



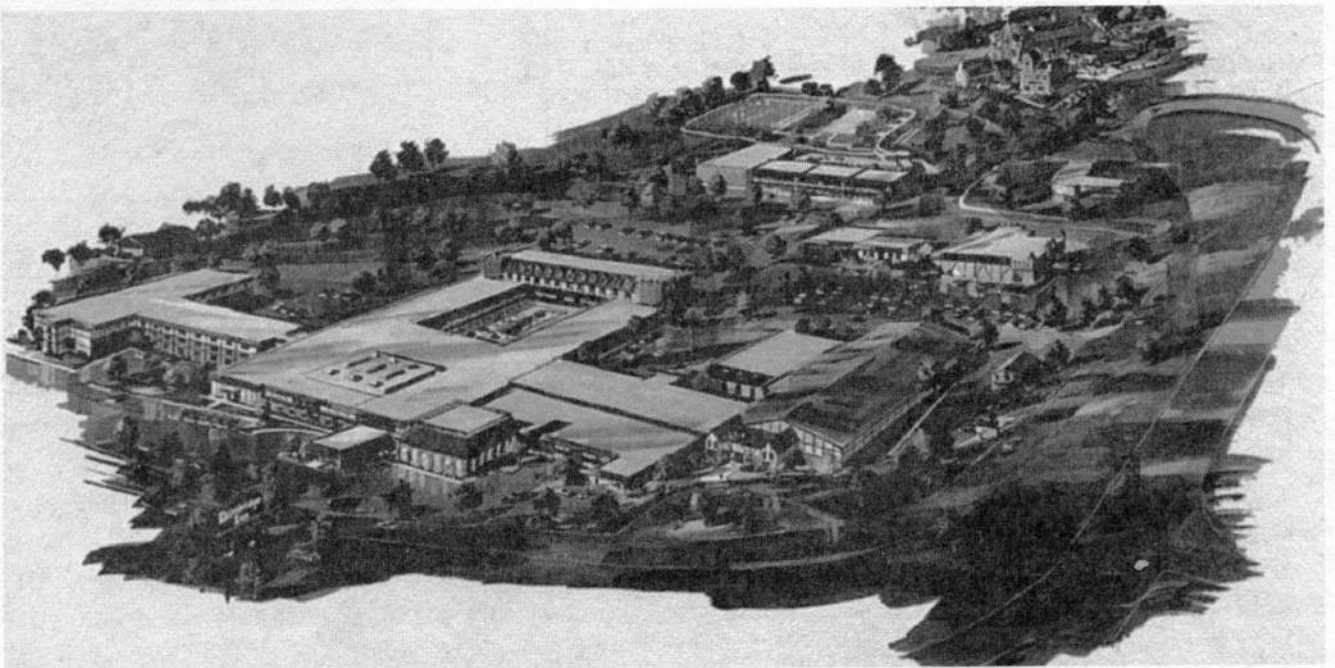
# THUNDERBOLT

83rd INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, Inc.  
WORLD WAR II

Vol. 58 Issue No. 1

Winter Issue 2003

THE DRAWBRIDGE, VILLAGER PREMIER HOTEL  
LOOKS FORWARD TO HOSTING THE  
57<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL REUNION  
FOR THE  
83<sup>RD</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION



*Ft. Mitchell, KY, September 3 – 7, 2003*

## THE THUNDERBOLT

Official Publication – 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Association, Inc.

The THUNDERBOLT is written for all members of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division World War II and is published at East Side Drive, P. O. Box 406, Alton Bay, NH 03810-0406

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### A SALUTE TO PAST PRESIDENTS WHO HAVE SERVED US WELL

*James C. Hanrahan.....1947	Albert B. Belvere.....1967	John Hobbs.....1986
Jack M. Straus.....1948	Vito C. Palazzolo.....1968	George Fletcher.....1987
*Shelly Hughes.....1949	Pat DiGiammerino.....1969	*Charles Schmidt.....1988
*Julius Ansel.....1950	Casey Szubski.....1970	Edward Reuss.....1989
*Walter H. Edwards Jr.....1951	*Charles Altomari.....1971	Charles J. Lussier.....1990
Leo Schneider.....1952	*Harold H. Dopp.....1972	Edgar H. Haynes.....1991
Finley Heyl.....1953	Louis J. Volpi.....1973	Ned Smith.....1992
*Lawrence J. Redmond.....1954-55	Bernard O. Riddle.....1974	*Louis Sandini.....1993
*Lt. Gen. Robert H. York.....1956	Robert G. Taylor.....1975	William A. Minick.....1994
*Harry W. Lockwood.....1957	Mike Skovran.....1976	Casey Szubski.....1995
*Raymond J. Voracek.....1958	Manlius Goodridge.....1977	Floyd Richmond.....1996
Charles Abdinoor.....1959	Joseph A. Macaluso.....1978	Keith Davidson.....1997
*Joseph F. Minotti.....1960	*William J. Chavanne.....1979	R.C. Hamilton.....1998
*Frank J. McGrogan.....1961	*Samuel Klippa.....1980	Pat DiGiammerino.....1999
*John W. Robinette.....1962	Michael Caprio.....1981	Salvatore Scicolone.....2000
*Manuel C. Martin.....1963	Ralph Gunderson.....1982	Pat DiGiammerino.....2001
*Julius Boyles.....1964	*Arthur Doggett.....1983	* Denotes Deceased
*Samueal Klippa.....1965	*Bernie Cove.....1984	
*William M. Doty.....1966	Carroll Brown.....1985	

## President's Corner

Robert G. Taylor, B-329

First I want to thank you for giving me, once more, the opportunity to serve this great Association as it's President. I am only the 4<sup>th</sup> person in the 57-year history of our association to be elected to a second term as National President. The others were Sam Klippa, Casey Szubsky, and Pat DiGiammerino. Pat actually served most of a third term also, having been elected from Vice President due to the resignation of a president.

It will take some re-orientation on my part to get used to the way things are now, but I'll do my best. John Prinzi and the Ex-Bd, have already done most of the leg work toward getting the 57<sup>th</sup> reunion under way at Ft. Mitchell, KY, a suburb of Covington, KY. Most of my time in this coming year will be spent in helping them draw this together.

So, make your plans now to come to the Drawbridge Inn next September and visit with the rest of us old BUDDIES that will meet you there.

## Past President

Pat DiGiammerino

Thanks to all who attended the Myrtle Peach Reunion. I have received many compliments on it.

I wish to thank Pat Emmon of the Landmark Hotel for seeing that things went right for us. Also to thank Mrs. Hornack for her showing of "Clowns" and "Famous Lady's", the men and women at the registration desk who kept things moving. Thank you to Fred Messina and Stan Bielen for their help in the hospitality room and to Cliff Wooldridge for his printing of the Ad book. Also thanks to Joe Macaluso for his usual fine job arranging our Memorial Services.

Congratulations to Bob Taylor for being elected Nat'l President for the coming year, the reunion to be held in Kentucky.

## Secretary/Treasurer

Thank you all again and I'll see you in Kentucky.

No report submitted

## From the Editor

**This is the last Thunderbolt you will receive if you have not paid your dues for 2002!**

I went to the reunion in Myrtle Beach and had a wonderful time. I met people I hadn't known before but missed some I have known over the years who didn't come for reasons of health and the hassle with the airlines.

I would like to hold this organization together as long as possible. Where can you find a nicer bunch of friends than the people from the "83<sup>rd</sup>".

Now we are into another year. If the membership keeps paying their dues, we can keep this Association going. We are like the government, if we don't get the money we can't keep running. Everytime we put out a Thunderbolt, it costs the Association \$3.00 which is about \$9.00 for the year.

One thing more, I'm not the Secretary/Treasurer, so anyone who sends me their dues, I have to re-send it to Bob Gangnath in Connecticut. As you can see in the Thunderbolt, it says to send your dues to Connecticut. I have enough to do with out taking care of your dues.

As for changes of address, I don't take an address change over the telephone. Please write it on a piece of paper and send it to me.

I guess that's enough for now.



# DECEASED LIST

*Our sympathy goes out to all the families of these veterans. We will miss all of them.*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Reported By</u>
Boyd, Olen "Nick" W.	E Co., 331st	Vito Palazzolo
Elphinstone, A.	B Co. 329th	
Gumola, Joe	F Co., 329 <sup>th</sup> Inf.	Pat DiGiammerino
Joseph, Anthony	93 <sup>rd</sup> Signal Corps, 83 <sup>rd</sup> MP	Allan R. Joseph, son
Jurden, Delbert	908 <sup>th</sup> F.A.	
Martin, Hershel	G Co., 329 <sup>th</sup> Inf.	John Cupina
McCallum, Leonard F.	C Co., 330th	
Mulligan, Joseph	Service Btry 324 FA	John G. Daum
Owen, Warren	L Co., 330th	Bon Grobelny
Spidare, William P.	HQ Battery	Bill Nurches
Tessman, Otto H.	308 <sup>th</sup> Eng.	
Thompson, H. Greer	H.Q. 324 <sup>th</sup> F.A.	Sal Scicolone

**Editors NOTE:**

**Due to the amount of material that was received for this issue of the Thunderbolt, some items did not get in. We apologize and will do our best to get them in the next issue.**

**Cliff Wooldridge**



# CHAPTERS

## BOSTON CHAPTER NEWS

By Amby Tynan

On Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002, Pat Sandini had a Memorial Service for her husband Louis Sandini at Bourne National Cemetery at 11:00 a.m. August Farias sang "My Buddy" at the service. After the service, most of us went to Lindsey's for lunch. Sixty-seven were in attendance and even more were at the cemetery. It was certainly a very good turnout for Lou as all these people are in their 80's and they traveled over 100 miles. Bob Sessions drove 230 miles each way. Thanks to Fred Sylvia for all his help arranging things.

Lou Sandini wrote a book on the 83<sup>rd</sup>. He held a high office in the Association plus he was a practicing Attorney, helping so many people for free. I am sure he will be rewarded in Heaven.

I am sorry I did not make the Reunion this year. I am told that everyone had a real good time with the Hospitality Room open all the time.

Joe Macaluso did an excellent Memorial Service. Thank God for having him with us for this occasion and also for many other things in our 83<sup>rd</sup> Association. We in Boston Chapter do appreciate you Joe, along with your family.

Dallas Williams and Eddie McCouch were at the reunion in South Carolina. Eddie was elected Sergeant at Arms. He tells us that Dallas can still fit into his army uniform and does a lot of work for the veterans.

Next year I hope to make it to Kentucky for the Reunion.

Boston Chapter is holding its next meeting at Pat and Ginny DiGiammerino's home in Malden, MA on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

Charlie Lussier is in charge of the Christmas Party on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome to come. I am going to try to get more 323<sup>rd</sup> members to attend this year.

Chuck Abdinoor must be back with the Loon Hill Gang after going to Florida after the reunion to put money in the Bank. Ha!Ha!

Walter Harding is entertaining his son, J.C., from Turkey. It is J.C.'s first time home in several years. Walt and Esther are happy to have him here to visit with them.

Had a nice talk with Leslie Taylor. Les is still cutting his own grass with his tractor (free ride).

Don Willis is doing fine with his golf cart and his wife Ann is in much better health which is good news.

Erwin Erhardt and Norma have been busy with their son Larry getting married. Larry owns his own home in Indiana. Good luck Larry. Erwin has been talking to Bob and Ruth Scheumann so I know they are well. Bob is thinking of reenlisting if we have another war.

Harold Barry, 331 A.T. Co.'s wife, Dot passed away recently. Condolences to the Barry family.



Hazel Farias & Ginny DiGiammerino,  
laying wreaths for deceased wives of 83<sup>rd</sup>



John Tisdell, President of Boston Chapter and his Buddies



Pat & Ginny DiGiammerino  
Joyce & Bob Gangnath



New 83<sup>rd</sup> Nat'l President  
Bob Taylor & wife



Cliff Wooldridge, Thunderbolt Printer  
Nancy McCarthy



Chuck Abdinoor, Bob Gangnath and Ginny DiGiammerino at the  
Registration Table

That's all for now

## CLEVELAND CHAPTER NEWS

By Bob Miller

Our Christmas Party is now underway. Emily Czech is in charge: 1:00 Cocktails, 2:00 Dinner. We hope to have at least 40 in attendance. It will be held at the Bedford Ohio VFW. Birthdays in September were Sam Cordiano and Ed Jocek. It was agreed by all in attendance not to have meetings in January and February due to the chance of bad weather in the Cleveland, Ohio area.

Bob Grobeilny spent 3 days at Hillcrest Hospital with a heart problem. Earl Lindsey is in better shape lately. Jerry Zingg is in bad shape. Charles Sihlanick is starting to loose

his memory in certain ways. George Calore is taking chemo for his legs. Warren Owen passed away and was laid to rest 8/26/02 at Rittman Ohio Veterans Cemetery with taps and Rifle Squad.

## DIXIE CHAPTER NEWS

By Ellsworth Massie

Camp Atterbury, August 24, 2002

10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of dedication of Memorial to all who trained and fought for our country at this camp and many who gave their lives in many parts of the world. 500,000 plus in the past 60 years trained and went on to protect our freedom. Some of those were able to come back to memorialize this fact. Members from nine divisions laid wreaths in memorial at the Memorial Wall in honor of the fallen and recognition of all who trained here. Color guards, music, appropriate remarks, fly overs, flowers, placement of memorial bricks in the circular walk around fountain and pool, firing squad, salute, and taps were all a part of the Memorial. The "Atterbury Veterans Memorial Association Inc." sponsors this annually. It is worthy of a trip and contribution.

