



THUNDERBOLT

83rd INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, Inc.
WORLD WAR II

Vol. 64 Issue No. 1

Fall Issue 2008

**Dolce Valey Forge
LOOKS FORWARD TO HOSTING THE
63rd ANNUAL REUNION
FOR THE
83rd INFANTRY DIVISION - WORLD WAR II**



King of Prussia, PA

August 12 - 15, 2009

THE THUNDERBOLT

Official Publication - 83rd Infantry Division Association, Inc.

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

STAFF REPORTERS

BOSTON.....Anthony Piantedosi, 59 Edward Rd., Watertown, MA 02472, Tel. #617-924-7302
CLEVELAND.....Robert W. Grobelny, 1581 Lander Rd., Mayfield Heights, OH 44124, Tel. #440-449-5085
DIXIE.....Ellsworth Massie, 2514 Lincrest Road, Joppa, MD 21085, Tel #410-877-0682
FLORIDA.....Robert G. Taylor, 406 Seagrape Cove, Ellenton, FL 34222, Tel #941-729-5903
MICHIGAN.....
NEW ENGLAND.....Nick Francullo, 10 Bessom Street, Lynn, MA 01902, Tel. #781-592-9154
NEW JERSEY.....Stan Bielen, 71 Glenwood Terr., Fords, NJ 08863, Tel. #732-225-0169
PITTSBURGH.....Francis Beerthalter, 147 York Road, Cranberry Township, PA 16066, Tel. #724-452-2297

ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Michael Catrambone
418 Strathmore Road
Havertown, PA 19083
610-446-0434

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Carmella Dimartino Catrambone
Associate
418 Strathmore Road
Havertown, PA 19083
610-446-0434

2nd VICE PRESIDENT

Edward L. McCouch
Descendant
316 Mt. Carmel Avenue
Glenside, PA 19038
215-884-5843

3rd VICE PRESIDENT

Georgeanna Lewis Slaybaugh
Descendant
5690N Turner Road
Morgantown, IN 46160
812-988-9106

TREASURER/PUBLISHER

Clifton Wooldridge
138 East Side Dr., P.O. Box 406
Alton Bay, NH 03810-0406
603-875-3649

SECRETARY

Susan Dumont Pray
Descendant
6 Susan Lane
Rochester, NH 03867
603-332-0884

JUDGE ADVOCATE

John F. Markuns
Descendant
381 Massachusetts Ave.
N. Andover, MA 01845
978-683-5104

HISTORIAN

Dave Curry
Descendant
887 E. 331 Street
Eastlake, OH 44095
440-942-5030

CHAPLAIN

Ellsworth S. Massie
2514 Lincrest Road
Joppa, MD 21085
410-877-0682

SERGEANTS-AT-ARMS

Christian C. Heine
10 Old Colony Lane
Marlton, NJ 08053
856-596-3130

Edwin F. Brown
P.O. Box 2675
Ramona, CA 92065
760-788-8067

Dave Dimmick
1714 Coal Creek Rd.
Murrayville, IL 62668
217-473-9524

83rd ARCHIVIST

Rudolph "Rudy" Zamula
7847 Heatherton Lane
Potomac, MD 20854
301-299-2578

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Charles Abdinoor, Chairman, 68 Loon Hill Rd., Dracut, MA 01826, Tel #978-458-0371
Manny Epstein, 1900 Quentin Rd., Apt. E14, Brooklyn, NY 11229, Tel #718-375-9440
Glenn P. Wible, 1701 Pinehurst Rd. #18A, Dunedin, FL 34698, Tel. #727-738-2850
Anne M. Tisdell, 505 Plantation St. Apt. 411, Worcester, MA 01605, 617-257-1882
John B. White, 3001 Merryman's Mill Rd., Phoenix, MD 21131, 410-666-0879

A SALUTE TO PAST PRESIDENTS WHO HAVE SERVED US WELL

1947 James C. Hanrahan*	1964 Julius Boyles*	1981 Michael Caprio*	1998 R. C. Hamilton
1948 Jack M. Straus*	1965 Samuel Klippa*	1982 Ralph Gunderson*	1999 Pat DiGiammerino*
1949 Shelly Hughes*	1966 William M. Doty*	1983 Arthur Doggett*	2000 Salvatore Scicolone
1950 Julius Ansel*	1967 Albert B. Belvedere	1984 Bernie Cove*	2001 Pat DiGiammerino*
1951 Walter H. Edwards, Jr.	1968 Vito C. Palazzolo*	1985 Carroll Brown*	2002 Bob Taylor
1952 Leo Schneider*	1969 Pat DiGiammerino*	1986 John Hobbs*	2003 Salvatore Scicolone
1953 Finley Heyl	1970 Casey Szubski*	1987 George Fletcher	2004 Allison Shrawder
1954 Lawrence J. Redmond*	1971 Charles Altomari*	1988 Charles Schmidt*	2005 Ames H. Miller*
1955 Lawrence J. Redmond*	1972 Harold H. Dopp*	1989 Edward Reuss*	2006 Rudy Zamula
1956 Lt. Gen. Robert H. York*	1973 Louis J. Volpi*	1990 Charles J. Lussier	2007 Robert Keck
1957 Harry W. Lockwood*	1974 Bernard O. Riddle*	1991 Edgar H. Haynes*	2008 Michael Catrambone
1958 Raymond J. Voracek*	1975 Robert G. Taylor	1992 Ned Smith*	
1959 Charles Abdinoor	1976 Mike Skovran*	1993 Louis Sandini*	
1960 Joseph F. Minotti*	1977 Manlius Goodridge	1994 William M. Minick*	
1961 Frank J. McGrogan*	1978 Joseph A. Macaluso*	1995 Casey Szubski*	
1962 John W. Robinette*	1979 William J. Chavanne*	1996 Floyd Richmond*	
1963 Manuel C. Martin*	1980 Samuel Klippa*	1997 Keith Davidson*	

*Denotes Deceased



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

MIKE CATRAMBONE

To all 83rd Thunderbolts, Descendants and Friends,

Thank you for the opportunity to preside as your President for Reunion 2009. With my wife Carmella as my 1st Vice President, we hope to make the 2009 Reunion a fine one of which you will be very proud. Many hours have been spent checking out all the facilities in the area and we are certain we have selected the best of the lot.

The Dolce Valley Forge is a 4-star hotel and has been completely renovated and should provide us with all the amenities necessary for a successful reunion. The Executive Board approved the site with personal inspections. Employees at Dolce are kind and courteous and we are sure everyone will be elated by the accommodations. An on-site restaurant and coffee shop as well as nearby alternatives will take care of everyone's food requirements without breaking the budget.

We are working on a schedule of events with two things in mind: Your pleasure and your convenience. Buses will be handicap-accessible, people will be there to assist those who need help, each bus will have its own tour guide, and we are trying to keep the bus-loading and unloading to a minimum.

It has been brought to my attention that some people think we are spending too much time on trips and not enough time in general get-togethers. We are planning our trips for Thursday and Friday so that they will

conclude at a reasonable time each day. That will leave more free time for gathering in the Hospitality Room which we hope to keep open later than has been the case thus far. However, we will need volunteers to host the Room.

This year's hosts believe we were "relieved" of some of our supplies by persons other than 83rd Reunion attendees while the room was unoccupied. The 2009 reunion area will be semi-private and we should not have that problem this time. If we have someone on duty during open hours that should guarantee safety. It isn't fair to ask a few people to baby-sit the room and we will be asking for volunteers for that chore. Perhaps some people who choose not to attend the trips away from the hotel could keep an eye on the supplies. After all, it is our money being spent for our pleasure so we all have an investment in its success.

The King of Prussia area has the world's largest Mall (not under one roof) and if the ladies are so inclined, they could keep themselves very busy spending their mad money or "just looking". Restaurants galore dot the area and the Dolce management provides shuttle transportation to and from both the Mall and the surrounding restaurants. We have been assured that they will have additional transportation by next year.

The nearest airport will be Philadelphia International, about 20 minutes away. Several methods of transportation are under study and will be available by reunion time. If you are planning to add vacation days to your reunion stay, please consider the other entertainment venues which we added to your packet at the Carlisle reunion. If you missed this year's reunion in Carlisle and do not know what we are talking about the entire area around King of Prussia abounds with places of interest, both historical and entertaining. It is a great place for vacations.

Nearby Lancaster County, home of the Amish, is replete with all sorts of historic and colorful venues. It is truly a family wonderland. We will be visiting the birthplace of the Revolution of 1776 in

Philadelphia, but there are too many interesting sites to cover in such a short time so your family may be interested in an extended stay to peruse that area. If you are a Revolutionary War or Civil War buff, the early history of our glorious country will be yours to explore. Pennsylvania has so much to offer that you may never want to go home again.

It is never too early to begin planning for the 2009 Reunion. Perhaps we could all begin by inviting other 83rd members who might live near you to consider coming to King of Prussia next year. I just received my copy of the 2008 roster and was surprised to find people from my area who are members. We are a dwindling group and as a result chapters have dissolved. With the establishment of the Legacy Chapter we may have a vehicle with which to encourage reunion attendance.

