21)

7 April 1945: The Reconnaissance Platoon, 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion moved out first to perform reconnaissance for the task force. They spotted the enemy at about the same time they were spotted. The enemy, consisting of five Tiger Tanks positioned in the woods, opened fire on them and in but a few short minutes, the reconnaissance team was nearly completely destroyed. What was left of the Reconnaissance Team withdrew from the encounter and reported back to their headquarters. The 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion's record of this particular setback does not indicate whether or not there were casualties. The Reconnaissance team lost three jeeps and one armored car.

Following the Reconnaissance Team's report, when the enemy's strength was known and the possibility of Tiger Tanks in the area, the two platoons of light tanks from D Company, 777th Tank Battalion, being no match for the Tiger Tanks, withdrew to the North (possibly in the direction of Hann-Munden).

7 April 1945: In "On The Way," the light tanks were leading the way during this part of the advance but they were going too slow or weren't moving fast enough for **Captain Burson** so he got permission for 3rd Platoon to take over the lead. **Sgt Nockerts'** tank took the lead. Soon the column began advancing faster than before. Along this highway, the column ran into the enemy. **Sgt Nockerts'** tank, with infantry on board, runs into a gun nest full of riflemen. The infantry bail off the tank and hit the dirt. Bullets are whistling by and pinging off the tanks. One infantryman remained on the rear deck of the tank and manned the 50 cal machine gun on the tank and began firing at the enemy. His bravery didn't last long though as he was hit by a bullet and killed. **Captain Burson** wrote, "I have never seen a braver man." In the skirmish that continued for some time, several more of the infantry were wounded. In the end though, the Germans "didn't see daylight again after the skirmish." After the skirmish, 15 enemy lay dead, several were wounded and 50 were taken prisoner.

It was after this initial skirmish that **Captain Burson** wrote, "Today is the day I decided to tell the TD's to go to hell! They were supposed to follow me but at some point pulled off the road when the going got a little rough."

After the initial skirmish, **Sgt. Nockerts'** column moved out once again and one mile West of Oberode, the tanks were held up by road blocks. Nevertheless, **Sgt. Nockerts** pushed forward and the tank column, under **Nockerts'** lead, overcame the first road block.

Captain Burson recommended **Sgt. Nockerts** for a Bronze Star for his aggressiveness at this point.

Captain Burson called **Sgt. Rheino Pelkonen**, with his Tank Dozer to move forward and clear the two road blocks.

At the first obstacle in this road block, when trying to keep up with **Sgt. Nockerts'** tank, **Lt. Dorner's** tank threw a track and was out of commission. **Lt. Rothock "Rocky"** from Tank Recovery was called in and he put **Lt. Dorner's** tank back on the road.

Sgt. Pelkonen arrived with his tank dozer and eliminated the road blocks and the column continued forward.

The following paragraph from the 273rd Infantry Regiment History records the way the 2nd attack unfolded.

Quote: "April 7, 1945 — 3rd Battalion, 273 Infantry Regiment (after departing Lutterberg) attacked in two columns, generally to the Northeast.

Column A met strong opposition from three or four Tiger tanks hidden in heavy woods that menaced the entire route of the Column."

Note: I have not located the reference which records the actions of Column B. I imagine that Column B is responsible for the action not attributed to Column A.

Quote Continued: "One of our tanks, (It was from 1st/2nd/3rd Platoon, D Company, 777th Tank Battalion) was hit and put out of commission. Also, a scout car, and two 1/4 T's were knocked out in one engagement.

A terrific fire fight developed. The armor could not proceed, so K Company, followed by L Company (perhaps this was I Company) advanced through the woods on the left of the road. K Company came to a road at right angles to the road on their right. The company deployed along the road prior to crossing and proceeded farther. A ditch and an embankment on the edge of the thick wood provided cover. At this point a German tank, MG's blazing, broke cover and roared down the road across K Company's front. **Pvt. Kellerman**, who tried to stop the tank with a bazooka, was killed. Others were wounded, but the embankment served as excellent cover.

During the action, **Lt. Currie** knocked out a German vehicle with a grenade, killing four occupants. He was later awarded the Silver Star for the action. Orders were suddenly received rerouting the Task Force. The tanks came up and the troops boarded them, and the team set out with the mission of seizing the bridge over the Werra River at Hedemunden." END

The lead tank from 2nd Platoon, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion, commanded by **First Lieutenant Robert E. White** was instrumental moving in at this encounter and evacuating the wounded infantry under heavy fire. The other members of this crew were **T/5 Frank L. Smith**, Tank Driver, **John Hedick**, Tank Bog Gunner, **Pfc Maurice O. Burdick**, Tank Gun Loader, and **Cpl Ib A. Hvengaard**, Tank Gunner. The name of the tank was "Angel." During this encounter **1st Lt. Robert E. White**, of 1st Platoon, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion distinguished himself and earned, for his gallantry, the Silver Star Medal.