A museum has opened and has a place for exhibits of memorial value. If you have items, this is a good place for them to be preserved. Ames and Helen Miller of our 83<sup>rd</sup> are still hard at work with the museum and memorial. They deserve all our praise and admiration for their dedicated service over the past many years. I discovered my old barracks has been torn down but one has been converted into overnight quarters which were enjoyed by a good size group of our 83<sup>rd</sup> members. What an honor to take part in this celebration! Especially since it involved so many units including our very own.

I stayed overnight in Bldg. 331. I named it 331 Headquarters since it's the only original barrack building standing and has the number. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

I saw Ames Miller, Floyd Richmond, Larry Dalton, George Naylor, Chester Wilson, Manny Goodridge, and Al Henry. Nancy Ledger, widow of Bill Ledger F329th was also present. Many others were there. I'd like to name them all but alas, what 80 years does to my memory.

Just as I left home, I got word that William Benlow, Bty A 322<sup>nd</sup>, had passed away.

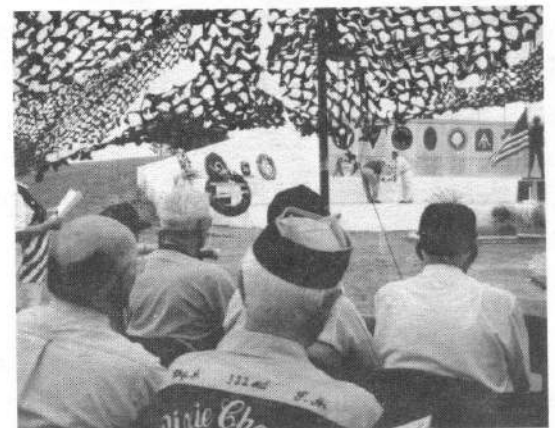
On my trip I managed to catch John Hudnell, one tough infantryman, at home on the farm and had a short visit with him.

I trust many will be able to not only attend but participate in this celebration in the future. You can sit, stand, salute, speak, march, think, pray, remain silent, just be there. That is what counts.

Let us be there for each other. That's why we are still here now because we have always been there for each other! Carry on.



4 Dixie Ladies  
Kathryn Massie, Carole Naylor, Jessie Dalton, Dolores Keith

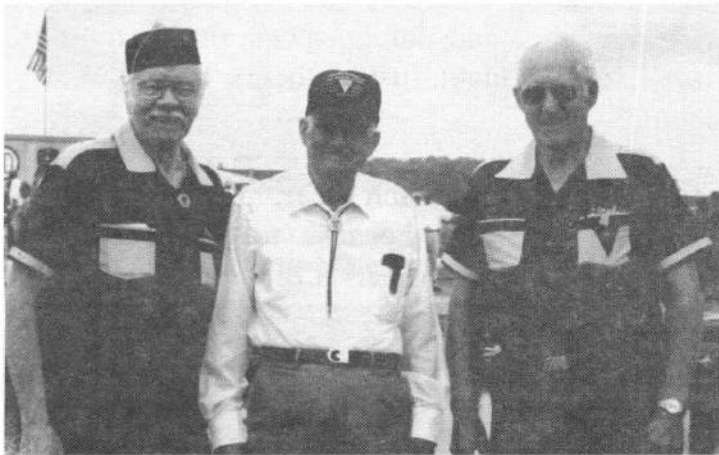


Laying 83<sup>rd</sup> wreath,  
Shade from camouflaged net





Building 331 converted into overnight accommodations  
Old barracks, yes!



Two good F331st men, Dalton & Richmond  
One Artillery man, Massie 322<sup>nd</sup>



83<sup>rd</sup> Division Memorial Wall



Ames, G 329 & Helen Miller in Museum with recent picture given to Museum.  
Picture by M. White's wife

### Notes from National 2002 83<sup>rd</sup> Div. Assn.

I'm so grateful that I'm able to be here, the old, ½ old, and new. Some are disabled, some wanted to come but couldn't. Some should have stayed home because of health but didn't. In spite of our problems, individual and general, we will have a gathering to remember for as long as we spread the word to the next generation before our last roll call is answered.

There are so many memories to recall, faces to remember, and new men to meet. Fellowship with those bearing a common bound is overpowering.

Some are here writing histories, some looking for someone who soldiered with their father or grandfather. Where else could you find such a diverse group with such a single purpose? Fellowship and comradeship with those who had the same experiences over the years have come together to share and enjoy and honor those who have given their all! Lets never forget the real purpose of coming.

In spite of our tremendous loss of leadership, those left here stepped up and got the job done! Now we can look forward to another year. Thank each one of your for a job well done under most difficult conditions.

Pictures, Stories  
I have dozens more



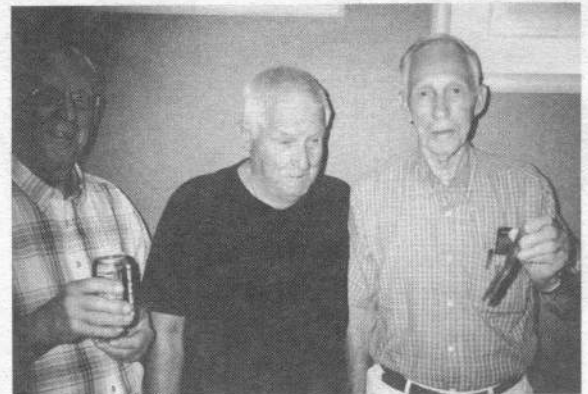
There's the story of Capt Mac, his wife Rena and daughter Monica. I've known Monica since she was a small (young) child. Now she has matured and takes part in everything. Picture her with her mother (former Army nurse) taking care of Mom while Dad attends to business.



Here's Larry Dalton (Silver Star winner, Battle Field Commission) with three other good men from 331<sup>st</sup> Inf. They had six men from "F" Co. but two were on patrol and missed the picture. Youth is son of Tom Curry who lost his life in Hurtgen Forest 1944, other men John Helms and Hershel McIntosh. Picture these three. Two Infantry men, one holding 10 inch shrapnel from our own 105 artillery "Friendly Fire" shell that landed beside him. He has kept this piece since March 1944 training in Breckinridge.



Here's RT Brooks with his wife and two sons at our meeting. Helping to make my day. Thank you all.



Talk about "short" rounds, he is Paul Willis, Co. "G" 329<sup>th</sup>. Talk about miracles, Henry Cyr holding soda just lost his wife but had to come once more from A 322<sup>nd</sup>. His buddy in middle too sick to be home, let alone being 900 miles from home. I have lost my notes and can't recall his name. Maybe next year.



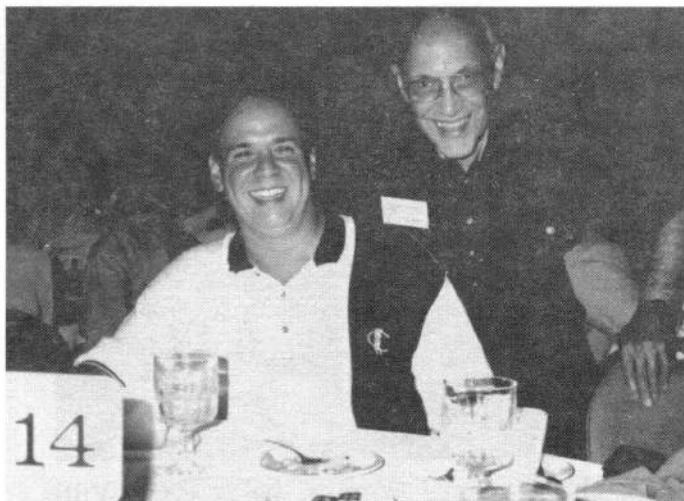
Here's two artillery men with three infantry men just waiting for a fire mission or an attack

Here is a couple I have to mention. Bob Smith, wounded and captured July 44, spent 300 days in captivity, yet survives and is a "hero" to me. This is his second reunion. He

never heard of it until Gatlinburg, two years ago. Hasn't missed since with his lovely wife. He is serving a Purple Heart Organization, Ex-POWs and other places. What fortitude. Where do these men get it?



Here is the man I thought dead for 55 years standing. Now I ask you doesn't he look alive? Wounded in Hurtgen Forest, December 1944, he is back finally. That story would fill a book. His son is with him for the first time. By the way, their last name is Lazarus. What could be more appropriate? He was in A 322<sup>nd</sup>.



These stories are but a few, all of us know many of these. I want to know and share all I can with each of you wherever you may be.

Lets keep on keeping on. I'm looking for each of you next year in Kentucky. If I don't make it, I know some one will step-up and get the job done. Together we have done it and will keep on. I just know it.

## FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

By W. Allen Fisher

The Florida Chapter is still alive with 47 current dues paying members, including 8 widows who we classified as Honorary Members. As the membership is so spread out, there is no personal contact other than at meetings.

Our last meeting was in April with 24 members in attendance. At that meeting it was decided to change from three meetings per year to two meetings. One will always be in November and the other one will be in the Feb/March time period. Exact dates will be determined at the November meeting. Shopping around the state for meeting sites is very difficult, therefore all meetings will be held in Sebring, Florida, as it being more accessible to the majority of the members.

The Florida Chapter was not as well represented at Myrtle Beach, with only about 12 members attending. However we were proud to have one of our staunch members, Bob Taylor, elected President of the National Association for the second time. He will certainly receive our loyal support.

I'm putting this report together to hopefully meet your October 10<sup>th</sup> deadline. Our next meeting will be November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, so your next issue probably won't be mailed before then. Then the February deadline might be just before our next meeting.

To the "Short Stay Snow Birds" belonging to the Florida Chapter, you will be notified of the date of the winter meeting as soon as possible after the November meeting.

Stay healthy and God bless you all.



## KENTUCKY CHAPTER NEWS

By Chester Wilson

The Kentucky Chapter held their spring meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> at the Comfort Inn in Chillicothe, Ohio. It was hosted by Earl and Bonnie Hoover. Everyone has a good time. Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, Ohio is where the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division trained during World War I.

The Kentucky Chapter held their summer meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> at the Signature Inn, Florence KY. It was hosted by Manlius Goodridge.

The Kentucky Chapter Christmas party will be December 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> at the Comfort Inn, Piqua, Ohio. Hosting it will be Al, Dorothy, Henry Hayes and Betty Wilt.

The members and wives of the Kentucky Chapter wish everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

## MICHIGAN CHAPTER NEWS

By Vito Palazzolo,  
Harper Woods, Michigan

The Michigan Chapter held its last meeting on July 11, at the Country Buffet in Mount Clemens, Michigan. We had five fellows and three wives. We have several on sick call and several that were not able to make it. Lee Hestrick reported sick. Nick Boyd has been released from the hospital and several had other commitments elsewhere.

Our last meeting was held at Reckters Restaurant in Dearborn, Michigan. We were saddened by one of our long time members Orlow Boyd's passing in October 2001. He had been ill for a long time and was unable to survive his illness. We will miss him. A daughter Vickie, an only child, survives him.

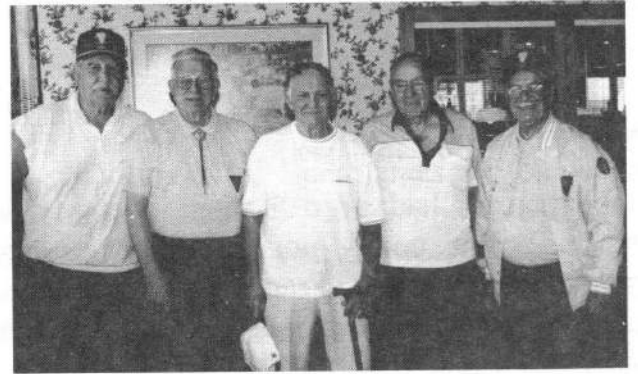
Also just out of the hospital is Nick Barber, who had his second knee operation and is

doing very good. He is home getting around nicely. Also, Lee Hetrick on sick list.

We had seven members attend our meeting. Lee Hetrick is still ailing and taking it easy.

Those at the meeting were: Mr. & Mrs. Charlie McAulliff, Mr. & Mrs. Joe Romano, Vito & Virginia Palazzolo, and Big Al Vartaran. As always, Evelyn McAulliff was there with her camera and took pictures.

Any one interested in shirts, caps and jackets. Please write me.



Vito Palazzolo, Stanley Kiel, Joe Romano, Charley McAulliff, Al Vartaran at Country Buffett



Rose Romano, Virginia Palazzolo, Evelyn McAulliff  
At Country Buffett



Together in Dearborn, Michigan  
Joe & Rose Romano, Charley & Evelyn McAulliff,  
Vito & Virginia Palazzolo, Al Vartaran had left room

# NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

By Nick Francullo  
Hq. Co. 3<sup>rd</sup>, Bn 330<sup>th</sup>



Happy 80th Nick

Hope you all had a great reunion at Myrtle Beach. We could not make it as my granddaughter Anne Francullo got married September 14 and that was the first reunion Mary and I and Jim and Dot Brennan missed in many years.