I am open to all suggestions which may provide ideas for a successful 63rd Annual 83rd Infantry Division Association Reunion in 2009. Who knows, you may have a Reunion-Maker-Idea tucked away in the back of your mind without realizing what you have there. Think about it. Together we can make this one the reunion to remember.

Mike Catrambone
Hq. Co., 2nd Bn., 331st Inf.
President, 2009 Reunion

PAST PRESIDENT'S CORNER

ROBERT KECK

The 62nd Annual Reunion of the 83rd Infantry Div. Association is now history. Held July 30-31, August 1-2, 2008 at the Carlisle Hotel, Carlisle, PA.

We had a successful and fine reunion. To any reunion it is necessary to have planning beginning a few years prior. I was asked by the Executive Board to find a suitable area. I had in mind the Harrisburg or Carlisle area because of the history importance. I had been to the Carlisle Hotel for prior meetings,

PA Game Commission, VFW and Wild Turkey Federation. I had checked about 8 other hotels in the area, and found Carlisle to offer the best room rate.

I called Cliff Wooldridge about the results of my survey. Cliff lives in New Hampshire but volunteered to come down for a scheduled visit to the Carlisle Hotel. First meeting included Cliff Wooldridge, Nancy McCarthy, my wife Phyllis and daughter Carol Gill. We all agreed if their contract looked OK we would present it to the Board for approval and have our 2007 Spring Board Meeting at the Carlisle Hotel. All agreed with the proposed contract.

I needed some help but there was no one local to the area. At the reunion in Arlington Christian C. Heine Jr. volunteered to help put on the reunion. He lives in New Jersey but teaches at a school in PA. and the son of 83rd Div. member Christian C. Heine (deceased).

At home I received a telephone call from Col. Michael Lynch of the Army Heritage Center in Carlisle, PA. He advised me that a lady from Carlisle had volunteered to help with the reunion. I called her and was surprised to find a retired Army Lt. Col. Merideth Bucher. Chris and I set up a meeting with Merideth on a Sunday. After the meeting we were sure of a winner. Merideth is the niece of 83rd Vet. James Harp.

Those of you who attended the reunion know that the success was as a result of volunteers. The others we must give thanks to. Cliff Wooldridge and Nancy McCarthy without them we would be in trouble.

There are others that helped during the reunion, the McCouch family namely, Richard who served the Catholic Mass and Ed taking care of the banquet seating. Dave Dimmick was always available to do anything and Jim Swope for organizing the Rag Tag Circus. I thank God for giving us the people to make it work.

Robert Keck, Ex. Pres.
L Co. 329 Reg.

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER CHUCK ABDINOOR

Hello Everyone,

Sincerely hope all is well with all, and what about our reunion in Carlisle! Our hat is off to Bob Keck and his committee. Everything went as planned, you could not have timed it any better. Merideth Bucher kept everyone on their toes. Chris Heine missed his calling, he should have been a tour guide the way he ran our bus, and made sure everyone was on time for all the activities, also Dave Dimmick, he should have been a dispatcher, as he worked into the night, picking up members from the airport. To the rest of the committee my heartfelt THANKS.

We now have a new **Legacy Chapter**. John Markuns and crew have invited all descendants to join, and have PLEDGED to continue our Association, and help our members in any way possible. They have formed their officers.

Along with our current members Manny Epstein and Glenn Wible, two new members have been elected to the Executive Board: Anne Tisdell for a one-year term and John White for two years. They are replacing Steward Barrick and Manny Goodridge. My THANKS to them for their help these past years. WE MUST MOVE ON!

I would also like to remind members that have not paid their dues this year, that they do so. Cliff has sent notice to them that we need their dues. The rising cost of printing material, and all other incidentals, have added to Cliff's burden as Treasurer and Publisher.

I also want to THANK Rudy Zamula for the Flags Presentation to Emmanuel Ledoux who will deliver them to the Mayor Michael Lepourry of Sainteny. Jean Paul Pitou, our French representative, has advised us that they plan to put them in the lobby of their Town Hall. (See thank you letter from the Mayor of Sainteny elsewhere in this issue) Please plan on attending our 63rd Reunion, which will be at the Dolce Valley Forge

(Hotel), King of Prussia, Pennsylvania,
August 12-15, 2009,.

Chuck Abdinoor, B & A Co. - 330th
Chairman, Executive Board

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE ELLSWORTH S. MASSIE

Prayer for Holiday Season

Thanksgiving at this Time of
Celebration of God's Gifts

We give thanks for the beauty of the land
and the great resources of our nation!

For the men and women who have made
our country strong!

Thanksgiving for the torch of liberty in our
land. Let us keep it burning bright!

Give us help to finish the good work here
in our land.

Hasten the day when all shall Glorify Thy
Name.

In Christ's Name,
E. Massie

FROM THE EDITOR CLIFF WOOLDRIDGE

**IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR
2009 DUES BY JANUARY 1st
YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE THE
NEXT THUNDERBOLT.**

**Please keep the Association
going by paying your
Dues - \$25**

**Please check the date on your
membership card (or call me at
603-875-3649) so you won't miss
the next issue of the
Thunderbolt!**

Well, let's talk about this last reunion. It was fabulous! Bob Keck put together a great group of people who worked very hard to make everything go off smoothly.

Bob was fortunate to have Merideth Bucher who coordinated the activities and had everything going off like clockwork. Chris Heine WAS EVERYWHERE AND COULD HAVE USED A PAIR OF ROLLER SKATES!

Remember the Mailman's creed - *"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds"*? Well, that could also apply to Dave Dimmick. No matter what time of day or night he was going back and forth to the airport picking up and then returning members. John White was everywhere doing what needed to be done. He handled our tour bus to Gettysburg and the Eisenhower Farm and he never lost one of us!

Susan Pray was doing double duty as secretary of both the Association and the new Legacy Chapter running back and forth to meetings. John Markuns, our Judge Advocate was on a mission to get the Legacy Chapter formed and approved. He made it! (More information on the new Legacy Chapter elsewhere in this issue.) **THEY NEED MORE STATE REPS.**

The Army Heritage & Education Center had a great exhibit that included some of Tony Vaccaro's photos - bringing back many memories. I enjoyed the Army Heritage Trail which had tanks and exhibits from all the past wars.

We then went to the War College for a buffet lunch. I was again fortunate to enjoy the company of Curt Herrick, the son-in-law of my battalion commander, BG Roy T. Dodge. And I had a little advantage because Curt had gone through the War College so was familiar with the College and knew his way around the grounds (even the speed limits). It was like having my own personal guide.

That evening we returned to the AHEC to listen to Tony Vaccaro's fascinating presentation including many of his photos.

The Rag Tag Circus on Saturday was GREAT! This was Rudy Zamula's project and he pulled it off with flying colors. I got a chance to ride in the Dodge ¾ ton truck. The Indian motorcycle was a 1940. He ran convey and would stop at the intersection. We had a chance to talk to the fellows who had put all this equipment back together - rebuild engines. Jim Swope owner of "Mickey" the Authentic 83rd ID WWII Jeep brought these men and vehicles for our special Rag Tag Circus. **ALL THE 83rd VETS PRESENT SIGNED THEIR NAMES ON THE 83RD JEEP.** (See pictures, etc. further on in this issue.)

Nancy and I were thrilled to meet Bob's son Rob and his wife Susan. We certainly enjoyed their company, "their delicious peaches" and their dependable assistance at the Registration Table along with Phyllis Keck and Carol (Keck) Gill. Thank you for your all your help. Also, great to see Paul DiGiammerino (Pat's son) at the reunion.

I want to thank the "Team of June Zenz and Wanda Lawson" for doing a fantastic job selling 50-50 tickets and we already have them signed up for next year.

At Saturday night's Banquet Tony Vaccaro got all the Vets together on the dance floor and took a group picture.

To Nancy's total surprise Carmella Catrambone, representing the Association, presented her with a beautiful flower arrangement in appreciation of all she does for the 83rd. Nancy thanks you all!



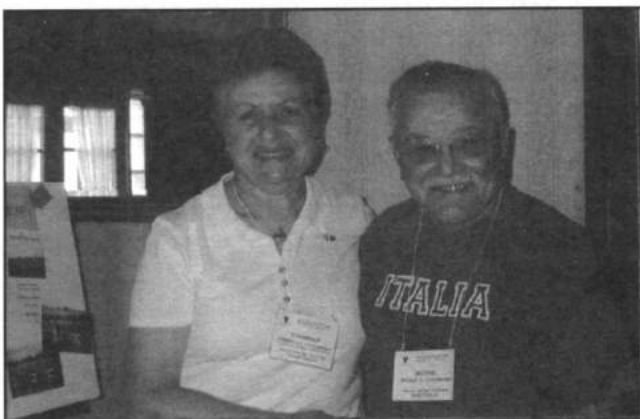
I would like to see the original History Book reproduced that is the one that was printed

in Germany in 1945 that we got when we got home. The book I'm talking about is "Thunderbolt Across Europe". I would like to know how many would like to buy one or two or more. Just drop me a postcard or letter, phone me at 603-875-3649, email @wooldridge@metrocast.net, or any other means you would like. **I need to know now if I am going to get these by next reunion time. PLEASE READ THIS AND MAKE UP YOUR MIND NOW.**



I think we could do something for our buddies who are laid up at home, some live alone and are lonesome and they don't have anyone to talk to.