(Continued on Page 23)

TANKER STORIES (Continued from Page 22)

Note: **Otis Burdick**, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion, who was the Tank Gun Loader on **1st Lt. White's** tank wrote recently (November 1996) and enclosed a newspaper article which was published in August 1945 following the ceremony which awarded the Silver Star (Posthumously) to **1st Lt. Robert E. White**. The newspaper article which elaborated **Lt. White's** gallantry is quoted here.

"While returning from an attempt to regroup his halted tank column (between Lutterberg and Oberode), which was under direct enemy flak fire, **First Lieutenant White** saw friendly infantrymen, whose platoon leader and platoon sergeant had been killed, pinned down by enemy machine gun fire. With utter disregard for his own life and safety, **First Lieutenant White**, bravely advancing under the heavy enemy fire towards the disorganized group, was confronted by a German officer who threw a grenade at him. **First Lieutenant White** killed the enemy officer with a pistol and was successful in reaching the friendly troops. Quickly reorganizing the men, he then led them to his tank. Upon being ordered to withdraw, **First Lieutenant White** then mounted his tank which was then under direct enemy 88mm fire, and fired continuously at the enemy until the wounded could be evacuated."

Note: I recently spoke with **Richard Landers** (1998), a medic with the Medical Detachment, 777th Tank Battalion. He explained that he was administering to the wounded when **Lt. White** appeared and led them back to his tank. **Landers** and the wounded infantrymen were then evacuated on **1st Lt. White's** tank. **Landers** received The Bronze Star Medal for Heroism. Although the exact date for his unselfish act has not been determined, I believe it was on April 7, during this action for treating the wounded while under direct enemy fire.

A considerable number of other enemy soldiers were also killed during this action but the tankers were unable to verify the numbers.

Note: I haven't located any reference indicating that they completed their mission to seize a bridge at the town of Hedemunden.

Laubach

The remainder of the Task Force proceeded east until they were two miles west of Oberode. Although it is not specifically stated in references, this position "2 miles West of Oberode" seems to be very close to where the town of Laubach should be located. (See Note Below) Here the Task Force encountered very heavy machine gun fire in the woods. Tank Destroyers of the 661st were held up by enemy fire.

Note: On 7 April 1945, C Company, 777th Tank Battalion, which was attached to E Company, 2nd Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment, "attacked East down the autobahn towards Laubach." Laubach is a

small town about 4 kilometers Northwest of Oberode between Lutterberg and Oberode. The distance from Lutterberg to Oberode is about 25 kilometers.

The tanks (I am assuming that the tanks being referred to are the medium tanks of A Company, 777th Tank Battalion. These tanks could be the light tanks from D Company, 777th Tank Battalion that were forced to withdraw to the North earlier in the day) have rejoined the advance of Task Force Miller by passing through the tank destroyer positions.

The infantry dismounted from the tanks. The tanks then moved through the enemy positions with all automatic weapons firing. References do not indicate whether any enemy were killed or wounded, whether the tankers stopped to pick up prisoners, or whether any equipment was destroyed or captured.

Note: B Company, 777th Tank Battalion had just fought a night battle through the Kaufunger Forest, several miles South and was now at Witzenhausen. Witzenhausen is about 15 kilometers southeast of Oberode.

Oberode

The Task Force was held up momentarily on the road west of Oberode due to roadblocks which were quickly removed. The Task Force moved on into Oberode and remained there for the night.

The tankers were responsible for the capture of 50 enemy soldiers (perhaps at Oberode) who they turned over to the infantry. Ten of the prisoners had been wounded. An additional 15 enemy soldiers had been killed in the action.

The units assigned to Task Force Miller were relieved. The different units returned to control by their respective battalions and regiments.

7 April 1945: Task Force Miller was dissolved late this evening.

8 April 1945: Just passed midnight, 1st and 3rd Platoons, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion were relieved from 273rd Infantry Regiment at Oberode and ordered to return to Lutterberg.

8 April 1945: 1st and 3rd Platoons, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion left Oberode and returned to Lutterberg where 777th Tank Battalion Headquarters was located. **Captain Burson's** tankers arrived at 0200. It had been a long day. Here they rejoined A Company, 777th Tank Battalion which was now at Lutterberg.

Note: "On The Way" indicates that, "At Lutterberg, **Captain Burson** liberated 40 dozen eggs from a chicken farm."