Granddaughter Anne Francullo's wedding gang



Dot Brennan, Mary & Nick Francullo, and Jim Brennan at the wedding

Our get-togethers are slowing down as some can't drive and some are not well, but we still are 83<sup>rd</sup> members and keep in touch. Jim Brennan is getting along slow on his knee operation. They have moved and their address is 2970 Mendon Road, Maple Wood Farms, Unit 14, Cumberland, RI 02864.

Talked to the Ferriera's and John had 3 tumors taken out of his mouth, in below his gums, and has not been doing to good and Ester is not to good also. Get well you all.

What a proud family. Dutchy and Helen Smith's grandson, Steven Walsh, was elected state representative of the 11<sup>th</sup> Essex District. His mother, Debra Smith Walsh is Councilor at large for the City of Lynn. Good luck Steven and wish you well.



Steve Walsh (center), winner of the 11<sup>th</sup> Essex primary for state representative, celebrates with his family, (from left) sister Marissa, brother Joseph and (from right) father Coley and mother Debra

Oh, before I forget, I have another wedding on November 29. Mary and I will be going to Denver, CO for another granddaughter, Christine Walsh. This will be a cold one, ha ha, up in the mountains.

Also, we of the New England Chapter would like to send our sympathy to the Atkouias family on the passing of Vitie. He was the life of the party at all reunions and well liked by all.

Also our sympathy to the Lou Sandini family. Lou was a member of the Executive Board.

Dutchy and Helen Smith's grandson Joseph Walsh is going to London, England to study and teach theater and plays and the only one from the United States to be excepted out of a group of 6 people. Dutchy and Helen are doing okay but do not drive at night.

That is it.

\*\*\*

From Chuck Abdinoor:

Hi Buddies! Sincerely hope all is well with all of you. Our reunion was a great success. Missed all our New England buddies and wives this year. All our regulars were AWOL this past year. No Christmas Parties or get-togethers. Only ones that were at Myrtle Beach, that I saw, were the Faria's and McKees, all in all we had a great time. They gave me a suite Oceanside at a great price, and treated us real good. They added an indoor moving river, that you can sit on a tube and take a leisure ride all around the hotel, where the parking area was. Those that were at the last reunion there, remember all the construction that was going on, well the results now shows, even though we were disturbed. I would not mind going back in a few years, hopefully, that we are in good health. The Banquet Hall was completely filled and the prime rib was so, so. I happen to get an end cut that was good, but others at our table were a little disappointed. To bad they did not also have a chicken dish, for those that did not like red meat. The old regulars were there, although I missed a few old faces. Many thanks to Manny Epstein for the beautiful tie he sent me to wear and also congratulations on being finally on the officer's staff. He finally was recognized after all these years. I can say that my wife Bernice and I had a wonderful time, but we missed the New England Chapter. Hopefully we will all be together in Kentucky. Looking forward to it.

P.S. We lost 83 ex-soldiers last year.

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Dear Nick,

Just a few lines to let you know that Hazel and I had a wonderful time at the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry

Division 56<sup>th</sup> Reunion. There were about 400 people there. Next year Robert Taylor will be President and Carrel Brown, Vie President.

We went to the Carolina Opry. They put on a good show.

At the memorial service, Chuck laid a wreath and so did Hazel. The food was good so was the music. I sang "My Buddy" again. We had three members from the New England Chapter. Chuck was concerned about it.

When we got back, I went to the burial of Lou Sandini in Bourne, Massachusetts at the Military Cemetery. Pat asked me to sing "My Buddy", which I did. I only knew Lou for about 7 years. He was a gentleman. He was the chairman of the Board and tried to do what was best for the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division. I will close now and God bless you all.

Sincerely, August Farias

## NEW JERSY CHAPTER NEWS

By Stan Bielen

I had planned on attending the reunion and spending some vacation time with my wife, Fran and my daughter, Joyce and her husband, John and our grandchildren, Emily and Evan. A couple of weeks before the reunion Pat DiGiammerino called to tell me they needed my help and to come down a few days early. I asked what I would be doing and his reply was, not much. When I got there, Meadors Minick told me I was in charge as reunion chairman. I wasn't really prepared for it, but after I got over the initial shock, I decided I would do my best to make it successful and enjoyable for those attending. I hope that my efforts accomplished that.

A reunion takes a lot of work to make it successful and many were there at the registration desk and performing other jobs to do that. I want to thank the following men for



their help. Pat DiGiammerino was there sharing the shopping for the Hospitality Room and always available to assist me. I wouldn't have been able to take care of the Hospitality Room without the help of John Cox and Fred Messina, they were terrific! Also to the Landmark Staff for their help which I really appreciated.

New Jersey Chapter had the following attend the reunion. Congratulations to Manny Epstein who was elected as our new National 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, George and Dot Foster, Sam and Edith Manzi, Frank and Mary Sabine, Cookie Seneca with son Jim, Charles Sihlanick and Andy Socha.

Joe Deperi wasn't able to attend as he had a quadruple by-pass in July and was still not up to it. Joe's doctor moved and when he had his new doctor examine him, he sent him in the same day for the operation. With his daughter Joann's care, he is coming along quite well. I know he missed seeing Cookie and Jim Seneca.

I talked to George Waple before the reunion and he told me he wasn't going. Lately he called and told me he was being operated on October 2<sup>nd</sup> for colon cancer. Our prayers are with you, hopefully the operation will be successful.

My daughter Joyce and her family were flying to Myrtle Beach from Atlantic City Airport on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Her husband John was approached by TV and Newspaper Media for an interview about flying on that anniversary day of the terrorist attack. In the interview, he told them he was going to the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Reunion. Have any of you seen it in the Atlantis City Press or the Philadelphia TV stations?

I have some news about Father Francis McCartin who recently celebrated 70 years as a priest. My son Ken was in New England area looking at colleges for his daughter. He was overnight in Lowell, Mass. And called Father McCartin. He was 89 in August and

has had several mini-strokes in the past year. It has affected his memory and legs. He talked about the European Trips with 83<sup>rd</sup> and sends his regards to all.

I lost my good buddy Wilson Day who passed away on August 17<sup>th</sup> at the age of 85. Wilson was in my company as a head cook and always kidded me about making a man of me with his cooking. He will be missed.

At the reunion, I had the pleasure of meeting Dave Curry who is the son of Thomas Curry who was with Co. F, 331<sup>st</sup> Inf. His father was lost in the battle for Gey, Germany when Dave was a year old. He has a website to honor his Dad and all the 83<sup>rd</sup>. It's a terrific site and if you have access to a computer log-on, the address

is <http://www.ncweb.com/~davecurry/brothers/>

Dave has a feature on his site the Message Board. On it recently there was one from Sonia Almond who is the daughter of Reverend Edward Swartout who was a chaplain with the 331<sup>st</sup>. The Reverend was seeking information on the name or the relatives of the first GI who was brought back to the state to be interred, he believed him to be an 83<sup>rd</sup> man. The GI was from New Jersey and the Reverend being nearby was asked to participate in the ceremony. Swartout was instrumental in starting the New York Chapter back in 1946, which later turned into the New Jersey Chapter. I last saw him in the late sixties when he asked me to help him on a tennis ball-throwing machine. I machined some of the parts from him and then got too busy to help anymore.

I often wondered what had happened to him and his machine. It was thru Dave's message board that I contacted Swartout's daughter and found that he is in a nursing home suffering from Parkinson's but has a good memory and loves to talk. The machine he developed was finished and he holds the patent on it. It's being manufactured under the name Tenni-Pro. So you tennis buffs out there if you have seen the machine, there is an 83<sup>Rd</sup> connection.

Reverend Swartout has some of his recollections on Curry's message board along with others from 83<sup>rd</sup> veterans.

I have included ten pictures for your enjoyment. Best wishes to all!



New Jersey Governor James McGreevey honorary member of the New Jersey Chapter accepting his issue of the Thunderbolt from Stan Bielen at the Governor's Mansion in Princeton



Frank Reichman and Stan Bielen at Frank's home in Princeton. (note the picture between them shows Frank, Stan, Fred Klein with Mickey Rooney taken from 331<sup>st</sup> book)



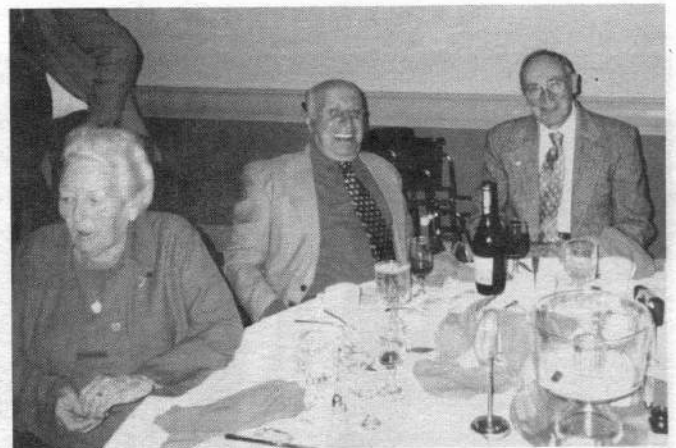
Dave and Ginny Curry with Stan Bielen at Banquet. Dave's father was with Co. F 331st



Mena and Joe Macaluso at Reunion



Nellie & Fred Messina and Edith & Sam Manzi at Reunion



Beatrice & Chuck Abdinoor with Larry Arrigo at Reunion



Geri Gunderson with Mr. & Mrs. R. C. Hamilton at Reunion



Nick & Sylvia Barbu at banquet



Dot & George Foster at Banquet



Cookie and Jim Seneca with friend at banquet

## **NEW ORLEANS CHAPTER NEWS**

By

No Report

## **PHILDELPHIA CHAPTER NEWS**

By

No Report

## **PITTSBURG CHAPTER NEWS**

By Francis Beerhalter

On Wednesday, April 24, I went to the City-County Building in downtown Pittsburgh to obtain a copy of my divorce papers from my first wife. While there, I renewed acquaintances with Diann Klippa who is employed there. Daughter of Sam Klippa, Mr. "83<sup>rd</sup>" of the past. She told me to give her regards to the members of the Pittsburgh Chapter. She informed me that her mother had passed away shortly before.

Ezio "Smokey" Alicandri died this past summer. A thank you card was received from his wife, Frances, thanking the chapter for attendance at the funeral services. "Andy" Churpak fell and broke his hip and is confined to the Baldwin Nursing Home. On Friday, August 16, a memorial service was held at Good Shepherd Church, 1700 Bower Hill Road, South Hills area of Pittsburgh. Greer was cremated. Myself, Paul Districh, Sal Scicolone and Frank Hornack attended the past reunion. Former member of the chapter, now residing in Florida, Lou Kanen also attended.

Your reporter with family and friends rented a 15-passenger van. In and out was a real challenge for me because of the high step. Two days later, Monday, I was unable to walk on my right leg. My wife took me to the emergency room of St. Francis Hospital here in Cranberry. X-Rays were taken. They thought I had a blood clot in my leg. Another test showed it as a bone clip. My doctor ordered an MRI. But my insurance company would not go for it, claiming it was not a medical necessity. After much talk, my doctor ordered an MRI. Results showed it was a cartilage tear. I was given a cortisone shot. I feel a lot better.



Chapter meetings are still held at the Brentwood VFW. We average fourteen at our meetings. The Christmas Party will be held at the Lamplighter Café on Sunday, December 8, at 2 pm.

The following article was taken from the Sewickly Herald Star of Wednesday, July 3, 2002 and depicts chapter member John Marek.



John Marek Jr. shows off his many medals earned during his service in World War II

John Marek Jr. of Bell Acres lived some compelling tales, but he isn't much of a storyteller. A former United States Soldier and a genuine hero, but he doesn't display this through his words.

"I had quite a life," he concludes, leaving out the specifics, especially his time during World War II.

Marek doesn't use war stories as conversation, retelling his bravery. It is a past that he'll never forget. However, behind the modesty is a first-class sergeant who is proud to have served his country.

On July 4, Leetsdale Borough will welcome Marek as the grand marshal for its annual parade at 2 p.m.

Many of the details of his brave service can be found in a personal archive, one stuffed in a worn out, manila envelope.

Ask him to retell the time he helped corner a squad of enemy tanks in the Battle of

Normandy, and with one reach, Marek will pull out a dozen photographs, certified documents and newspaper clippings.

Among the memories are the five major battles he fought in after landing 10 days after D-Day on Omaha Beach, Normandy.

There was a battle during his service in which he saved the life of a wounded soldier.

And there are stories when he was called to duty in 1959 and sent to train men for the Korean War.

Then there are his medals – a Bronze Star, a Victory Medal, Silver Star, American Service Medal, Combat Badge, European Service Medal with five stars for battle, a decoration for the Battle of Normandy, a good conduct medal and a Purple Heart.

"I have all the papers for all my medals," he says.

His name, one of 244, is also inscribed in the hall of valor at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall, Oakland.

While Marek keeps military history close, he hasn't forgotten his life as a civilian. Marek worked on a farm until he was drafted in 1942.

"I was a country boy," says Marek.

After his second discharge in 1952, he went back to the farm on land that later became a part of Bell Acres. As a devoted resident, Marek, along with his brother, helped to start the Bell Acres volunteer fire department, 50 years ago.

Now retired, Marek says he is honored to receive his latest title as parade marshal, but isn't quite sure what the role involves.

However, he will be there tomorrow at 2 p.m. as the parade begins, to return the salutes and waves of his many friends and neighbors.