I would like to get a list of telephone numbers of anyone that would like to be on the list. I will publish them in the Thunderbolt so some of us can talk to them. I do have a couple now. All you have to do is say "Hi, I was in the 83rd and then just listen.



Mike and Carmella Catrambone

We are working on the next reunion and it looks like a great one also. It is in very capable hands with Mike and Carmella Catrambone putting things together.

My deepest sympathy to Lavona Whitcomb and her family on the death of her husband

Bob "R.C.". Bob was a good friend and faithful contributor to the Thunderbolt with his Co. "F" 329th column. I've included in this issue a copy of his poem "Memories" that he sent me many years ago.

Cliff Wooldridge

Remember - Pay Your Dues!

CHAPTERS

BOSTON CHAPTER NEWS

August 22, 2008

On June 10, 2008, I received a call from Larry Arrigo, who has moved to Florida to be with or near his son and family. He told me that he had an emergency surgery to remove his gall bladder. He was about four months recuperating. He is now doing well and I heard that he attended the 83rd Reunion in Carlisle, Penn. in August. It was nice to hear from you Larry and that you are feeling well. Good Luck Larry. Keep in touch.

I also heard from Nancy Tynan and she is doing well. She has a great family who helps her very much. She misses Amby very much and we pray that she will continue to enjoy her family. Good luck Nancy and keep in touch.

September 22, 2008

I called Cliff Wooldridge recently and he said the 83rd Reunion was a great success and all had a good time. The 83rd is still holding on. What a great outfit.

Cliff is also looking into seeing if he can get Boston Chapter people to get another (meeting) gathering before the winter sets in. Good luck, Cliff. I also have to share news of my wife and I, (Helen & Tony Piantedosi), just had our 60th Wedding Anniversary. We

are very blessed to reach this point of our lives. Our children and our grandchildren are giving us a great time with family and friends.

Charles and Rita Lussier are not doing too well but hanging in there. Also, Vera Caprio is doing well. God Bless them all.

That is all I have for now. So, until next time, God be with you all.

Boston Chapter Secretary
Tony Piantedosi
"C" 323rd F.A.

CLEVELAND CHAPTER NEWS

BOB GROBELNY

DIXIE CHAPTER NEWS

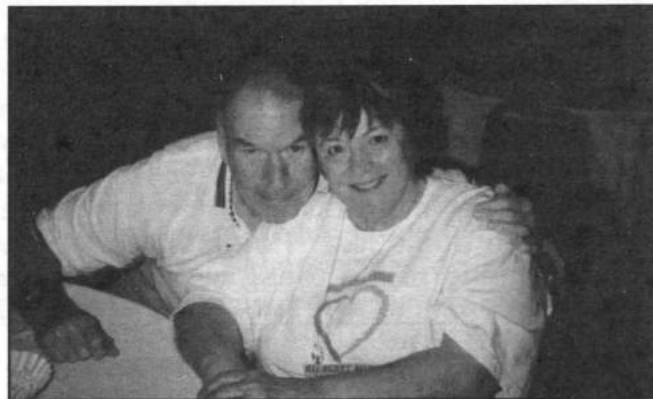
ELLSWORTH MASSIE

Report from Dixie

I've looked forward to this meeting since my very first meeting in Washington, DC in 1956. I may be a few years off but I'm certain that I enjoyed our 62nd as much as any other of the dozens attended over the years! Let me express my gratitude for all the blood, sweat and tears put forth to make it one of the very best!

Now I'm already looking forward to our next one. With all the help of our descendants and friends I believe our future is bright. So lets take part, enjoy and let that feeling of brotherly love prevail to the end that we may be bigger and in agreement on all the important issues that confront us coming together from the four corners of our country, putting aside our petty differences and dislikes to make our Association even stronger than ever!

Some chapters have gone dormant. This gives those active a greater responsibility than ever! I believe we can rise to the task and prevail with our descendants and associates taking an active part. Let me thank each one!



Tom and MaryJean Houlahan
Descendants Well Represented and Enjoyed



Andy Socha, Charlie Sihlanick, Ellsworth Massie
Btry 322 Represented

Dixie had two member couples present, one descendant couple present. Some had planned to be present but sickness prevented them from showing up. We missed you all! You missed all the fun and fellowship!

Sightseeing trips were daily to places of historical importance and interest. All were enjoyed although we were exhausted. Maybe it's because we're finally getting older!

Hospitality room is open full time and supplied with drinks and snacks! Something for everyone. Social Activity is the order of the day. Speak with someone from California to Belgium or Florida to Maine without moving. I believe the stories from the "old timers" are getting better each year! We are encouraged to submit them to our New Museum for the generations yet unborn! Each of us can have a part.



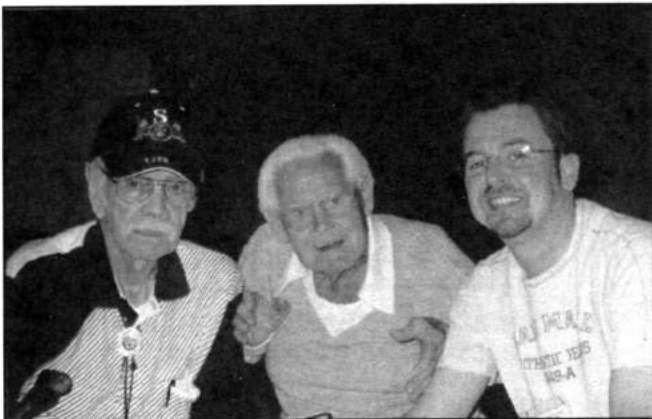
**"Who is this guy?
And what is he doing anyway?"**
Bill McKee signing "Mickey" Jeep

Rag Tag Circus - Army Heritage & Educ. Ctr.
Let's plan now to do it all over next year at a new location. Come and bring someone with you! It's been 35 years since I visited Valley Forge, Independence Hall. I'm ready to go back again. I hope to make it along with a few hundred hearty souls. Let's make our plans and get it done!

A Special Thanks for all our national officers who bring these gatherings into being! Let's not forget those whose sacrifice makes it possible for this to be done with a strong feeling of "Brotherly Love and Love of our own U.S.A.!" See you again in '09.

Your Reporter for Dixie,

Ellsworth Massie
A 322 & 908 F.A.



Ellsworth Massie - Charlie Sihlanick - Wilfried DeBacker

FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

ROBERT TAYLOR
B Co. 329TH

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

NICK FRANCUCCO

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER NEWS

STAN BIELEN
stanfran83rd@aol.com

November 1, 2008

Dear Cliff and Nancy,

In early July I was hit with many health problems concerning my heart and lungs. I really had a tough time at the reunion, I realized then I should have not attended, and was anxious to get home to get medical help. Since then I have had many doctor visits and been confined to the hospital twice and I still am not well to this day.

Early in the year Fran was found to have a tumor where she previously had a mastectomy. I had to take her for eight weeks, five times a week for radiation. I was confined to the hospital for part of this time and had to rely on my daughters and neighbors to continue taking her. Taking care of her and all the responsibilities at home even when I became sick took a toll on me. This has been a very tough year on my whole family.

As for the column, you can understand that I was in no way able in getting it out by October 10th with all that was happening here. I hope that you both would understand this. Hopefully I can get the column in for the February 10th deadline.

P.S. You can put this information into the Thunderbolt if you wish in place of my column.

Stan Bielen



Francis Markuns & Ed McCouch (L to R)
Hospitality Room - Carlisle Reunion

COMPANIES

Co. "A" - 330TH
CHARLES ABDINOOR
 sgtchuck83rd@comcast.net

Hi Buddy's,

Sincerely hope that all is well. We had a wonderful reunion at Carlisle, we missed, in order, Paul and Dolores Reed, Earl and Phyllis Dunn, Shorty Glasser, Cookie Seneca, Steward and Nellrita Barrick, Walt and Pearl Pillion, and finally the Prussman's. Hopefully, we meet next year at Valley Forge.

I can pledge that our President Mike and his wife Carmella, who is also our 1st Vice President, will run a successful Reunion. They are quite a team, as evident of the table they had laid out with brochures of what to do and see at Valley Forge. We met in April to check out the Hotel, and the area. I was impressed with what I saw. I hope that you will all attend.

Now, I would like to THANK Ed McCouch, Jr. for the usual efficient way he runs the banquet seating. Many do not know but a

cleaner took all his reservation slips for the banquet, and threw them in the trash. Needless to say, it caused quite a turmoil. But knowing Ed, as I do, he is most proficient on whatever he does. It took him a while, but he seated everyone to their satisfaction. He stayed until everyone was seated, then went to dress for the occasion.

I finally met most of the McCouch clan, and they took two tables. Richard, who is a Jesuit Priest, said Catholic Mass for us, and we have asked him if he would do it also at Valley Forge. He agreed, and this will be the third time he has said Mass for us. He also went to College in the area and we are fortunate to have one of our own.