Lutterberg

Shortly after returning to Lutterberg from Oberode and rejoining their Company at Battalion Headquarters, 1st and 3rd Platoons, A Company, 777th Tank Battalion were assigned to 1st Battalion, 271st Infantry Regiment which was now located to the East at Witzenhausen. Before departing though, the tankers enjoyed a fine egg breakfast.

The French Lieutenant and the German Cookbook

Written By: Gus R. Wiemann

Company L, 271st Infantry Regiment

and Headquarters Division

7126 Canella Court, Tamarac, Florida 33321

For a short time weeks before the war ended, a French lieutenant named **Boucher** joined our unit. As I recall, he was to aid any liberated French laborers or former prisoners of war. He was a genial, dark-haired man in his early thirties, just about a decade older than most of the men in our unit.

One morning my commanding officer assigned me to go on a reconnaissance with him. As we approached a shelled two-story frame house, he noticed a book lying in the backyard of the building.

Just then we heard a shell whistling and landing on the far side of the house. As we started running to the house for shelter, the lieutenant tossed the book into the back seat of an abandoned car parked in the back yard.

After sitting in the cellar of the building for about five minutes, we heard no more shelling and cautiously emerged. The lieutenant walked to the car and reached into the back seat to retrieve the cookbook. As he pulled it out, we noticed that shell fragments had penetrated the car's roof and ripped the cookbook to shreds. Looking at the remnants, he half-smiled, shrugged his shoulders and murmured, "Ah, my poor cookbook."

In time the lieutenant and I established a friendship as we worked together in the closing weeks of the war. On the day he was called back to his unit he came to me and handed me a slip of paper, saying, "Here is my telephone number and address in Paris. If you get a pass there, call me and we'll get together."

Months later I was transferred to Paris. Shortly after arriving I called him and he invited me to his apartment for the next evening.

On my visit the next evening he introduced me to his wife, a pretty brunette who knew no English. Also present was a young French lady who spoke some English and was planning to attend an American university soon. We had an interesting conversation despite a little language problem. One irony mentioned by the lieutenant was that his father, who taught at the Sorbonne University established in the 13th century, was a Professor of German.

After coffee and cake the lieutenant asked, "How about going to a French film tonight?" All of us agreed and that evening we saw "The Children of Paradise." It was unique in that the French produced this period picture in color under the German occupation when color film was scarce and cinematic story material was under German censorship. Much of the drama eluded me as, of course, there were no English sub-titles. Later that evening the lieutenant mentioned that even though the picture had been passed by the German

censors, through the dialogue were anti-German quips which apparently went over the heads of the Nazis.

In the days following that evening I visited as many cinemas as possible to learn more French by matching the actors' action with their lines. At the box office of one of the theaters I apparently overpaid for my ticket. Lights in the theater before the film started were still on when the young lady from the box office found me and refunded my overpayment.

The offhand remark of the lieutenant about his father being a Professor of German at the Sorbonne intrigued me. One day I visited the University and mingled with the students who were chattering away in French. Here and there I caught a few words, but it was amazing how quickly you learn the basics of a language by seeing films in that language and hearing it through the day.

Recently while browsing through the foreign-films section of a Blockbuster store I came across "The Children of Paradise." Funny how a title of a movie can release a torrent of memories.

* * * * *

The Stars and Stripes

For readers of the Bulletin who are interested in the history of The Stars and Stripes from the Civil War through World War II there is the book, "The Stars and Stripes" by Ken Zumwalt, the former European edition's managing editor.

Zumwalt, who was about to join a paratroops' unit in October 1944, missed a bus headed for a physical exam and wound up in Paris without a pass. He decided to apply for a job at the Stripes' office in Paris, was hired because of his civilian experience and stayed with the paper until 1955.

Among the daring adventures of the paper's journalists in getting the latest news to the frontline GIs is the one of two Stripes' sergeants in Strasbourg, France. American troops had been ordered to evacuate the city as a German counterattack was expected. Civilians in the city panicked, piled their possessions into carts, baby carriages and fled.

Disobeying the order to retreat, the two sergeants remained, put out the paper and delivered it to deserted news stands. Remaining citizens saw the Americans delivering the latest news, took copies and left payment. Within a short time the city's populace realized that the rumored German counterattack was not to happen and those who had fled returned.

A grateful French government awarded the two Americans, Staff Sgt. Victor Dallaire of Medford, Oregon and Sgt. Edgar Clark of San Francisco, the Croix de Guerre. Later the U.S. Army awarded each the Bronze Star.