# COMPANIES

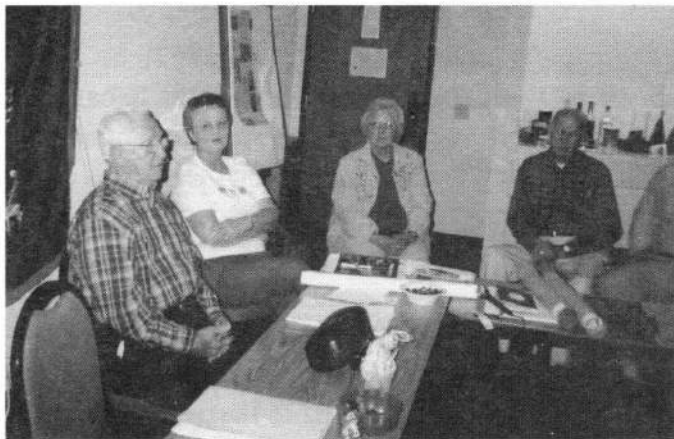
## Co. "F" – 329<sup>th</sup>

By C. R. Bob Whitcomb

Over but not Forgotten: 25 members, wives, and guests from seven states, stretching across our great Nation, from New Jersey to Texas, attended North 2002, October 6 to 9<sup>th</sup> in Ashland Ohio. Home to our Company "F" get-togethers in the North. 100% of those attending agreed to suspend Company "F" North 2003, with all roads heading North. South, East and West to the Drawbridge, Villager Premier Hotel, Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky, September 3-7, 2003. Start planning your route to Northern Kentucky, The Southern Side of Cincinnati. With Lord on our side, Company "F" could have one great contingent at the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division's 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion.

Having had others in the association request copies of "F" Company newsletter, which by the way, is not on a set schedule, we will be glad to accommodate you, if you will just sent your request to me, Bob Whitcomb at 1314 Centerlane Dr., Ashland, OH 44805-3403.

Now some pictures from North 2002.



Doc Keith conducting Memorial Services



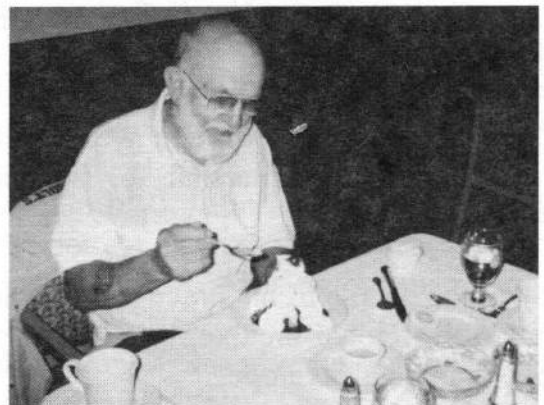
In AU, Accent Room



In AU, Accent Room



E. Hammonds, G. Fullers, M. Whitehead



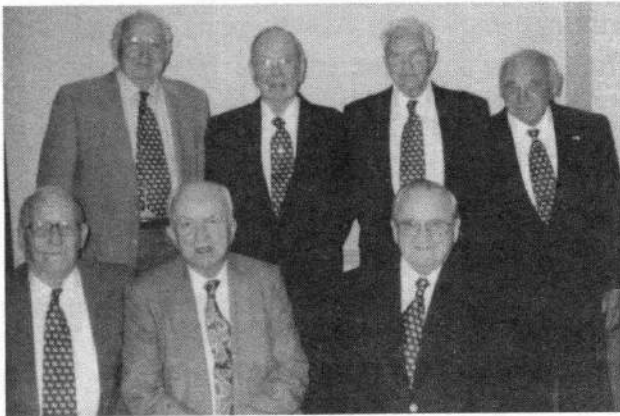
Just another boy – Russ Whitehead

## Co. "K" – 331st

By Norm Malo

The last two issues of our Thunderbolt made notice that no report had been received from me. The time and efforts are there, but without news from any buddies it creates an impossible task – so please let's hear from you.

The 56<sup>th</sup> reunion was certainly a bright episode when seven (7) original members showed up at Myrtle Beach, as shown in the enclosed picture. Those standing were, Harold Merrill, Paul Ours, George Baker and Manny Epstein. Kneeling, Everett Rogers, Norm Malo and Francis Horvath.



Co "K" 331<sup>st</sup> at Reunion

Standing: Harold Merrill, Paul Ours, George Baker and Manny Epstein

Kneeling: Everett Rogers, Norm Malo, Frank Horvath



Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Rogers

The other picture shows Everett Rogers counting his winnings of his share of the split-the-pot raffle at the banquet along with his wife Ugene.

Sadly missed this year was the company "Patriarch" James McNabb, the communication Sgt. throughout his army career. I understand he was scheduled for a second cataract operation and we hope and pray that all went well and that he has fully recovered by now.

You can always expect great shows at Myrtle Beach and the evening spent at the Carolina Oprey was wonderful.

As usual, Capt. Mac did a superb job with his memorial service. The reading of the 82 veterans of the Association who passed away during the last year serves as a solemn reminder that our membership is rapidly dwindling.

I was very thankful to our President for his efforts in being able to have a priest for the Catholic Mass. I'm sure it was well appreciated by the 80 or so who attended the service.

I was able to obtain an extra copy of the "AD Book" which I mailed to the wife of our former Company Commander, Capt. Marion Cooper. She wasted no time in thanking me as it brought back many of the wonderful memories she shared with him at past reunions. After 47 years, she moved to Carmel, Ind. to be closer to her daughter and youngest son.

Hope to hear from my many buddies and in the meanwhile have a very merry, happy and healthy holiday.

May God bless you.

## Co. "A" – 329th

By Bob Grobelny

No Report



## 783<sup>rd</sup> Ordnance Co.

by Rags Rangnow

Like you, I can't believe another year has flown by so quickly. Here we were all hoping to make it to the year 2000 and already it's 2003! We may be struggling and puffing a bit but overall I think we will all agree life has been good to us. Depending on where you live, smell the roses. If you have no roses, remember the color of the fall trees or take a look around the golf course.

As you look through the Thunderbolt you realize it's getting difficult to keep these Company articles interesting. It is reading more like the "New England Journal of Medicine" than articles on our relationships. This month I'm going to be of good cheer. The medical report on everyone is going to be like the morning Company report, "Everyone present and accounted for, Sir!"

Inasmuch as this is Christmas, I decided to do something a little different. Going down the shrinking Company list I picked out some of the fellows who for one reason or another have seldom contacted us. The lucky winners were Vin Musser, Wilton Snooks, Henry Krebs, Ted Leash, Steve Greecher, Donald Vandermergel and Hobart Belt.

When I make these calls these days I hold my breath hoping I get a good answer. Of course, the odds are now against us. On calling Ted Leash in Trenton, NJ, his wife informed me that Ted had died from cancer in March 1999. Musser, Snooks, Krebs and Belt all had disconnected numbers and there was nothing in the computer on Belt, Snooks or Musser. There is a Henry Krebs still in Florida but I wasn't about to spend \$14.95 for possible information. Two years ago, he told me he didn't want to talk. He "never felt part of the Company", "I just stay around the house, go to church and play gold." Steve Greecher is still living and working on his farm. Don Vandermergel and his wife Evelyn are doing

okay in N.C. Don let his membership run out but Evelyn is reinstating it.

There are still a number of other fellows out there but I was running late on this article and the phone bill was soaring. Ted's wife told me more about her dog than she did Ted! After listening to Greecher I feel qualified to build a barn and plant just about any crop. It's an interesting human study. You fellows who have come to reunions and stayed in touch still have that comrade feeling. These fellows have just about lost all memories of past friendships. Gilman always preached to me, "What you sow is what you reap." He cut so many holes in my mail that as Ginny opened my mail her Mom could always hear her singing, "holy, Holy, Holy."

The other sad part of this report is for the second year in a row not one of us made the reunion. I'm not going into each separate medical reason but I will say Al Bensimon and Sam Hoffman were all set to go but were discouraged that they would be the lone "odd couple." (This is known as writer's advantage)

At the last minute, Al had an eye appointment that he couldn't afford to miss. Lets hope some of us will make it up to Kentucky next year. You know it's only about twenty-five miles from Millie Doggett and she is already exercising her lips. I just hope Stan Bielen doesn't pick up on this.

Just had a whole MINUTE conversation with Joe Brown. Joe has joined the E-Mail forces and he sent me his address. Just as quick it wasn't working so I put in a call to him this morning. He must have been on the golf course as I got his answering machine. A short time later he called back, "Hey Rags, I've got a minute on this card. MY new address is jbr795@earthlink.com, How are things up....." I always thought Lt. Col's got better pension than this. All of you who were under Joe's big thumb 50 years ago and are stuck on his Christmas gift ---- he can use a new telephone card.

The Email in the Division is growing and while I hear a lot of chatter, "I'm too old to learn that stuff," it is really not all that difficult to send E mails. Remember we were supposed to be the smart Company! Every so often Gilman and I use the E to our advantage for quick questions and answers. It sure saves on stamps and phone bills. Ivan's address is Bud2pat@silcon.com, Millie Doggett's millie5@mymailstation.com and Bob Burns rburns@Tm.Net. Try it, you'll like it.

Jim Jones called last week when I wasn't home and he talked 45 minutes with Ginny. Jim's okay in more ways than one. Also checking in were calls from Doc, Weaver, Bensimon, Hoffman, Wiggins, Fredericks and Phillips. Every one of them stated they were grunting when they arose in the morning but at night, when they hit the pillow, they sighed.

Lastly, for you book readers I'd like to strongly recommend three great books for these winter nights. "Ghost Soldier", an unbelievable true story of the rescue of the Bataan Marchers by a small group of Rangers. "Flags of Our Fathers". By James Bradley the son of one of the Flag raiser on Iwo Jima. Stephen Ambrose said, "It's the best book I ever read." Lastly the best seller. "John Adams". All three of them declare the true spirit of Americans.

So HAPPY HOLIDAYS to one and all. Keep buying those prunes and keep walking but not at the same time.

## **453<sup>rd</sup> A.A.A. (AW) Bn.**

By Fred C. Pearson  
Email k8uet@lightsteam.net

Well, we have survived another year of Reunions. Our members are thinning out. With God's help and assistance for our medical Practitioners, some of use will make another Reunion in 2003.

As with many of the old veterans groups, the 453<sup>rd</sup> has suffered this past year, with many illnesses, afflictions and deaths. Of course this played heavily on our attendance at the 2002 reunion.

Several of our old buddies made an attempt to make the trip, but at the last minute had to bow out due to sudden extenuating circumstances. The ones that have communicated with me about the situation are, Carl Schults, whose some was not able to travel with him because of business commitments, Bob Hemstreet, eye problems that precluded him from air travel. Don Jopp, whose wife had to be rushed to the hospital. Larry Carman, who is not able to travel alone because of eye problems, had to cancel because his wife came down with physical problems that made her unable to be his travel companion.

Many of our Members seem to have fallen by the wayside. Many have gone to live with their children, or Rest Homes, or passed away. Some of these reasons are why we have lost contact lately and mailings have come back, "no forwarding address". The following persons had their mail returned: James Boff, Fred Milam, Durwood Brown, Joseph List, George Zelenka, Junius Hoffman, Ed Gearheart, Marion Cheshire, Anthony Monola. Many of the widows of our old pals still keep in contact, and their communication is appreciated greatly.

The widows who keep in touch with me are as follows: Jean Getts, widow of Virgil, who would like to attend another reunion, but will not fly, and has had several hip operations. Thelma Ratliffe, widow of Palmer, said that before his death, she and Thelmer always talked about attending, but his time ran out. Jean Bailey, widow of "Bud" still doing volunteer work, and is now trying to piece together things that transpired in the war year that pertained to Bud and the 453<sup>rd</sup>. Any one with data that you think would help Jean or anyone else from our old outfit, contact me or Jean.

William Stanton has a myriad of problems and has to walk with the aid of a walker. Jim Nichols with his back problems is also using a walker.

Fred Edwards, who just buried his wife Doris this year, is now in an assisted living home in "Golf Cart City" Florida. He fell a few months ago and had to have an operation. He seems to be getting around okay.

John Gosser, who from his letter, needs a whole new body. He has more ailments than I can write down.

The Farnsworths are now living in an assisted living facility. Jean has complications that Oscar could not handle.

Jim Hull is living in an assisted living facility.

Virgil Starkey just went for another heart bypass, this is the second time. At this writing he is still not ready to go 18 holes of golf, and needs much help and prayers.

I have heard no word on Doris Plummer, widow of Woodrow.

The following is a list of some of our members who have left for a better place since our last news letter:

Palmer Ratliffe, Sept. 30, 2001  
Jim Dalton, Oct. 2, 2002  
Raymond Lagergren, Dec. 16, 2001  
David Gerald, April 6, 2002  
Edward Banas, Sept. 6, 2002  
Walter Fisher, Oct. 7, 2002  
Mike Morick, July 29, 2002

Some letters seem to just want to let us know they are still around, but give not specific data on their well being. Some of them are as follows:

Frank Moore, Omar Peavey, Floyd Nedland

My chief spy and undercover reporter, Mike Manzo, helps me with much of my reporting.

It is sure great to have someone help when they can.

My chief gripe, are those that can correspond but don't bother and yet like to receive all the latest gossip. I sure would like to hear from them.

Our Reunion 2002 was a great success due to the combined efforts of Virgil and Wilma Starkey, and their daughter and son-in-law, Judy and George Foster.