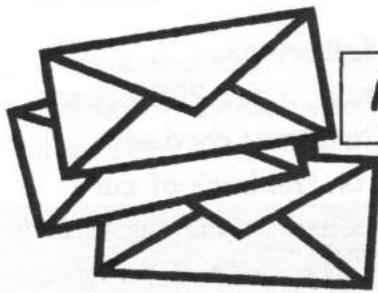


Ed Brown (L) and Chuck Abdinoor (R)
Rag Tag Circus, Carlisle Reunion

I have to mention also, Ed and Pauline Brown. They had another close call from the fires in California. They volunteer their services in Alaska every year. They are in the Education Field. THANKS, TO All.

Chuck Abdinoor
B & A - 330th

Co. "D" - 331ST
BILL MCKEE
GERI GUNDERSON



MAIL BAG

September 14, 2008

Dear Cliff Wooldridge

I just needed to say thank you to the 83rd for the wonderful time had in Gettysburg in late July 2008. Not only was the setting interesting and enjoyable but the company was much fun too. It was a pleasure to see and spend time with the associates. Some of the highlights for me were the Rag Tag Circus, the whole Hammond clan, Col. Mike Perry, and the Heritage Village where I was able to see a painting of the Huertgen Forest which brought me back to my days of service. And of course, I must mention the absolutely delicious peaches supplied by Bob's son! This was a reunion to be remembered.

Before I sign off, I regret to inform you of the passing of Bob Whitcomb. Bob will be greatly missed. It was he who faithfully held together Company F by organizing the winter reunions all of these many years. Our prayers go out to his wife Lavona.

Sincerely,

G. Russell Whitehead, Co. F. 329th
107 Wertsville Rd.
Ringoes, NJ 08551

P.S. If there is anyone out there who knows the whereabouts of **Doc Keith**, could you please drop me a line? Thank you.

Obituary

Charles Robert Whitcomb

Sept. 18, 1921 - Sept. 6, 2008

Charles Robert "Bob" Whitcomb, 86, WWII Veteran

Charles Robert "Bob" Whitcomb, 86, of Ashland, died at the Metro Health Medical Center

in Cleveland, on Saturday September 6, 2008 following an illness of four weeks. He was born in Ashland, Ohio on Sept. 18, 1921, a son of the late Isaak T. and Grace Wellman Whitcomb. He was a life long resident of Ashland. A veteran of the United States Army in World War II he served as a Staff Sergeant for Company F 329th Infantry 83rd Division. He was a member of the First Christian Church, a member of the American Legion Post #88 and a member of the Ashland Evening Lions Club. For 25 years he was a Real Estate Broker for Ward Real Estate in Ashland.

On Sept. 5, 1942 he was married to Lavona F. Deardorff who survives him, he is also survived by a daughter, Kathleen Fortenberry of Marietta, GA, and son, James A. (Cheryl) Whitcomb of Kings Mills, OH, three grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

The Ashland Evening Lions Club will hold Lions Services at 8 PM on Wed., Sept. 10th at Denbow-Primm-Kernery Funeral Home.

Funeral Services will be held on Thursday, Sept. 11, 2008 at 11AM with the Rev. John O'Hara officiating. Burial will be in the Ashland Cemetery at a later date with military graveside services.

October 20, 2008

This was in our local paper,
Eilene McGee

Sunday, Oct. 19, 2008
Clarksburg Telegram
Clarksburg, West Virginia
Obituary

Everett Eugene Rogers

SUN CITY, AZ -- Everett Eugene Rogers, 86, born at Brown, West Virginia, where a country doctor rode in on horseback to deliver him to Carl F. and Hazel G. Rogers, both deceased, went to be with his Heavenly Father on Sunday October 12, 2008.

Eugene had prayed for the Lord to take him home for some time since he was helpless.

Eugene left West Virginia to live with his grandmother, where he cared for 2,000 layers and went to school and played football, where he made All Licking County right guard and participated in other activities. He graduated from Pataskia High with a football scholarship.

He entered the 83rd Infantry during World War II immediately following graduation and served in the European Theater, where he was wounded on the 4th of July 1944, had his legs and feet frozen in the Battle of the Bulge, and served in many battles. He received the Purple Heart and honors for Good Conduct, Victory, Theater Service and EAME Theater Service, with 3 Bronze Stars. Even with his fingers off, he was a sharpshooter. He loved serving in the Infantry. He came home in December, 1945, from Reims, France, to marry his long-time sweetheart, Ugene Ash.

Everett Eugene and Ugene Ash were married on January 1, 1946. They were blessed with three children, Ginger Rogers Krawczel, Ray E. and Randy C. Rogers, all of Phoenix, as well as three grandchildren, 1 step-grandson, 4 great-grandchildren who their "Popa" loved dearly.

Eugene drove a gasoline tanker for Standard Oil and Shell Distributor for much of his working life. He was a warehouse supervisor for All-American and a maintenance/custodian for Washington School District. He attended and supported Grace Bible Church, was a member of the 83rd Infantry Division, was garden chairman for Royal Candle Condominium and worked many hours repairing sprinklers and fixing leaks. He worked with Little League, Babe Ruth, and American Legion Baseball.

Eugene's faith in Christ was not only his salvation but his hope for his friends and family. He was the rock that always held his family together in sickness or happiness, and will be missed greatly. His passing has left us all with a heartache, but his love will always keep us warm. His legacy will live on through the influence he had on his family and friends.

A graveside service will be held Friday, October 24, 2008, at 2 pm at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona. A memorial service will be held Saturday, October 25, 2008 at 2 pm at the Grace Bible Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Harmony Hospice, Scottsdale, AZ or Grace Bible Church Missionary Fund, Sun City, AZ.

Dear Cliff:

Oct. 22, 2008

Enclosed are the following:

1. My \$25 check . . . for 2009 dues
2. Copy of a Christmas card with description on the back of card. Could you publish this in the next issue of the Thunderbolt? You can keep the card.



This Christmas card, designed by Cpl. N. J. Firsflies of Hdq. Co. 308th Engr. Bn., 83rd Infantry Division, was mailed from somewhere in Germany to family and friends of the troops assigned to the 308th Engineers as their 1944 Christmas greetings.

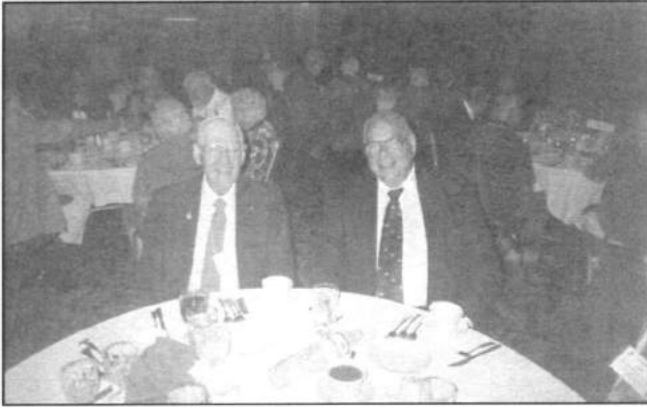
3. Notification of the death of Captain Fred Barrett on October 9, 2008, Fred died in Great Falls, Montana. Fred was Company Commander of Co. D - 330th - 83rd Inf. Div. -

Reported by his friend,
Willis M. McKeon of
Hdq. Co. 308th Engr. Bn.

Hi Cliff,

August 16, 2008

I have included three pictures to send you and they look very good. I hope you like them.
Harry C. Gabrys



Harry C. Gabrys
83 years old

Karl Gabrys 75 yrs
Ex Detroit Police Dept
4 years in Navy



Rag Tag Circus - Carlisle Reunion
Cliff Wooldridge-Luther Strunk-Larry Arrigo

Dear Cliff,

It's now three months ago from my heart operation, everything is OK. I have a new body and a second life. My Doc gave me 80 more years to live. I say no thank you because all my friends are going to heaven and I will be all alone here.

I have received many good wishes in the hospital from: Dave Curry, Eastlake,

OH; Mr. & Mrs. Michael Pike, Little Rock, AR; Michael Gottlieb, NY, NY; Mr. & Mrs. Fresson, Jacksonville, FL; Albert Vartanian, Southfield, MI; and Mrs. Virginia DiGiammerino, Malden, MA. (editor's note- all the "Get Well Soon" messages filled out at the reunion were sent directly to Henry's home. Also, August "Mousie" Farias had reunion attendees signing cards for Henry.)

Many thanks for all the good wishes. It's good to have friends. Thank you.

This year in December we have the Night-Vigil, we think of all the good boys who give life and health for our liberty.

Cliff, thank you for the nice report in last Thunderbolt.

God Bless, Henri
Henry Scheitler
Res. Rte de Montelange
L-8821 Riesenhaff
Grand Duchy of LUXEMBOURG

Dear Clifton,

In a telephone call today from his widow (Gene) I learned of the death yesterday, October 12th, of our member, EVERETTE R. ROGERS, 10120 W. Royal Oak Rd., Sun City, AZ. He had joined the Army from West Virginia originally but moved to Arizona many years ago. He had been wounded in battle but was returned to duty with the 83rd when he recovered. He was a fine American and proud to be a veteran of the 83rd Division. In turn, I was proud to have him as one of my friends.