If you should visit Strasbourg today you will find another memorial to the two sergeants: a street named "Avenue des The Stars and Stripes."

Headquarters 3rd Battalion, 273rd

Submitted By: Francis Blais

603 Church Road, Reisterstown, Maryland 21136

In cleaning out the attic, I came across a mix of old photos. I did my best with identities but 60+ years is a long time. I understand that **Malchick** is still an active member. He was in our Wire Section at Shelby and as all photos are of Comm Platoon members, he may be of some help with identification.

Every year I vow to attend the Division Reunion. I have been doing this for the past 5 years, but something always crops up. Mostly health problems. Maybe this year???

To the best of my knowledge, I am the sole survivor of Hq., 3rd Battalion, 273rd. Malchick was an original 69er at Shelby and stayed with us until Basingstoke when he got "volunteered" for Bulge duty.

I was in touch with **Bill** until he died about 15 years ago. I also visited **Hall, Klink and Eakle** and through **Bill**, **Bybee**.



Comm Platoon - Seated: Quinn, Nystrom. Standing: Kosmo, Rothstein, McMunn and Decker.



Unknown



Unknown



Rear: Tech Sgt. Bybee, Cpl. Malchick, Sgt. Eakle, Staff Sgt. Hall. Foreground: Pat Molder



Comm Platoon: Cpl. Malchick, Cpl. Wolff, Unknown, Cpl. McMunn, Unknown.



Staff Sergeant Roper



Unknown

Company I, 271st Medic Found

Submitted By: **H. Lynn Jones**
Company I, 271st Infantry Regiment
1081 Meadowbrook Drive
Milan, Tennessee 38358



*Pfc Melvin Schmook
Camp Shelby - 1944*

Researched and Written By: B. Dale Thompson

Company I, 271st Infantry received very heavy artillery and mortar fire in the attack on Oberreiffescheid, Germany on February 28, 1945. The Second Platoon was especially hard hit, encountering anti-personnel mines during the advance, and there were many casualties. The medic assigned to the Platoon was **Pfc. Melvin Schmook** who while attending a wounded man, was hit in the arm and leg by shrapnel. As the attack moved forward he found himself left behind in an open field with four other wounded men. Due to the heavy and accurate fire it was impossible to evacuate the wounded. During the lapse of nineteen hours, despite his own serious and painful wounds, **Pfc. Schmook**, by crawling, located the other wounded and administered First Aid and morphine. In spite of the bitter cold, he took off his own jacket in order to cover the most seriously wounded man and prevented the men from becoming hysterical by constantly reassuring them and attending to them. When the litter

party arrived the next morning, Melvin was attempting to drag himself toward the town to notify someone of the location of the wounded men. **Pfc. Schmook**, for his heroic service was recommended for the Silver Star. The Company lost track of him after the evacuation.

As the years passed and we began reunions and mini reunions, there was no one who knew what really happened to **Melvin** after his evacuation, after the War, or even his home town. A search of the Archives in 2006 revealed he had entered the Army in Cleveland, Ohio, and further searching of telephone directories located a son in Florida. The son Alan and his sister Janice provided information and records about their father.

Melvin spent a long period of hospitalization, and while at Memphis Kennedy Hospital he was awarded the Silver Star. He returned to Cleveland, married and raised a family, but never discussed his military experiences with anyone. The family found a few pictures and some records only after Melvin and his wife were deceased.

We were indeed blessed to have had medical personnel such as **Melvin Schmook**.

Company I, 271st Fallen G.I. Remembered

Researched and Written By: Joe McMurry, Jr.

It was a beautiful spring morning of April 17th, 1945 and Company I was moving from Audigast to Rosen, which was to have been cleared the day before, when the Company came under attack from anti-aircraft guns being fired down the road at the approaching column. The Company pulled back into Audigast. The 1st Platoon was ordered to circle around and try to silence the anti-aircraft guns. In doing so, they came under heavy sniper fire. While trying to locate the sniper, **Pfc. Frederick Otto Melhorn, Jr.** was killed.

He was buried in Germany with full military honors. A memorial service was held in May of 1945 at Camp Austin Lutheran Church in his home community in Tennessee.

In October of 2005 the Morgan County, Tennessee Commission approved a resolution to name a New Bridge down the hill from the church in memory of **Pfc. Fredrick Otto Melhorn, Jr.** He grew up in the community and attended Camp Austin Lutheran Church. The dedication was made on Memorial Day weekend of 2006. **Frederick** entered the army in August of 1944 leaving his wife and sons, Otto and James. Otto lives in Ten Mile, Tennessee and James lives in Texas.



“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.

Anthony V. Carini
2510 N. Oakland Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53211-3930
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