It was great to see Jim Hull, who seemed hale and hearty after his physical problems. Jim just went through the trauma of losing his wife Doris.

The efforts put out by the V.F.W. organizations in Fairmont, Shinston, and Clarksburg, West Virginia, were second to none. They made our group feel as though the efforts that were put forth by the 453<sup>rd</sup> AAA and the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division was truly appreciated.

Trolley type buses were supplied for our transportation to the involved towns where we visited the Memorials that were placed to honor those who had fallen in WWII.

The V.F.W. of Clarksburg supplied our lunch.

I must add, that I have seen nothing to date that even comes close to the efforts put forth by small communities, to honor those that served our Country in their "Hour of need". It was truly an inspiration.

The "Man of the Hour", Andy Ray, who was our guide and speaker at our banquet, did an tremendous job on our behalf. Andy is the Past District commander of the Clarksburg V.F.W., retired from the U.S. Army, a Purple Heart recipient and Veteran of the Viet Nam hostilities.

Proclamations were presented. One from the Marion County Commissioners, one from the Commissioners of Harrison County and one from the Mayor of Clarksburg, West Virginia.



In each case, the Proclamations Honored both the 453<sup>rd</sup> (AW) BN, and the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division.

Your President received a nice letter from Ronald Massar, son of the late Steve Massar, B Battery. He and his family are great supporters of the 453<sup>rd</sup>.

They made a donation to be used for something that would help make our reunion a memorable event. Many thanks Massar Family.

Ron also sent me a Collectors Editions Half track with Quad Mount Fifties, that he had acquired.

In discussing this with other board Members it was decided that we would try to acquire more of these units to be given to those men and widows that were in attendance at the reunion.

Pearson contacted the manufacturer and was able to locate just enough of these half-tracks to cover the above-mentioned persons. They were greatly appreciated.

It was a terrific reunion and one I thought might be our last.

Surprise. We now have a sponsor for a reunion in 2003. Linda Dickens and her dad, John Dickens have volunteered to take on the great task of arranging all the details for the reunion to be held in Lisbon, Ohio (vicinity of Youngstown, Akron, and the Great Armament Museum in Hubbard, Ohio). The reunion dates are September 12<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003

I just received word that my grandson, Jeremy Whitely, in Saudi Arabia, received a coin type of medal, presented to him by a general for his knowledge and excellence in his assignment. This, after being able to explain the mission to this general in a way that he could understand just what was being accomplished. The general's words were, "It's not worth much, but it will give you certain bragging rites." I guess that's better than a "Kick in the teeth".

This is a portion of the Article taken from the Fort Bliss Monitor, Aug. 15, 2002, "3-43 ADA uses renaming to link past with present" by Maj. Jonathan Cohen, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 43<sup>rd</sup> ADA.

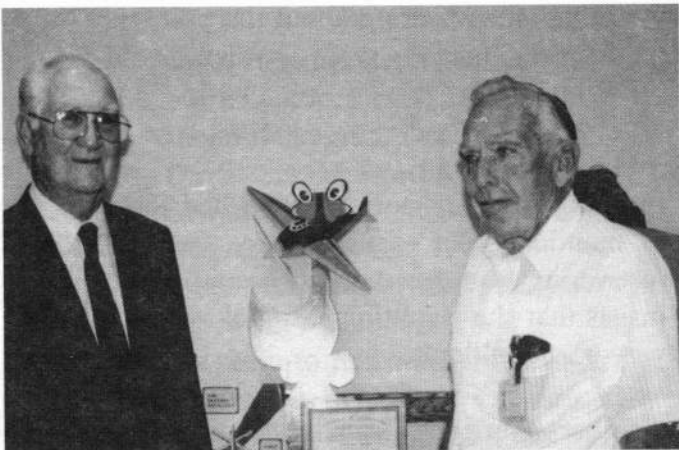
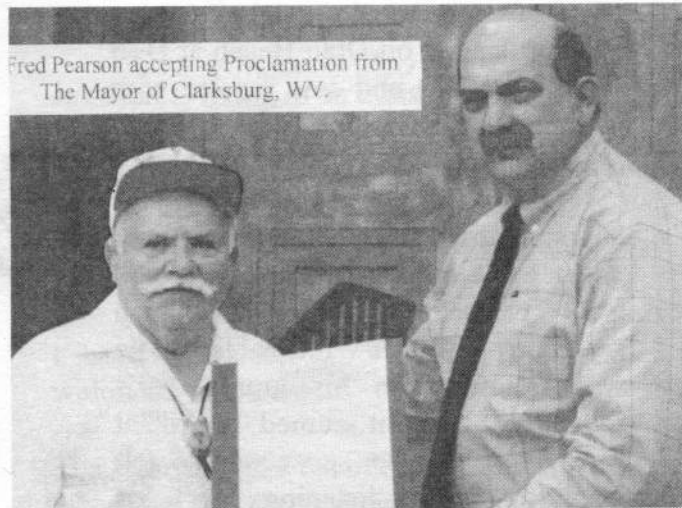
Pvt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jeremy L. Whitely, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, recently discovered that his grandfather, Fredrick Pearson, served in what was known as an expandable (or "X") Battery during World War II. X-Batteries were constantly attached and detached from their parent battalions and employed where needed. The battery's equipment consisted of four 40mm Bofors and Quad-50s mounted on half-tracks. Pearson landed on Utah Beach at D+6 (12 June 1944) and saw service with 4<sup>th</sup> and 83<sup>rd</sup> Divisions, among many others.

When he discovered his grandson was going to be an Air Defender, Pearson was pleased with the branch assignment. When Whitely learned he was following in his grandfather's footsteps, he said it seemed "weird" at first, however, he subsequently felt inspired after listening to his grandfather's stories. "(It) instills pride when hearing about the past and inspires me to work harder," said Whitely

In going over my notes, I see I had forgotten to mention the Crepps. Mary Jane is still recovering from her many operations, but still insists that she is getting along okay and has a very bright outlook.

Another oversight, Isabelle Manzo, wife of my chief spy, is still on oxygen. She and Mike still arrange to get around by careful planning. Extra precaution is needed to transport the necessary oxygen system.

Virgil Starkey is now home from the hospital and Wilma is trying to fatten him up. A very trying time for all concerned.



Virgil Starkey, our host, and Loren Kissick.  
The only member to attend from the west coast. The formidable  
Oozelfinch in the background



Our dwindling 453<sup>rd</sup> AAA (AW) BN Group  
And their wives



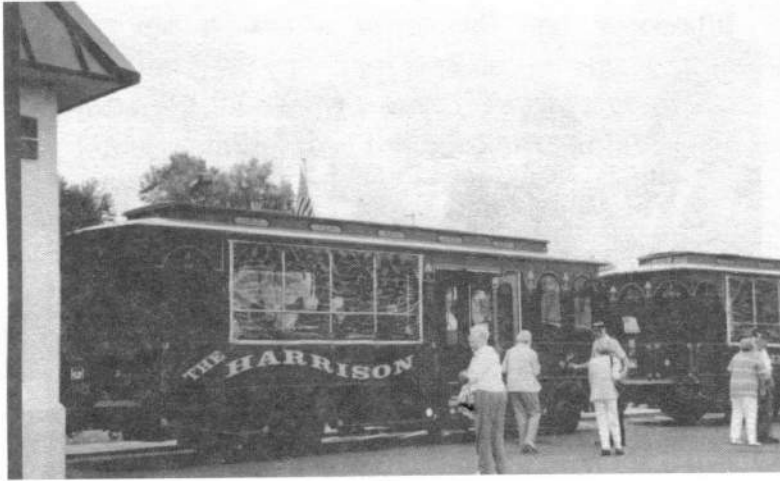
Annual Convention of 453<sup>rd</sup> AAA



Fred Pearson accepting Proclamation from Marion County, WV  
Commissioner



Andy Ray and wife, past District Commander of Clarksburg, VFW



Our transportation for the day, trolley buses

## **Co. "D" – 331<sup>st</sup>**

By Geri Gunderson (acting)

Another great 83<sup>rd</sup> Reunion is now history! We may be smaller in numbers but we still have the will and spirit that was visible when we were fighting in Europe some 55 years ago. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to get together and renew old friendships in Myrtle Beach.

Co. "D" was well represented with 20 in attendance: Nick and Sylvia Barbu, Paul and Mary Dallos, Harry and Barbara Gravelyn, R.C. and Louise Hamilton, Dan and Doris McDermott, Bill and Jeannette McKee, Frank and Mary Sabine, William and Doris Sauer, Al and Charlotte Shrawder, Bryam Hancock and Geri Gunderson.

Seventeen of us arrived at the Grand Strand Motel, (across the street from the "Landmark") on Wednesday and remained until the following Wednesday. We also had a three-bedroom suite that served as the Co. CP. This was our second time at this location but we did less drinking and cooking than in 1994. We attended a couple of shows, shopped, tried lots of restaurants and had a very good time just being together. The Co. "D" wives "snacks from scratch" were worth coming for! It was hoped we never get to old to stop baking and eating!

We missed Boston, Cancasci, Diaz, Harman, Komlos, Smith, and Trzeciak. Lets hear from you.

Harry Adkins, Yuell Cotney and Ray Rickter where were you? Unable to attend was Rev. Kenneth Barker, Any Churpak, Harvey Clements, Arthur Haught, Jimmy Lynch, John Miklos, and Frank Sharp. We sincerely hope to see you next year.

The 2003 57<sup>th</sup> Reunion will be held at the Drawbridge in Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky. Al Shrawder will visit Vevey, Indiana next weekend and reserve a place (near a casino) for Co. D's traditional get-together after the 2003 Reunion. Vevey is 35 miles from the Drawbridge. We hope you can join us for this special and happy occasion.

It was just learned that Polly Odenweller died in April of this year. She and George were faithful members of the 83<sup>rd</sup> and attended many reunions.

Please keep me informed about you and your family. Hope each of you has a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## **Co. "G" – 331<sup>st</sup>**

By Capt. Mac

This article is catching me at the wrong time. After the reunion, a trip to the doctor informed me that I had a large mass on the left side of the body. It was the same area where a kidney was removed in 1994. Since then I made many trips to the doctor and hospital to get blood work, ultra sounds and cat scans. Yesterday ten hours in the hospital and doctor's office proved nothing. A cat scan just before they were to take some biopsies, there was some blood in the area, so they could not perform any work. They are recommending Radiology. We will go from here.

Now for some better news. The reunion went along fine. I was surprised when Troy Mayse



showed up with his daughter and son-in-law. It was a present surprise, because I haven't seen Troy Mayse in many years. Same all "letters Joe" as we called him when ever I needed a pace setter on a long march, he was the man. Guys like Tatars and Pangle were mad as hell but Troy Mayse always got us there on time. It made my day when he showed up. The reunion went along fine, except I told the judge advocate, if he did not intend to follow our Certificate of Incorporation on the by-laws, he should throw the damn things away, because he was going to do as he pleases. The worse thing about it the Executive Board goes along with him. We will have honorary and alternative members. Bring your families so they can vote on all matters that come to the floor.

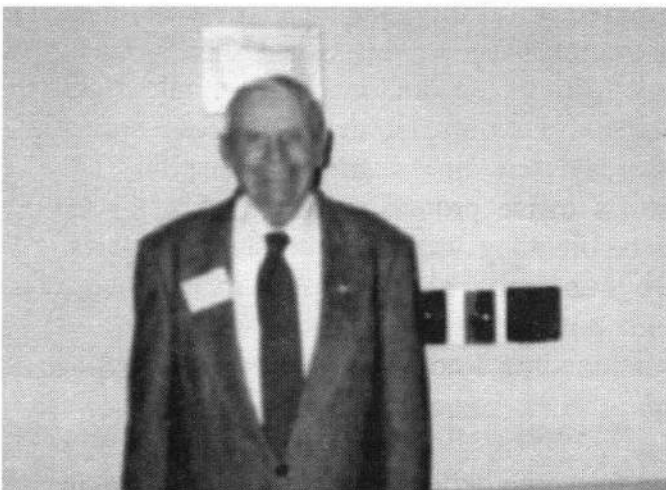
I am waiting for that to happen just to see what the women and the grandkids challenge him on some of the issues. I know at least two women that will do it. I will sit back and laugh.

Haven't heard from any G Company men in a few months. Will try to keep in touch. Next reunion at Fort Mitchell across the river from Cincinnati

Sorry letter is short but I promise to do better.

## **Co. "A" – 330th**

By Charles Abdinoor



William (Neal) Prussman



Left to Right: Ed Brown, Charles Abdinoor, Cookie Senica, Neal Prussman, T. Steward Barrick. Missing was Bob Gangnath (to busy)

At Myrtle Beach we had the honor to meet Neal Prussman. He was in my company, "A" 330<sup>th</sup>. One day he was a scout on a mission with another buddy, last name was Peacock. The squad was ambushed and he was shot in the shoulder and arm. The rest of the squad retreated, and he dug in the hedgerow, but was eventually captured. This happened near the Moselle River. He spent three weeks in a German hospital and was eventually sent to Stallag 12A in Limburo, Germany. He traveled four days and nights on a freight train, no food or water, eventually he was put in Stallag 4B in Milburg, Germany. The stallag Commander who worked in N.J. as a used car salesman treated them fairly well unless they did things against the rules, then they were brutally beaten. They woke up at 4 am. And left the barracks at 6 am, walked 5 kilometers, where they worked 8 to 10 hours a day, then walking back to the barracks where they ate barley soup and black bread made out of meal and sawdust. Sometimes they ate ruderbaker soup, and shared with 5 men one kilo of bread, also 40% grain & 60% flour and sawdust. When the war ended the Germans released them and walked to the American lines. 5 of the struck out on their own and reached the American lines. He does not know what happened to the camp commander, but lost 85 lbs. in 8 months. This is just one story from one of our man from "A" co. 330<sup>th</sup>. It was certainly a pleasure to meet him and his wife, and share his story with us.