Best regards,

Herbert L. Gibson
123 Elizabeth Ave., Avalon, PA 15202

Dear Clifton, Oct. 13, 2008

It's with great pain that I report the passing of Everett Rogers on Oct. 12.

Everett was an original member of Co. K 331st since 1942 and served with honors in Europe in all of the five campaigns. He was wounded in Normandy and was awarded the Purple Heart.

In the past 25 years Everett and his lovely wife Ugene could be seen at mostly all of the 83rd reunions and made many friends. A sad buddy,
Norm Malo

Dear Cliff 13 Oct. 2008

It is with deep regret to report the death of Everett E. Rogers, Co K 331st Inf Regt 12 Oct 2008.

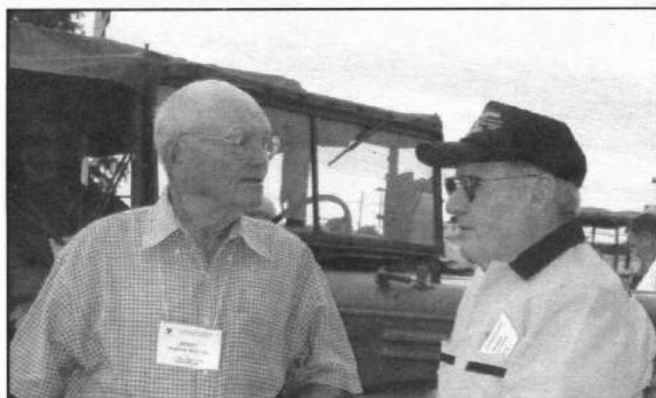
Everett grew up in West Virginia using his middle name of Eugene. But Military protocol dictates the use of ones first name and middle initial, thus "Everett E." After leaving the military he reverted back to "Eugene".

When Eugene found out that my wife and I didn't attend the last reunion he called out of concern for us even though he was seriously ill himself. That was the kind of friend he was. He will be sadly missed for his friendship and humor. Sincerely,

George S. Baker Sr.
5775 Walker Perry St.
Morganton, NC 28655-6351

Dear Cliff,

It was good to hear from you the other day. We certainly had a good chat. Included are two pictures of interest.



Wayland Hicks (L) Cliff Snyder (R)

Wayland Hicks left the 83rd on Dec. 15, 1944 with frozen feet. I was his replacement on Dec. 18, 1944 -
2nd Squad - 2nd PLT C Co -330th Regt.

We did not find this out until the Carlisle Reunion - the first reunion Wayland ever attended.



Bob Keck, Russ Whitehead,
Cliff Snyder, Rudy Zamula (L to R)
Rag Tag Circus- Carlisle Reunion

Cliff, a personal thanks for the job you have done to keep our association active. Your Buddy,
Cliff Snyder

Hello,

Just to let you know that today on Veterans' Day we celebrate the endings of the World Wars. I was there to represent and to place the 83rd in the picture. We drove around with kids and Belgian veterans.



The 2 guys with me are friends (Jan and Erwin) dressed up as 82nd Div. paratroopers. (Wilfried is on the right with elbow on the Jeep) Most of the time you will find a lot of paratroopers but no infantry. I'm the only one that represents the 83rd on those days and that is because my heart is with you. Some of those guys love to restore WWII vehicles and now my job is to make some of them warm to restore the jeeps, command cars, Mc trucks or halftracks in 83rd cars.



Cliff, you told me some stories of being a jeep driver at those times. Well, if you want you can tell me more

about it and especially about the Hurtgen Forest and the Ardennes regions. I love to hear them and maybe we can use some of your stories in Eddy's book about the battle of the Ardennes in Jan 1945. Every story of you guys is important and not only the fighting ones. Take care and keep in touch.

Wilfried (DeBacker)

**A NOTE TO RUDY ZAMULA
FROM
JEAN PAUL PITOU**

In first we hope you are in good health. About the flag, Monday evening M LEPOURRY Mayor of SAINTENY phoned me to inform that Tuesday evening the council town welcome the flag. Also, at 20h30, French hour, I was at SAINTENY. I welcomed Emmanuel, a kind man that give the first 13 flags at the Mayor. Michel LEPOURRY had been very happy to discover these flags the beauty and the size. The members of the council town have been also very impressed. Now, we must find a good and excellent space like you asked, to expose the wonderful gift. Thank you Rudy.

We will go in holidays to 2 weeks and with my computer broken, I don't know if I should find the possibility to visit my mails. Excuse me Rudy, but we are very very tired and we will wait the holidays with impatience. God bless you RUDY. Best regards. Thank you to all.

Jean Paul & Christiane

**TO ALL YOU PEOPLE THAT ARE
PLANNING A VISIT TO BELGIUM**

At the reunion I heard a lot of people that want to come back again to Europe. If you are planning such a visit know that Eddy and the people of the region are planning a March for the 83rd on January 11, 2009. As I heard from Eddy it will go from Bihain over Ottré to Petit Langlir. If you need more details, please contact Eddy Monfort (e.monfort@belgacom.net) and he can tell you more about it.

Also know that if somebody of you would like to buy the book of Tony Vacarro "Shots of War" there is a person whose name is Robert Vandewiele in Bihain (He is building the Museum for Tony Vacarro) that has several 100 of copies of that book. If you need his e-mail address feel free to ask me or Eddy.

Wilfried (DeBacker)
widb@stabe.be

June 23, 2008

Dear Mr. Wooldridge

I'm sorry to report that my father, Lt. Col. Edwin G. Holt, passed away on June 2nd. He was almost 94 years old, and had enjoyed a full, wonderful life. He was buried at Pine Hill Cemetery in Burlington, NC, on June 7th, and the US Army provided four men who performed a folding of the flag ceremony and played taps.

The fighting in Normandy was, by far, the most profound event in my father's life. He never forgot the men who died, and the sacrifices made by the men of the 83rd Division. I intend to continue his membership in his memory.

I am enclosing a copy of this obit for your records. (further in this issue)

Very sincerely, *Ed Holt*

Edwin C. Holt
295 Bethany Court
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360-2013
805-496-5286 * seholt@roadrunner.com

Hello Cliff,

My name is Don Housley, I'm the son of Dale J. Housley - G. Company 331 Infantry Reg. I just talked to my father's buddy Phillip Graff and let him know that my father Dale passed away on Aug 24 2008. He never said much about his service time but I've found his medals and ribbons and see that he had a purple heart (hand grenade) and bronze star. He did talk from time to time about Capt Mac and how he would leave his m1 carbine by my dads fox hole and take his gerand rifle out before sunrise and return before dad awoke and carve another notch in it. He told my father that that was the best shooten gun in the war. One of the few times I ever saw my father cry was when he read the Thunderbolt that Capt Mac had passed away. I just wanted to let you all know HOW Proud I am of all that you did for the rest of us. God bless you all and keep you safe. Please feel free to drop me an email if you have any info on my father and his adventures. Thank you again,

DON Housley

31700 Siercks Rd
Scappoose, Oregon 97056-2233
hodaka72t@hotmail.com

English translation of Letter
from Michel Lepourry, Mayor of Sainteny

Dear Sir, All Veterans and Friends of the Thunderbolt Association,

Thank you so much for the 13 flags you have offered to the Sainteny community. This is a strong testimony and souvenir of your generosity for all the people of our community.

The community counsel, who were reunited on September 2nd, with M. Maurice Prioux, who is the president of the Association for former veterans and Jean-Paul Pitou, greatly appreciated the quality of the flags and the wonderful welcome to our new messenger, Emmanuel Ledoux. He came back very happy and with much emotion and satisfaction in being able to take part in the presentation of the flags.

We will not miss our chance to expose these flags to the public and especially on special occasions and commemorations - especially June 6, 2009.

For the 65th Anniversary, we are already working on our projects with the people of Sainteny to give you the very best welcome reception in Normandy. It will be a very special occasion, we will make it necessary for everyone, especially the young generation, to carry this message of liberty.

For sure, the former Veterans and families of Sainteny, we will do whatever we can to accommodate you next year. Jean-Paul Pitou is always, for us, a person who can take over.

Again, thank you and in the year 2009, we look forward to receiving you Mr. Zamula and all your friends, with profound affection and recognition.

The Mayor,

Michel Lepourry

The first 13 flags presented to the Mayor of Sainteny represented the first 13 colonies - Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Virginia

**151 Westgate Drive
San Francisco, CA 94127**

June 30, 2008

Mr. Clifton Woolridge, Editor
The Thunderbolt
138 East Side Drive
P.O. Box 406
Alton Bay, NH 03810-0406

Dear Mr. Woolridge:

My name is Susan O'Donnell Davenport, and my father was John Baldwin O'Donnell, a native San Franciscan who was a member of the 83rd Division of the Third Army in Europe during World War II. You may recall that we had a phone conversation a few weeks ago, and it is on the prompting of Tony Vaccaro that I am sending you a synopsis of a particular incident during my dad's service in France in 1944, to see if you or any of the other members of the 83rd Division can shed some light on the tale. I so enjoyed speaking with you, and Mr. Vaccaro has been wonderful in helping point me to good resources, so please allow me to recount the tale and to bring you up to date with the current state of things. It's really quite a marvelous saga.

This particular incident occurred on the night of August 3-4, 1944, as the US Army was preparing to liberate a small town in Brittany called Dol-de-Bretagne. At that time, my dad was a corporal in the Third Army, 83rd Infantry Division, 330th regiment, 83rd Counter-Intelligence Corps detachment, under Col. Robert Turnbull Foster, which was under Brigadier General Ferenbaugh. In mid-August 1944, Dad received a promotion to Technical Sergeant, and in November, he was made a Lieutenant. I believe I do have all the National Archive and Records Administration documents relating to this, of which there are almost none, because his CIC didn't keep good records of its secret missions, so there are no After-Action Reports that address this story except generically. I have confirmed that Dad was there when he said he was there, so at least that is provable.

My father was one of two soldiers who were successful in convincing the German commander to abandon the town of Dol-de-Bretagne that night. The Army had orders to bomb it the next morning -- in particular to annihilate the 13th century Cathedral St. Samson, whose belfry had been used by the Germans as an observation tower. Most of the citizens had evacuated and were waiting in neighboring farmhouses. Apparently, at that time, there were only a few hundred German troops remaining in the town, and there were many American troops arriving and preparing to do what they needed to do to push out the Germans. So the odds were not good for the Germans. I have learned recently from a German researcher that the Germans in the town were most likely fragmentary groups of the 77th Infantry Division, Grenadier Regiment 1049 and/or 1050. Needless to say, documentation is scarce on all sides, as there was organized mayhem everywhere.

Late in the evening on August 3, 1944, Col. Foster summoned my father and another soldier, Kaarel R. E. Pusta, into his quarters. Because my dad spoke passable French, and Sgt. Pusta spoke both German and French (he was the son of an Estonian diplomat, and had grown up in Paris), Col. Foster asked them to go to the house of the mayor of Dol, whose name was Emile Pardieu (as CIC, Dad had the address from SHAEF headquarters). The purpose of the mission was to persuade the mayor to take them to the German commander so they could convince the Germans to leave town. If they did leave, they were assured safe passage into the night to join their comrades wherever they wanted to go (probably St. Malo). Col. Foster told my father that

he didn't want the unnecessary destruction of the cathedral. So, Dad and Sgt. Pusta crawled on their bellies to the mayor's house, all the while thinking that they were on a suicide mission. Dad and Sgt. Pusta managed to get the mayor to take them to the German commandant, and they succeeded in convincing the latter that he wasn't really retreating; rather he was helping to save a historic cathedral and its town. Regardless, the German commander, whom my dad recalled as a "young Major," took his troops and left. The town and the cathedral were thereby spared, and were easily retaken on August 4, 1944. Tony Vaccaro recalls some casualties, as do the French who witnessed the events they could see, but they were few, and by mid-afternoon, the US troops were on their way towards St. Malo. No one except Dad, Sgt. Pusta, Col. Foster, the French Mayor Pardieu, and the German officer knew how this came about, and now none of them survives.

My dad revisited Dol in 1969 with my mother, but did not make known his story about how he contributed to its survival. He told my mother that it was enough for him to walk through the town and to see the cathedral still standing, and to know that he had had a hand in its survival. In 2004, a friend of his named Howard Kalt did a videography of him (and 60 other of their mutual friends who had been in the war), so this story (and many others about the war) is on video from my dad's own mouth. Dad passed away in 2005, and in 2007, Mr. Kalt went, by chance, on vacation through Dol-de-Bretagne, and picked up the "fichier" in Cathedral, only to find no mention of this heroic tale of my father's, which was the very reason the Cathedral still stands today. In an attempt to bring this story to light, and to honor these men who risked their lives to save Dol-de-Bretagne and St. Samson, Mr. Kalt wrote both to the mayor of Dol and to the Archbishop of Rennes to ask for some kind of commemoration on the Cathedral to honor Dad and the others in the story. Both the Archbishop and the Mayor of the town enthusiastically agreed in concept, but understandably, they asked for some kind of proof to verify the story.

So, for the past five months, I have been in regular contact with this town's mayor and with a local historian, exchanging what information is available that we can find. The historian, whose name is Patrick Amiot, wrote a book in the late 90's, called *Dol: Occupation et Liberation*. He sent me a copy, and if we can unearth more facts or testimony, he says he will rewrite it to include this story of my dad's, which actually solves a long-standing mystery about why the Germans left the town without a fight that night. This book contains the eyewitness testimony of over 120 local citizens of what they saw and did during the five years of occupation until the liberation. It also contains pictures of citizens and soldiers during this era, though none taken by Tony Vaccaro. I contacted Tony, since he was one of the first Americans to enter the town on August 4, 1944. He told me that though he had no knowledge of this story, but it still could very well have occurred. I understand that he will be attending your 83rd Division reunion in Carlisle, PA this July, and he will probably talk about this story. Also, there is one French woman, now living in Rennes, whose parents were best friends of the Mayor and Madame Pardieu, and this woman recollects Mrs. Pardieu speaking about two American soldiers coming to the Pardieu home that night of the town's liberation. M. Amiot has already spoken with her, and her story dovetails well enough with my dad's that M. Amiot is completely convinced of its truth. And I took it upon myself to hire a German historian, who has scoured the archives in Germany to find who the officer might be. He came up with a list of 10 or so last names, so we now have to see if anyone in Dol remembers any of them. If so, there is a chance we can find out who this fellow was.

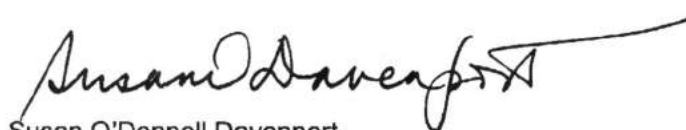
M. Amiot is so convinced of the likelihood of this tale that he has taken it upon himself to advocate on Dad's behalf about the truth of this story, and as a result, some amazing things have transpired. The current mayor of the town has convened a 20-person committee to review the evidence and to seek more, in an effort to corroborate the story. The town officials plan to highlight this story this August in the press in Brittany, to elicit what recollections might still be buried in anyone's memory. My mother, my two sisters and I planned a visit to Dol for this summer, and now it appears that the town officials are making us their guests for a few days! This will be an opportunity to prepare for a noteworthy commemoration in 2009, in honor of the 65th anniversary of the liberation, with the placement of a plaque on the cathedral citing the names of my dad, Sgt. Pusta, Col Foster, Mayor Pardieu, and the German officer. The

Archbishop of Rennes wants it to be a celebration of peace, as well as a commemoration of the men involved in saving the cathedral. My mother, my sisters and I will be there this August, and we will likely go again in 2009 for the celebration.

I have researched the Thunderbolt Division records, the NARA records, and interviewed several veterans and family members of veterans who might know something about this story. My dad was not given to making such things up; he was a well-respected member of the legal community in San Francisco all his life, and had many, many colleagues who admired his ethics. This particular story was one of which he was very proud, in his own humble way. I have found this research to be hugely edifying and enthralling, and I wish I had paid more attention when my dad was alive. I have my dad's service record, and I have letters he wrote from France to his parents (nothing important was shared), and I have talked with Mrs. Elke Pusta, Sgt. Pusta's widow, who lives in White Plains, NY, about her late husband. She does not remember his talking about this story in particular, but she said that he (like many veterans) didn't like to talk about the War, though this was precisely the sort of assignment he often did in the Army. So, I am now looking for anything that might prove or corroborate this mission somehow. Perhaps, perhaps, you have heard something related to this, or you might know of resources to which I might turn for more information.

With my deepest thanks for your attention to this letter, and with a renewed and profound respect for the veterans of the 83rd "Thunderbolt" Division, I wish you a wonderful reunion this summer. I will be in France, in Dol, when you are convening, meeting with the officials and the historians. I look very much forward to anything you might be able to send my way about my dad and about this incident.

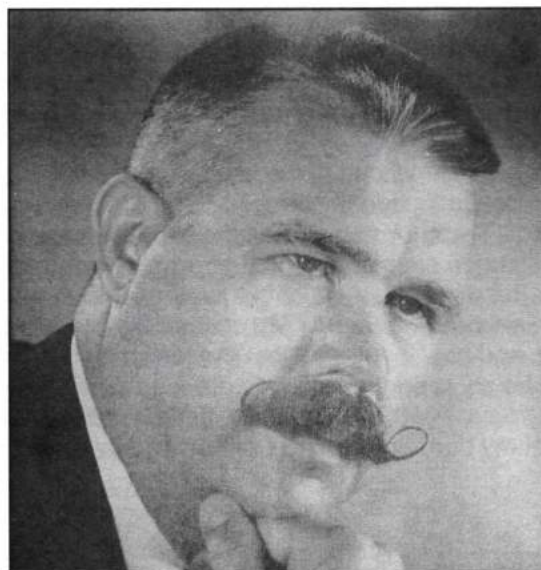
Sincerely,



Susan O'Donnell Davenport
151 Westgate Drive
San Francisco, CA 94127
415-585-2356

**Guess
who
this
is**

**(Answer in next
Thunderbolt)**





Herbert Gibson
123 Elizabeth Ave.
Avalon, PA 15202

July 13, 2008

Dear Clifton

Thank you for your phone call today. I found our conversation very refreshing, even both of us have difficulty catching everything that is said on the phone.