To me it was a wonderful and successful reunion. We ended up with an Oceanside suite that was out of this world. We had a complete kitchen, dining, and living room. At last, after attending most of the reunions we finally hit the jackpot. Weather was excellent. The water was warm. I wouldn't mind going back in a few years. We missed our old diehards from "A" Co., namely Dolores and Paul Reed, Pearl and Walter Pillion, Shorty Glasser and his wife, also Butch, who was Arthur Klug's wife, who always attend with Shorty. We lost Art quite a few years ago. Cookie Seneca was there with his son. He is a true regular. We had the honor of putting the wreath for the 330<sup>th</sup> Regiment. As usual, Joyce and Bob Gangnath, him being our Sec-Treasurer, was also there. The big surprise of the reunion was meeting four new members with their wives. Namely, Virginia and Neal Prussman from Colorado. By the way he was a prisoner of war. Pauline and Ed Brown from Ramona, California. Also T. Steward Barrick and his wife Nell. We had the whole table of "A" Co. for once. We had plenty to talk about and really enjoyed this reunion very much. Sincerely hope that they will once again attend in Kentucky.

Paul and Dolores Reed spent the summer at their condo at Ocean City, MD. I called Lee Milligan who lives in Wichita, KS. He is taking care of his wife who is ill. I have to thank Manny Epstein for the beautiful tie he sent me. It was a pleasure to see Larry Arrigo, once again. Missed Amby Tynan, he is a regular. I sincerely hope we can keep this association going for many years to come. Again, it was a pleasure to see old faces and also plenty of sorrow to miss old faces that had passed on. Was pleased to see June Zenz. Joe just passed on this year. They attended almost all the reunions. He was one of our youngest. Missed John Bullard. He could not make it due to health problems. Also, many more to mention. This is all the news for now. I am deleting quite a bit since I just heard of the new schedule of the Thunderbolt. Hope this makes it.

Let's not give up!

## Co. "L" – 331st

By Charles Rudler

The 55<sup>th</sup> annual reunion of Co. L was held September 13 and 14<sup>th</sup> at the Lees' Inn in Plainfield, Indiana, south of Indianapolis. The reunion was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Edwards, with the help of their daughter and granddaughter

This year 9 veterans (3 more than last year) attended for a total of 33 including relatives and friends. The veterans attending were: James O. Brown, Glasgow, KY; Elmer Carlson, Erie, PA; Harold Edwards, Martinsville, IN; Luther Kantner, Wapakoneta, OH; John E. Miller, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; John Otis, Winterport, ME; Charles Rudler, Linesville, PA; Albert Runge, Hingham, MA; Tony Torrieri, Yonkers, NY.

Emile D. Weber, Albuquerque, NM was unable to attend but he gave our group a 42" x 69" flag had made by a group of German women. The story behind the flag is: Co. L lost (?) their flag this particular day and the commanding officer asked the mayor of the town if he knew of any women who could make a flag overnight. The date and place remains a mystery. Perhaps there is someone who knows the rest of the history.

The Edwards will again host the reunion next year. The date and place is to be announced.

Until next time.....

# Historian

Louis Gormori

I received news that our dear friend Lou Sandini passed away. He will be greatly missed by all as he was, as others have said also – the spark plug of the 83<sup>rd</sup>. Our condolences to Louis Sandini's family members, relatives and friends. He wrote a great book, The Rag-Tag-Circus. I also want to apologize for being unable to attend the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual reunion at Myrtle Beach, SC, but it was unavoidable. My wife, Mary Ellen belonged to three bowling leagues. At the Wednesday affair, she picked up her bowling ball from the locker, hurt her back with great pain radiating down her left leg, and was confined to the bed and lounge chair for 4 weeks. After a number of different medications, she is doing better but unable to travel too far. As a diabetic, she must be careful.

On other matters, enclosed is a copy of a letter from Senator Arlen, Specter to the Secretary of the Army dated July 29, 2002 in regards to the proposed Citation and a copy of a letter dated July 31, 2002 to me from Mr. Bradley A. Blakeman, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Appointments and Scheduling.

I have been getting material together for John Raikos as he is writing a letter to the White House. I will also include the six Chapters of "The Elbe Operation" that describes the action quite well. I will also gather material for Senator Specter. Either one of these can possibly earn the 83<sup>rd</sup> another Battle Campaign Star as we did invade territory in Eastern Europe that the Russians were supposed to capture but we beat them to it and had to eventually turn the bridgehead over to them and returned to the Central European Sector (western side of the Elbe River). This was a goof up by XIX Corps Headquarters as they issued two Field Orders for the 83<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>

Armored to cross the Elbe, establish a Bridgehead and be prepared to advance East/northeast in the direction of Berlin. If XIX Corps Headquarters was bold enough to countermand Eisenhower's orders by not stopping on the west bank of the Elbe, they could have ordered the 83<sup>rd</sup> to take Berlin, as the 83<sup>rd</sup> captured other cities East of the Elbe, including Zerbst.

The Rhineland Campaign was designated West of the Rhine and the Central European Campaign was East of the Rhine River to the Elbe River. The Russians were to conquer Germany in the Eastern European sector, including the area the 83<sup>rd</sup> had already captured. Although Campaigns were designated by DATE, this is wrong. High Command was embarrassed to learn that Western Allied Forces crossed the Elbe River and didn't want to rock the boat. The war came to an end and they didn't want to correct this blunder. While all other Western Allies were celebrating the end of the war west of the Elbe River and exchanging greetings and drinks, the 83<sup>rd</sup> with support units, including the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored now were still exchanging artillery shells and bullets against an armed enemy. Hostilities did not end for our units and this must be corrected, especially for History's sake. These are my feelings and I will stick by them, *like it or not*. Now for unfinished business, in the last issue I had the 83<sup>rd</sup> and support unit's activities after V-E Day, May 8, 1945 to July 1945 I believe. I am preparing it for the Thunderbolt and hopefully, beat the deadline. Also included is an item I just came across from the Department of the Army in regards to the release of information from Historical Documents of the Army, with Special Preference to events of World War II and we will provide the information about the 83<sup>rd</sup> that they do not have.

I had requests from a few Descendant members in regards to action around St. Lo where they had lost a loved one. The After Action Report for this is entitled "Normandy". Bill Specht of nearby Chicago sent me 3 Xeroxed maps of Northern France, the site of



the invasion, and then some (Quite detailed, bribed him with tapes from the History Channel), (what I wouldn't do for information?) I will be tracing the routes of the three regiments as closely as I can (one map each), and hopefully have it ready for the next reunion at the Drawbridge Inn.

I am also including a Xerox of a letter for publication that I received from Mr. John B. O'Donnell and it is quite informative and self explanatory about the CIC Detachment, as he was there and I thank him for his compliments and his kind words, and remember – we were INDEED the best of the best – like it or not.



JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV, WEST VIRGINIA  
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TIM HUTCHINSON, ARKANSAS  
KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, TEXAS

WILLIAM F. TUERK, MINORITY CHIEF  
COUNSEL AND STAFF DIRECTOR

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6375

July 29, 2002

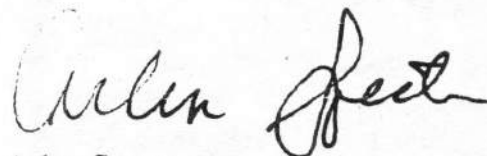
The Honorable Thomas E. White  
Secretary of the Army  
101 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0101

Dear Secretary White:

Enclosed you will find materials that I recently received from Mr. Louis Gomori, historian for the World War II 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Association. Among the materials provided to me was a copy of a declassified proposal to award a unit citation to the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division for its actions between April 3, 1945, and April 18, 1945. According to Mr. Gomori, the proposed award was canceled for "political reasons." If that was the case, I would like you to consider whether awarding a unit citation to the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division at this time might be appropriate.

I would appreciate if you would review the merits of the citation and make a determination if a unit award is in order for the actions of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division during the period of April 3, 1945, to April 18, 1945. I would appreciate a response from your office at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Arlen Specter

Enclosures

AS/cpm

cc: Louis Gomori

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 31, 2002

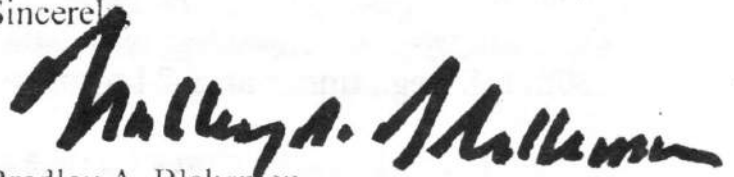
Dear Mr. Gomori:

The President asked me to thank you for your letter inviting him to receive an Honorary Membership in the 83rd Infantry Division Association of World War II in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, on September 12, 13 or 14, 2002. Although the President is appreciative of the support your invitation represents, it is with sincere regret that we must decline the invitation.

Unfortunately, as the schedule for the next few months has become more firm, we have had to make some difficult decisions. Due to the President's travel schedule, we are unable to add this event to the calendar.

The President asked that I take this opportunity to thank you for your letter. Please know that your comments and suggestions are always welcomed.

Sincerely,



Bradley A. Blakeman  
Deputy Assistant to the President  
and Director of Appointments and Scheduling

Mr. Louis Gomori  
Historian  
83rd Infantry Division Association, Inc  
309 East Locust Street  
Butler, Pennsylvania 16901-4826



JOHN B. O'DONNELL  
1388 Gough Street #1001  
San Francisco, CA 94109  
Tel. (415) 563-5132

September 17, 2002

Mr. Louis Gomori  
309 E. Locust Street  
Butler, PA 16001-4826

Dear Mr. Gomori:

I've just finished reading your fascinating and memory-evoking article in the Summer 2002 issue of the Thunderbolt, and am hastening to thank you for it, and to the best of my recollection to fill in a few details that may be of interest.

*Let me first identify myself. I'm John O'Donnell, who was a member of the 83rd's CIC Detachment throughout the entire European Theatre Campaign from Stoke-on-Trent to the Elbe, and then down to Bavaria. I was then usually known as "Jocko".*

We had a fourteen-man team commanded by Captain Oliver A. Vietor of Red Bank, New Jersey, under the general direction of Divisional G-2, Colonel Deshautels(sp?), although I was usually in charge of a two-man team assigned to the 330th Inf. Reg., under an S-2 I recall as Major Foster.

In that fantastic climactic race across Germany from March to May, 1945, my teammate was T/Sgt. George Florsheim, born in Germany (Hamburg, I think), fluent in German and French, but American through and through and as brave and enterprising as they come. The two of us had the thrill and privilege of obtaining the surrender of at least two German towns in the northern foothills of the Harz mountains, a few miles south of the main east-west highway, we in our jeep with mounted machine gun, hearts in mouth but trying to act as confident as General Macdonald as we barrelled down the road between two columns of surrendering Wehrmacht with hands in air. In the towns we would be directed docilely to the Rathaus, do our formalities with the Burgermeister, have the prescribed proclamations posted, arrange for an interim government set-up pending the arrival of MG officers, and start the collection of guns and ammo and cameras, and then get back to the POW compounds along the main highway, and report. We were astonished at how utter and complete the defeat and dejection of the Germans seemed to be. (Not so, a few days later as we approached the Elbe.)

But back to your splendid article: On May 7, after getting across the Elbe as far as Zerbst, we were pulled back to the pulverized city of Magdeburg, where our entire CIC detachment set up an office in a little jewelry store on a small square near the Cathedral, which had pretty well survived the heavy Allied January bombings. Confusion reigned. While we were awaiting the arrival of the Russians we, as you say, began to get word that we were being transferred out of XIX Corps (9th Army), that

parts of the Division would be going back up to Braunschweig, but that most of us would be going down to Bavaria for occupational duty.

While we were trying to sort out rumors and orders, whammo! The Russians-seemed like thousands of them-men and women, boisterous and friendly and looking for vodka and schnapps, arrived. Man, did they ever arrive!!

Meanwhile, the high commands evidently became concerned about large numbers of refugees from the Russians threatening to overwhelm the German-Czech and German-Austrian borders. We were ordered down to Bavaria to be responsible for counter intelligence activity in a large geographical area running generally west and north of Passau on the Danube.

As you suggest, there was a flurry of other orders in that confusing time, whereby the 83rd Division was relieved from XIII Corps, and attached to XII Corps. Some personnel were assigned to occupation duties, some went into the education program, and all were being told to prepare for possible redeployment to the Pacific.

Our 83rd CIC Detachment came down with the Division to Vilshofen, but on May 10 we received orders transferring us to the 12th Army Group 970 Headquarters CIC Detachment, now in Weisbaden, relieving us from the 83rd Div., but at the same time placing us on detached service in place as CIC/83. This had the general effect of severing our attachment to individual regiments, but leaving us under the military command of the 83rd Division Headquarters in Vilshofen.