I promised you a picture of the Mayor of Sainteny, France. It is enclosed herewith. It is several years old and I think he might now be shocked if he saw it, but it is the only one I have.

I am also enclosing copies of some correspondence I have had with him. You will notice that he is very favorably disposed toward the 83rd. The enclosed translation of his letter to me several months ago shows that he has not forgotten the 83rd.

With best regards,

Sincerely

Herb Gibson, G-2 Section

HERBERT L. GIBSON



PHOTOGRAPH (SEVERAL YEARS OLD, ?) OF MICHEL LEPOURRY,
MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF SAINTENY, NORMANDY, FRANCE)

FEB 21 REC'D

Le Maire de Sainteny,

à

Monsieur Herbert GIBSON
123, Elisabeth Avenue

AVALON
PA 15202-2722
États-Unis d'Amérique

Le 14 février 2008

Mon Cher Herbert Gibson,

Bernard et Annie n'ont pas manqué de me faire part ainsi qu'au conseil municipal, de vos aimables vœux avec votre habituelle sympathie à l'égard de la commune de Sainteny.

Ce jour, nous avons l'assemblée générale annuelle des Anciens combattants de Sainteny. À leur demande, je me fais leur interprète pour vous redire toute notre reconnaissance aux vaillants et généreux Vétérans de la 83^{ème} Division. Il m'est également très agréable de vous adresser, à mon tour, mes meilleurs vœux et souhaits de bonne santé pour ce nouvel an 2008. Sachez aussi, mon cher Herbert Gibson que nous apprécions beaucoup ce relais amical et familial que vous savez si bien entretenir avec la famille de Bernard et Annie Leconte.

Avec Pierre Lepourry, qui vous adresse le bonjour, nous continuerons les relations avec le frère Eugène et la famille de votre collègue disparu, Raymond Peloquin. Malgré le décès de mon prédécesseur, Auguste Férey, que vous avez si bien connu, son épouse Simone, sa fille Hélène et son mari Christian Lehay entretiennent les meilleurs échanges amicaux avec votre collègue Stanley Bielen et ses enfants.

Jean-Paul Pitou, représentait la commune de Sainteny au 50^{ème} anniversaire de votre association. Toujours aussi attentif au souvenir de la 83^{ème} Division, il en garde un très bon souvenir. Il a d'ailleurs eu le plaisir d'y rencontrer Stanley Bielen. Je lui avais confié la remise de médailles commémoratives de Sainteny pour cette manifestation aux Vétérans qui n'avaient pas eu la possibilité d'assister aux fêtes du 50^{ème} anniversaire du Débarquement en Normandie.

Ces marques de sympathie sont très utiles au devoir de mémoire que méritent les valeureux libérateurs de notre commune de Sainteny.

Avec ma profonde gratitude, je vous prie d'agréer, Cher Herbert Gibson, mon amitié la plus sincère.

Michel Lepourry



Mairie - 2, place Saint-Pierre - 50500 Sainteny

Tél. : 02 33 42 05 64 - Fax : 02 33 42 41 51 - Mel : mairie.sainteny@wanadoo.fr

T R A N S L A T I O N

Sainteny, France
February 14, 2008

My dear Herbert Gibson

Bernard and Annie did not forget to make me a part of your loving wishes, with your constant kindness, for the town of Sainteny.

This day, we have the annual general assembly for the old soldiers of Sainteny. At their command, I make myself the interpreter to tell you of all our gratitude to the courageous and generous veterans of the 83rd Division. It makes me equally happy to give you my best wishes of good health for this new year in 2008. Please know too my dear Mr. Gibson, that we appreciate very much this friendly contact you have looked after with the family of Bernard and Annie Leconte.

With Pierre Lepourry, who sends you a Hello, we will continue the relation with his brother Eugene and the family of your departed colleague, Raymond Peloquin. Despite the death of my predecessor, Auguste Ferey, that you knew well. His wife Simone and her family also give their best wishes to your colleague Stanley Bielen and his children.

Jean Paul Pitou, represented the borough of Sainteny at the 50th anniversary of your association. Always attentive to the memory of the 83rd Division, he holds a very good keepsake memory now. He also had the pleasure there of meeting Stanley Bielen. I entrusted to him the distribution of commemorative medals of Sainteny for this gathering of Veterans who did not have the opportunity to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Debarquement in Normandy.

These marks of kindness are very useful in the memory that merits the valuable liberators of our Sainteny.

With my deep gratitude, I beg you to accept my friendship, the most sincere.

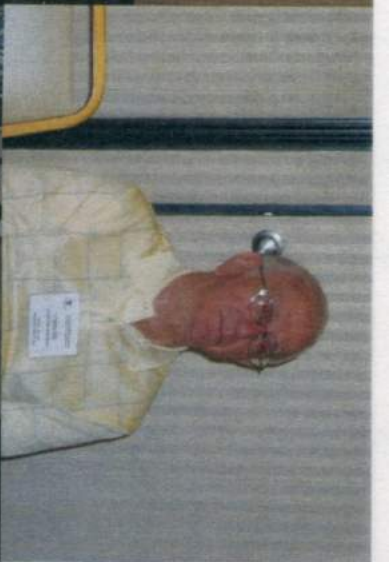
(s) MICHEL LEPOURY

MAYOR OF SAINTENY

1st Row of Photos



2nd Row of Photos







The song "Happy Birthday" to Roger and Stewart was sung with their 83 year old, enjoyed a delicious red-white-and-blue decorated cake, and the "dinkety" boys opened their

Two 83rd Buddies
Celebrating Their 83rd Birthdays Together
Steward Barrick from Clinton, Oklahoma
with
Roger Dumont in Rochester, New Hampshire



Birthday Cake Celebrating 83 years x 2



Susan Dumont Pray, Hostess
Roger Dumont (L) and Steward Barrick (R)

Steward and Nellrita Barrick's Visit to New Hampshire
Monday, October 13th to Sunday, the 19th

On Monday (Oct. 13th) afternoon Susan Dumont Pray (descendant) greeted Nellrita and Steward Barrick at Logan Airport, Boston and took them to their motel room in Dover, NH. After they checked in, she brought them to her home in Rochester, NH for supper.

On Tuesday Susan spent the day with Nellrita and Steward riding around the Mount Washington Valley/White Mountains area. The foliage colors were absolutely spectacular this year. They had lunch at the Muddy Moose Restaurant in North Conway, NH.

On Wednesday Susan and her husband Greg took Steward and Nellrita for a sightseeing trip to the beaches in Maine and in New Hampshire. Great pictures of the Atlantic Ocean and of course the colors were beautiful. Thursday was a day of rest for Nellrita and Steward.

On Friday went to Alton Bay, NH to spend the day with Nancy and Cliff Wooldridge. We boarded the M/S Mt. Washington Cruise Boat and spent 2 1/2 hours on Lake Winnepesaukee viewing the beautiful foliage colors - the reds were magnificent! Afterwards, went to Cliff and Nancy's for supper and watched some old videos of past 83rd Reunions (at the Pines). Memories, memories.

Saturday we celebrated Steward and Roger's 83rd birthdays with other 83rd Division buddies at Susan's home where she prepared a fabulous dinner. Attending 83rd members were: Steward Barrick (A 330th), Roger Dumont (G 329th), Clifton Wooldridge (C 308th Eng.), and Chuck Abdinoor (B & A 330th). Total of 11 people enjoying each others company: Greg and Susan Pray, Roger and Cecile Dumont, Steward and Nellrita Barrick, Cliff Wooldridge and Nancy McCarthy, Chuck Abdinoor, and Patti and John Markuns (descendant).

We sang "Happy Birthday" to Roger and Steward who both were 83 years old, enjoyed a delicious red-white-and-blue decorated cake, and the "birthday boys" opened their

gifts and cards, and we all enjoyed the rest of the day/night taking pleasure in warm, friendly conversation. It was so hard to say "Good bye" to Nellrita and Steward.

At noon on Sunday Greg and Susan Pray (descendant) brought Steward and Nellrita to C & J Trailways where they headed off to Boston for four days to complete their trip.