Meanwhile, because of the increasing intensity of the demand for intelligence activity, 970 CIC Headquarters began sending in new personnel to help our Detachment to break down into three teams. On June 10, I was placed in command of 970/83rd CIC Detachment with four men, Special Agents-Sergeants Florsheim, Janszen, Lammert and Steierman, soon to be followed by 2nd Lt.-Special Agent Gerald Pierce and Sergeant-Agent Erville DeWitt, Special Agent- Technical-Sergeant William Salsinger and Agent-Sergeant J. J. Van der Ploeg, on verbal orders issued through the Division.

On June 11 we established offices at 449-1/4 Bahnhof Strasse, Deggendorf, on the north (left) bank of the Danube, about 10 miles west and slightly north of Vilshofen and about 20 miles in the same direction from Passau, where the Inn River, coming down north along the Austrian border and the Ilz and other smaller rivers coming down south and west out of the so-called Bavarian Forest that bordered with Czechoslovakia, join the Danube.

We were confronted with a daunting task. The CIC's specific mission now included searching for, arresting and interrogating alleged "War Criminals," screening the ever-increasing number of refugees and Displaced Persons (known then as "DP's"), investigating numerous reports and "tips" about civilian "dangerous activity," and screening applicants for employment by military government.

As I recall, large compounds were set up by the division in or near Pleinting and

Plattling and at Pocking, and smaller ones in and around Straubing.

On June 22 I received orders from 12th Army Group, 970th CIC Detachment, that my whole little Deggendorf attachment, including myself, were released from Detached Service with the 83rd CIC Detachment and placed on Detached Service with the 303rd CIC Detachment, 3rd Army, in Regensburg and Munich. In some ways this made practical sense, since on the whole the Division's occupational duties had become more perfunctory; but on the other hand we as Intelligence personnel under divisional authority, had had full support from the Divisional paymaster and the motorpools and the rations depots, as well as kitchens and quartermaster.

Fortunately, however, our long history of contact with the Division and the Regiments, and even the Battalions and the Military Police, stood us in good stead, and somehow everyone tended to have a pretty relaxed interpretation of the various jurisdictional obstacles until everything started to shake out and settle down into something of a routine, especially after the control of our area passed back to the 83rd Division from the 102nd Division in August.

We had set up sub-detachments and/or patrols up in Regen and into the woods to the Czech border, at Grafenau, and of course also in Vilsohofen and in Passau, and south of the Danube at Pfarrkirchen, and had hired a Dutch national civilian as an interpreter, but our connections to the 83rd Division became more tenuous as our intelligence duties (and my paperwork) increased.

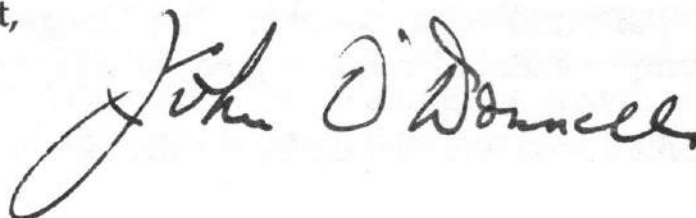
During our time with the 83rd we made, I would estimate, at least 1000 "categorical arrests," and extensive (I almost said "endless") screening of evacuees, refugees and DP's, and dozens of investigations, sometimes resulting in stakeouts, chases and arrests of hide-out recalcitrant Nazi types.

I look forward to your next installment covering August. It must be increasingly difficult for you as an historian to keep track of the many changes that began to take place from July on, and I myself begin to be more uncertain about dates after August 15, when redeployment for discharge became an on-going flood, and CIC's mission and focus began subtly to change (not necessarily by my Infantryman's standards, for the better). But that's another story.

Meanwhile, I note your remark indicating that a few health problems had slowed you down for awhile. I sincerely hope that those problems have been solved, and that your health remain good.

You have my sincere thanks for your dedication and thoroughness, a sentiment I'm sure is shared by all who read the Thunderbolt.

All the best,







## A FAMILY'S JOURNEY

By Debbie Holloman

Niece of PFC Ed Hart, Company G  
329<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment



PFC Ed Hart, 1944

In August 2001, my mom, Hattie Hart Holloman, decided that, after almost 57 years, she was ready to visit her brother's grave in the American Cemetery near the village of Margraten in the Netherlands. Her brother, PFC Ed Hart, had been killed in Germany on April 12, 1945, the same day that President Roosevelt died, just a few weeks before the war ended in Europe.

As I thought about why we were going, I wanted to learn more about the uncle I had never known. He was the smiling soldier whose portrait hung on the wall in my parent's bedroom. My mom had even let me take the Purple Heart he'd been awarded to school when I was a child. But I really didn't know very much about him or what role he'd played in our victory in Europe in World War II.

While I was making travel plans, my mom was contacted by a writer, Brenda Hughes, who wanted to do a documentary about my uncle, the adoption of his grave by a young Dutch

woman, Betty Vrancken, and the more than fifty-year friendship between mom and Betty. My mom agreed that the story should be told and shared information with Brenda.

In mid-January, I emailed a friend, Mike Rawlings, who served in the JAG Corps and asked if he had any suggestions on how to find information about my uncle's division, the 83<sup>rd</sup>. Mike sent me an email with several web sites that discussed the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division, which I learned was known as "The Thunderbolts".

Once I started reading about the 83<sup>rd</sup>, I was hooked. Each site had links to other sites. I emailed the creator of one web site, Dave Curry, who had put together a great site about the father he'd never known. Dave's web site <http://www.ncweb.com/~davecurry/brothers/>, begins with this introduction: **"This is the story of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division. Specifically, it is the story of my father, Thomas D. Curry, and the men he served with in Company F, 331<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment. It is the story of men united as brothers in the bitter struggle against Nazi Germany – a struggle that took them more than 1,400 miles in 244 days of combat."** Dave had several good suggestions. First, he helped me post a message on the electronic message board on his web site. If you have not ever seen the message board, you should take a look.

My uncle, **PFC Eddie Hart**, was killed near **Barby, Germany** on **April 12, 1945**. He was in **G Company/329<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 83<sup>rd</sup> Division**, joining that group in France in January 1945. He was from Lenoir County, North Carolina. My family and I are going to the American Cemetery in the Netherlands at the end of March to visit his grave. We are also trying to trace his route through France (where his letters said he was in January), the Netherlands, Belgium (where his letters said he was in February), and Germany (where he was in at least part of March and April, until his death). If anyone

remembers my uncle or has any additional information about him, please contact Debbie Holloman at [daholloman@hotmail.com](mailto:daholloman@hotmail.com).

After posting the message, I followed Dave's suggestion about requesting information, such as the Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF), from the government and then looked at other web sites that were linked to Dave's site. I found another great web site, <http://gateway.ca.k12.pa.us/memorial/index.html>, and emailed another proud son, John Bifano, ("Biff"), whose father, Samuel J. Bifano, returned from the war and raised a family. When Biff learned that we hoped to visit places where my uncle went during the war, Biff suggested that I call Lou Gomori, the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division Association's historian. Biff also sent me some helpful documents and added my uncle's name and photograph to the page on his web site called "World War II Brothers".

When I called Lou in Pennsylvania to ask for his help, he talked with me, answered my unending questions, and gave me more suggestions. I told Lou about the chaplain's letter to my grandmother that said that my uncle had been killed when the house he was in was bombed on April 12 by enemy planes. Lou told me about veterans who were probably in the same farmhouse where my uncle was when he was killed. This was a huge shock because my family had always understood that everyone in the house was killed. We never had any inkling that there were men in the house who survived. Over the next few months, Lou also generously sent me many documents, answered many questions, and helped me find the Elbe Report, which describes the movements of Company G the day my uncle was killed.

As I started researching the 83<sup>rd</sup>, Brenda and her assistant, Heather Gnegy, were starting their research as well. They talked with Betty Vrancken Habets, who adopted my uncle's grave in April 1946 when she was only 21, the same age as my mother, and they contacted

Betty's brother, Johan Vrancken who, with his family, had taken over the care of the grave after Betty and her husband, John, and their three children immigrated to the United States. They also sent letters to many veterans who served in Company G or Company F, asking questions about my uncle and the events of April 12, 1945. Many of you were kind enough to answer their questions, write letters about your recollections, and give them more ideas. John Cupina sent Brenda information about how Company G was organized, a photograph that included by uncle, and more. Lafayette Smith, who served with my uncle and visited my mom's family when he returned from Germany, also talked with Brenda.

For weeks, it seemed that I was either on the internet doing research, on the computer emailing someone who served in the 83<sup>rd</sup>, or on the telephone talking with World War II veterans or their children. I spoke with Bob Whitcomb, Company F, who was in the farmhouse when it was bombed and survived, but who did not know my uncle; with Bill Nickell, also Company F, who was near the farmhouse and who was warned by a little boy that a plane would be dropping bombs that night; with Charlotte Sharpe Daly, whose father was the Second Battalion C.O., Lt. Col. Granville Sharpe; and with Jenny Littlepage Wilkinson, whose father, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Arthur D. Littlepage, was the commanding officer of Company G. Everyone was generous with their time and information.

In February, Brenda and I attended the opening of Tony Vaccaro's exhibit, "The Last Battle," at Virginia Military Institute, in Lexington, Virginia. The photographs are incredible, as you know if you've seen the exhibit or Tony's book, Entering Germany, and it was wonderful to meet many of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division veterans for the first time.

And on February 12, I got an email from Dick Coyle, who wrote that he was a sergeant in my uncle's platoon. I just sat and stared at the email. I could not believe that I'd actually

heard from someone who know my uncle Ed and had served with him. I finally recovered enough to respond to Dick, but was so excited that I typed my zip code incorrectly, resulting in my never receiving the first package that Dick sent me, filled with information about Company G. (Dick generously copied all the information a second time and mailed it again!)

Many others have talked with me, shared their stories, and sent information. My brother, Ben Holloman, talked with Paul Willis, another sergeant in my uncle's company, who also know my Uncle Ed. I talked with 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Sam Hastings, also in the Second Battalion, about the Elbe Report. (We still do not understand why the Elbe Report states that the house was hit "with a bomb", but then say that "little damage was done", or why another section states that "eight men were wounded" and never mentions that men were killed.) I even talked with the son of the chaplain who wrote the letter to my grandmother.

When we traveled to Europe in April 2002, we visited Omaha Beach and Point du Hoc, and nearby Normandy villages where many in the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division fought and died. We traveled across France and through Belgium, close to where much of the Battle of the Bulge was fought. As we arrived in the Netherlands, our anticipation mounted. The Vrancken family along with Brenda and her crew met us at the American Cemetery and accompanied us on our first visit to my Uncle Ed's grave. Cemetery Superintendent Dan Meese rubbed sand from Omaha Beach into the letters on the white marble cross so Uncle Ed's name would show up clearly in the photographs we took.

While we were in the Netherlands, Johan Vrancken arranged a visit to a farm near the village of Eckelrade where some of the men of G Company stayed during 1944 and 1945. My Uncle Ed was there in February 1945. The farm is only a few miles from the American Cemetery. The 1999 edition of The Thunderbolt Across Europe includes a photograph of the 1<sup>st</sup> platoon of G Company

taken at this farm in February 1945. We were thrilled that Johan had located the farm, and visiting it was one of the highlights of the trip. We were photographed standing in the same spot where the 1<sup>st</sup> platoon of G Company stood in the 1945 photograph.



1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Co. G, 329<sup>th</sup> Infantry  
Eckelrade, February 1945

There is no way to adequately thank the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division veterans and, in some cases, their children, for all their help as my family and I made the journey back to 1945 and to Europe to retrace my uncle's steps. Brenda Hughes is continuing work on the documentary. Several brief segments aired on NBC12 in Richmond, Virginia for Memorial Day. Dick Coyle and his wife, Jean, drove to Virginia for a visit with my family, including my mom and brother. My mom and I along with my husband and children, traveled to the 2002 Reunion in Myrtle Beach. We were thrilled to meet some of you for the first time – Paul Willis, John Cupina, "Doc" (Marshall) Keith (F Company medic), Dave Curry and others. It was wonderful to be with you all.

In February 1945, while he was staying at the farm near Eckelrade, my uncle wrote my mom about his fellow soldiers: "I really wouldn't take anything for being with the boys that I am with now. Just about every one of them is tops I think." Now we know that he was right.

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Had a good meeting this time in Myrtle Beach. There were 5 of us that severed



together in World War II. I am sending a picture of us but only 4 on it. From left to right, Bob Keck, J. J. Lamb, John Tisdell and last but not least, Ladde Law. The one not on the picture is John Prinze.



This is John White, a son of Mat White who was our Bn Comm. Of the Third Bn of 329<sup>th</sup>. We all had a good time and enjoy visiting. Hope to see you next year.



+++++  
Cliff Wooldridge's  
43 MB  
Conway, NH



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Taken from September 22, 2002  
The New York Times

Japanese Veteran's Path to Reconciliation  
By Ken Belson

Tokyo- For Zenji Abe, World War II ended the day in 1991 when he visited the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial in Hawaii.

One of the few remaining pilots from the Japanese raids on Pearl Harbor half a century before, he came to apologize to his former foes. While listening to an American veteran play taps that day, Mr. Abe looked down into the harbor, where oil still drifts to the surface from the wreck of the battleship below.

"People said those bubbles coming from the bottom of the Arizona were oil bubbles," Mr. Abe said. "But to me, they looked like the tears and crying of the soldiers who died in the attack."

The experience helped close a dark chapter in Mr. Abe's life, and it opened another, more enduring one. Instead of going home sad, Mr. Abe, now 85, formed deep friendships with American veterans, most notably with Richard Fiske, the bugler who played at the memorial. As a sign of their bond, Mr. Fiske plays taps there on the last Sunday of every month and, care of Mr. Abe, leaves behind two red roses.

Many Japanese bristled when commentators compared the raids on Pearl Harbor, when 350 Japanese fighters destroyed much of the United States Pacific Fleet and killed 2,400 people, to the September 11 attacks in New York and Washington, and none more than Mr. Abe. To this former naval officer schooled in bushido, the unwritten code of Japan's feudal warriors, attacking defenseless civilians is taboo. He and other Japanese Veterans insist that an act of war directed against men in uniform can never be likened to the terrorists' slaughter of ordinary civilians.

“War and terrorism are totally different,” he insisted, sitting in his living room cluttered with World War II memorabilia, including a model of the Akagi, the aircraft carrier he took off from in 1941.

As he recovered from cancer surgery in July, Mr. Abe received flowers from veterans across the United States. Every year, an American Navy officer who served on a ship Mr. Abe said he bombed sends him a Christmas card.

Mr. Fiske, too, finds solace in the relationship. On the battleship West Virginia during the raid, he looked a Japanese pilot straight in the eye as his plane swooped low over the vessel. The image of the pilot’s face haunted Mr. Fiske for decades and left him with nightmares.

That changed when he met Mr. Abe. The men now work to ensure their stories are not forgotten. This year, students at an elementary school in Honolulu won a prize for a video project documenting the friendship between the two men, and National Geographic and NBC News have featured them in reports.

Since September 11, 2001, Mr. Abe has also worked to make sure Pearl Harbor and the World Trade Center do not become interchangeable historical reference points. He does not dispute his role in the 1941 attack and said he had supported Japan’s expansion efforts in Asia.

Still, he worries that if too many Americans associate the attacks of 1941 and 2001, they may forget that Japan is a stalwart ally of the United States. “The moment I saw the World Trade Center attacked, it got me to think of the U. S. people’s reaction,” he said.

Mr. Abe said ignorance was behind much of the fervor that led to the war. As for many of his generation, the military was a way out of rural poverty. After winning a spot in a naval academy, he became a pilot, but said his views then were colored by a barrage of propaganda from his military superiors.

“It was only after the war that I learned that American people are basically good.”

“Of course, we have a very bad history of fighting and hating each other,” Mr. Abe said. “But we have to forgive and get along.”



Zenji Abe, 85 flew Zero fighter planes during World War II and took part in the Japanese bombing raid on Pearl Harbor

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### Road Hazards

The Red Ball Highway was its name  
And newspapers spread its fame  
But to our Wire Team it was sweat and  
dust

From early morn til dusk

Trucks with food and fuel roared by  
To keep the front well supplied  
We patrolled the telephone lines every  
day

From Oleon to Onjay

The wires were laid in ditches and under  
roads

That were often cut by tanks and trucks  
with heavy loads

We spliced and taped and swore  
And restored communications once more

By late afternoon we were stripped to the  
waist

But all wore neckties in the proper place  
Patton’s order did not mention shirts  
But we kept an eye out for an officer just  
in case

We decided to wash in the River Loire  
And parked our truck by the the northern  
shore

Across the river there was a scene  
From a poor soldier's dream

Six French girls of sixteen or more  
In swim suits stood on that golden shore  
Only three of us could swim  
And I as the first one in

Return! The Sgt. Yelled, Do you hear?  
But we were deaf with our dream so near  
When out of the bushes came an  
apparition  
A nun dressed in the old tradition

Her habit of black and white was quite a  
sight  
And her steely glance gave us a fright  
Back in the truck the Sgt. Swore  
You three will be Privates for evermore

Forget it, I told him  
And we all teach you how to swim!

From the yet to be written book Romance  
On The Red Ball Highway

Hall O'Neill  
83<sup>rd</sup> Signal

Note: The Red Ball supply line ran from  
the port of Cherbourg east along the Loire  
River to the front.

### THE SOLDIER'S FRIEND

The 88's and 105's  
Sing as they passed, "You are still alive!"

But the mortar shells, a sneaky thing  
Dropped without warning of their sting

The night was sprinkled with red and  
green  
From tracers carrying death unseen

I lay in a ditch and watched the show  
As 88's exploded in the field below

I picked my moment with a muttered  
prayer  
And ran like a rabbit for the hedgerow  
there

It was safe and solid and thick  
And to the next field I must move quick

To reach that soldier's friend  
A big, fat hedgerow once again

Composed in Normandy in June 1944  
while touring Europe on a trip with all  
expenses paid by Uncle Sam.

### BUDDIES

The fields are green and the sky is blue  
And the orchards are in blossom, too

But Death is in the perfumed air  
For a sniper's bullet doesn't care

If young or old or wise  
As it enters between the eyes

I take Bert's wallet and personal stuff  
And on his cigs I'll sadly puff

For he would have done the same you  
see  
If the sniper had drawn a bead on me

Some where in France  
Hal O'Neill  
83<sup>rd</sup> Signal

+++++

83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Association

I am LTC Richard L. Hoffman, USAR RET. I  
am the keeper of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division Memorial  
Reserve Center Memorial Historical Display  
Case in Columbia Ohio.



I began the display case at the dedication for the Reserve Center in August 1996 when the center was dedicated. In attendance at that dedication were over 20 members of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division Association.

I constantly look for actual items from the 83<sup>rd</sup> Division to add to the display case. Currently I am working on a collection of the actual crests of the units assigned to the Division. Through E-Bay, my own collection and friends I have acquired all but two of those crests. Those two remain very hard to find. They are the 322<sup>nd</sup> and 323<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Units.

I am writing this in hopes that a member of your association may be willing to donate one of these crests to the display case. Of course, any other donations of small items or copies of actual pictures of 83<sup>rd</sup> Division veterans would also be appreciated.

I remain respectfully yours,

Richard L. Hoffman  
170 S Sylvan Ave.  
Columbus, OH 43204-1920  
614-276-8045

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September 30, 2002

Dear Comrades,

It is with great sorrow the Vi and I could not attend the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion. We sure missed seeing all of my Comrades and their ladies during the festivities of the occasion. I especially missed leading the Colors and Honor Guard for the Historical Ceremony directed by Captain "Mac" our great hero of the 331<sup>st</sup>.

I am still participating in Military functions around Fort Monmouth – The Battle of the Buldge Association, and the AUSA. Fort Monmouth has a Company of the National Guard from Mass pulling Gate Guard and other duties around the Fort. I enjoy talking to

them and praising them for the job they are performing.

We also have the West Point Prep School here and I also enjoy discussing the Army and my past with them. They listen so intensely to my WWII and Korea War stories.

It was a distinct privilege to have the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education have the Superintendent of the Fairfax County School System present me with my High School Diploma on 24 May 2002 at the Waples Mill Elementary Eight Grade Graduation. Media coverage including Fox Five Washington News Channel, plus the Washington Post covered the event. I was "King" for a day and/or happy as a "Pig eating slop" (southern expression).

The High School Diploma, along with the Historical Marker where I was born and raised denoting "Waples Mill," erected by the Fairfax Historical Society has made the past year very gratifying. Now if I can lick this cancer problem, I'll see you all next year, God willing.

Vi and I both suffer from cancer, but hope it is okay for the next reunion. Keeping doctor's appointments straight is a chore in itself.

Hope to see you all next year, stay well and keep pushing.

My book, "Country Boy Gone Soldiering" is selling fairly well – keeps me happy hearing from folks all around the world. Autographed copy can be sent any where in the US for \$16.75 pp.

Our best to all of you – my dear coprades and their ladies.

Sincerely,  
George Henry Waple, III  
First Sergeant HQ Co. 331<sup>st</sup> Infantry  
Captain U.S. Army, Retired

Except from the Biographical Sketch on George Henry Waple III:

George Henry Waple, III enlisted in the Third Horse Calvary, Ft. Myer, Virginia at seventeen years of age and developed a knack for leadership by observing Colonel Jonathan Wainright and Colonel George S. Patton, who both commanded the Third

Calvary where George was assigned. He was promoted at 21 years old to Master Sergeant in November 1942 and functioned as the Regimental Communications Chief of Headquarters Company 331<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 83<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division.

As First Sergeant, he participated in the Eighty Third Infantry Division normal training cycle, maneuvers in Tennessee 1942-1943, and overseas preparation at Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky. The Division shipped out of New York on the SS George Washington arriving at Liverpool England spring 1944; they landed on Omaha Beach D-Day plus twelve, relieving 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne near Carenton, France. Fighting through the Hedgerows, Hurtgen Forest, Battle of the Bulge and across Europe to the Elbe River to meet the Russians in May 1945. He served in all five European campaigns.

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On August 24, 2002 the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary service was held at Memorial Wall. This was also the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Camp Atterbury. People who represented the 83<sup>rd</sup> were: Manny Goodridge, Floyd Richmond, Nang Ledger, Mr. & Mrs. Bob Naylor, Mr. & Mrs. Ellsworth Massie, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Dalton, Mr. & Mrs. Ames Miller, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Marshall, Mr. & Mrs. Chester Wilson, Mr. & Mrs. Al Henry, Mr. & Mrs. Wilt, Lars Halverson, whose father was in the 83<sup>rd</sup> Div., Mrs. Johny O'Brien, a nephew of an 83<sup>rd</sup>.

Ellsworth Massie presented the museum with memorabilia that was placed in the museum in honor of the Dixie Chapter. Previously a check for \$500.00 was given the museum by the Dixie Chapter. A big thanks goes to the Dixie Chapter.

Regards Ames and Helen Miller. We continue to work a lot at Camp Atterbury.

Please see page 41, To Remember and Honor, should you wish to participate in the "Walk of Honor".



Memorial Walk



Memorial Wall



Inside of Camp Atterbury



Rock in front of Camp Atterbury



Camp Atterbury Veterans' Memorial Association, Inc.  
Camp Atterbury  
Edinburgh IN 46124  
(812) 526 - 1349 or (812) 526 - 1107

*To Remember and Honor*

For over fifty years, thousands of soldiers and civilians have contributed to the history and legacy of Camp Atterbury. Join us in dedicating a Memorial Walkway in their honor.

The Walk of Honor is sponsored by the Camp Atterbury Veterans' Memorial Association and is constructed around the reflecting pool in front of the Memorial Wall of Honor. It is designed to honor all individuals, soldiers and civilians alike, with a past or present connection to Camp Atterbury. The Walk is constructed of brick pavers engraved with an individuals' name, rank, branch of service, units, etc. Unit Associations and other organizations are invited to purchase a brick in honor of their unit or organization. Bricks are installed once yearly.

Your contribution is only \$25.00 per engraved brick.

Complete the form below, enclose your check (made payable to Camp Atterbury Veterans' Memorial Association) and mail to:

Camp Atterbury  
Attn: NAF Accountant (Bricks)  
Building # 1, Hospital Road  
Edinburgh IN 46124 - 1096

Brick Inscription: No more than 17 characters per line – including spaces and punctuation.

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Name, Unit or Organization

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Branch of Service, Unit, Specialty, Years of Service, etc.

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

County, Campaigns, Awards, Military or Civilian, etc.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (include Area Code): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Visit us on the Internet at <http://www.IndianaMilitary.org>











**A MESSAGE TO ALL 83<sup>RD</sup> MEMBERS . . . . .**

Anyone wishing to purchase coats and caps may write to:  
Vito C. Palazzolo, 20000 Lancaster, Harper Woods, Michigan  
48225 for information. He will send you an application form.

**83<sup>rd</sup> Reunion will be held at  
Drawbridge Inn  
2477 Royal Drive  
Fort Mitchell, KY  
Dates are:  
September 3, 4, 5, 6, 2003**

**\$15.00 Dues are due  
NOW  
For the year 2003**

**THUNDERBOLT DEADLINES**

Deadline for **ALL** articles to be published in  
Thunderbolt must be at this office by  
October 10, February 10 and May 10  
Cliff Wooldridge  
East Side Drive  
P.O. Box 406  
Alton Bay, NH 03810-0406

**83<sup>rd</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**East Side Drive**  
**Alton Bay, NH 03810-0406**



**“Change Service Requested” 1**

Charles C Sihlanick  
322nd F.A.  
2 Elizabeth Ct  
Little Ferry NJ 07643-1705

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

**NAME (please print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY, or TOWN & STATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company** \_\_\_\_\_ **Regiment** \_\_\_\_\_ **83<sup>rd</sup> Division**

**Phone No.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Renewal** \_\_\_ **New** \_\_\_

**Please Enclose A Check or Money Order**  
**DUES \$15.00 PAYABLE TO:**

**83<sup>rd</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION**  
**12 Hamlet Lane**  
**Monroe, CT 06468-2008**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Descendant Membership** \_\_\_\_\_ **Name**

**Name of 83<sup>rd</sup> Division Member** \_\_\_\_\_

**BULLETIN**

When you move and change your address, **PLEASE**, send your change of address. It does no good to mail you a Thunderbolt at your old address. **The Post Office WILL NOT** forward this magazine. It will just go to waste. With the cost of printing and postage this is very costly to the Association to have even one go to waste. Send your address change to the Association Office and not to someone else. Thank you for all your cooperation. **Send old and new address.**