.....Susan Pray/Nancy McCarthy



Nubble Lighthouse, York Beach, Maine



Fall Foliage - NH Lakes Region



Weirs Beach, NH - Boat Landing



M/S Mt. Washington Cruise Boat



**Roger (L) and Steward (R)
Back Row (L-R) Cliff Wooldridge,
John Markuns, Chuck Abdinoor**



The Birthday Boys

Confirmed Kill for AF Pilot at St. Malo

In the last issue of the "Thunderbolt," this column included the story of General Seth J. McKee who reported that he dropped a single napalm bomb on the Citadel, causing its immediate surrender. I asked if any 83rd veterans could confirm this event, and I recently received a phone call from Paul Conrad, 308th Engineers, who reports that he saw the surrender. Paul says that three P38s flew in and dropped a single bomb into the fresh air vent on top of the Citadel (the top of the Citadel was 15-ft thick solid concrete). He then saw a German come out and wave a white flag, and the P38s left the area. Paul was only a few feet from General Von Aulock when the formal surrender took place. Somehow Von Aulock was carrying the latest *Stars and Stripes* under his arm. It was surprising, because no one in the 83rd had seen the new issue yet!

308th Medical Battalion

David Smith recently sent me a photograph taken at Camp Breckenridge on 21 February 1944. It is an interesting picture that shows all of the officers in the 308th Medical Battalion at that time including David's father, Captain Walter M. Smith MD who joined the 83rd on 21 February 1944. Captain Smith was a general practitioner in civilian life, and was a 1932 graduate of Temple University Medical School in Philadelphia. The Army converted him into a surgeon.

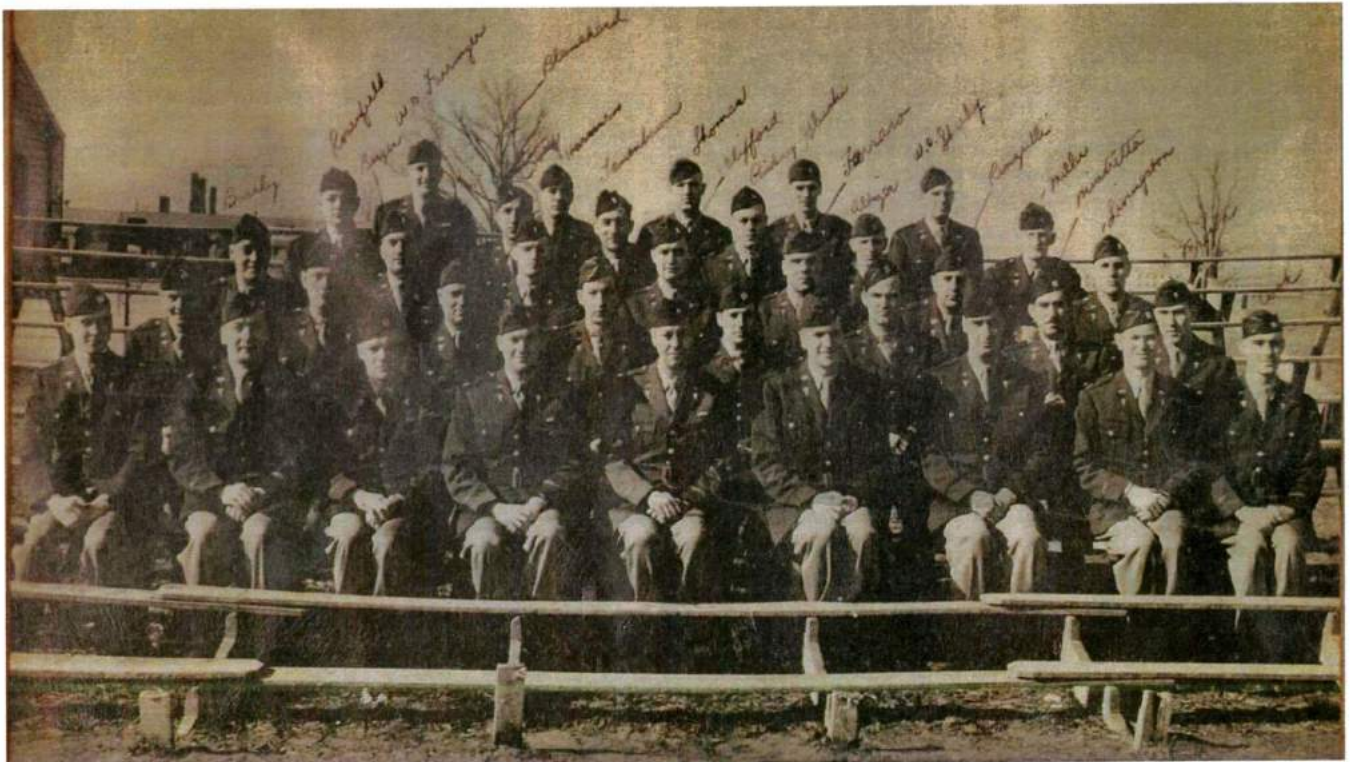
He attended the Medical Field Service School at Carlisle Barracks and then trained at

Camp McCain in Winona, MS. He then served with D Company of the 308th, and was with them in Europe for all of the 83rd battles through the end of WWII. He was awarded the Bronze Star.

In the photograph, below, Captain Smith listed the names of most of the officers. Smith is in the second row from the front, third from the left and is next to Leonard Maidmen, fourth from the left. Monroe Coleman may be next to Maidmen. Captain Smith wrote the names of the other men in the second row on the photo, but his son is unable to read them. He was able to figure out most of the officers from D Company from another photo.

The names in the front row as best as can be determined are, from left to right: Ling, Provost, Mitchell, Mercuri, illegible name, Randall, Reike, Lavoie, and Cook. Second row, from left to right, are: unknown, unknown, Captain Smith, Leonard Maidman, Monroe Coleman, and the rest of the row unknown. The names that can be read from the third and fourth rows include the following: Birkley, Rosenfield, Berger, WO Farringer, Blanchard, Tannenbaum, Thomas, Clifford, Pinkney, Gluski, Farrow, Altger, WO Stucky, Rangulli, Miller, Mistretta, Livingston, and Brown. If anyone has any further information about the men in this picture, please get in touch with me.

Below, officers of the 308th Medical Battalion at Camp Breckenridge in 1942.



The Thunderbolt Chronicles



Dave Curry

Historian

email: davecurry@ncweb.com

phone: 440-942-5030

Legacy Chapter

A lot of exciting things have been going on in the Association. As most of you know, a new chapter of the Association was approved at the recent reunion. The Legacy Chapter is comprised of descendants of 83rd Division veterans and other Association members who have an interest in preserving the Division's history. A number of potential projects have been identified, including copying and digitizing the 83rd Division documents stored at the National Archives, as well as the possibility of publishing a new 83rd Division history book. Work also continues on the project that Lou Gomori started and put so much effort into--obtaining a Presidential Unit Citation for the 83rd Division.

Another activity is the organizing of descendant members who would act as state representatives to support and assist veterans with 83rd Division activities.

A recent phone conference was held to discuss these and other projects, and an email group has been started to make it easier for members with internet access to stay in touch with each other. You can keep up with these activities at the Legacy Chapter web-page:

<http://groups.google.com/group/83rd-infantry>

European Chapter

There are quite a few members of the Association in Europe, and if you attended the reunion this year you probably met a few of them. Our European members are quite active in promoting the 83rd Division, and they include Wilfried DeBacker and Eddy Monfort in Belgium, Gilles Billion and Jean Paul Pitou in France, Jurgen Ladebeck and Sam Magill in Germany, Claude Mathieu and Henry Scheitler in Luxembourg, and our newest European member, Thijs Hodiament in the Netherlands.

Gilles Billion and Jean Paul Pitou, are also members of the OHIO Group, a French association dedicated to preserving the memories of the 83rd

Division, and assisting 83rd Division veterans who travel to France. The OHIO group was founded in 1987, and has had legal status since 1995. Ten members, headed by Chairman Jean Francois Le Bouvier, do historical research on the 83rd Division and help families of 83rd veterans learn about the battles in France where the 83rd fought. The Group also works to retrace, using military reports, the path of the 83rd Division in France with local correspondents in Normandy, central France, the Swiss border, northeast France and Belgium. The Group also collects and refurbishes military equipment similar to that used by the 83rd Division and uses it to take part in re-enactments and other events celebrating the Liberation of French citizens in World War II. Headquarters of the OHIO Group is at 31 Rue Gouyon-Matignon, 35800 DINARD, FRANCE.

Gilles Billion is an expert on the Battle at St. Malo as well as Brest and Nantes. He has been doing research for 20 years. Gilles was my earliest European contact, and he has been a wonderful friend who has gone out of his way many times to provide me with information about the 83rd Division at St. Malo. Gilles has sent me books, photographs of 83rd Division monuments and stele, and has made trips to the St. Malo area to do research for questions that I asked him. On one occasion he traveled to the area south of Dinard to pinpoint the location of the 908th FA during the time that they were subjected to German counter-battery fire.

Jean Paul Pitou is an expert on Sainteny and the Battle of the Hedgerows in Normandy as well as the Loire Valley and Beaugency, where General Elster surrendered his 20,000 troops to General Macon. Jean Paul developed the display at Sainteny for the 60th Anniversary of the Liberation there, and has been asked to again provide the display next year for the 65th Anniversary of the Liberation. He has traveled all over the hedgerows and swamps where the 83rd fought in Normandy, and has provided much new information about specific locations of the 83rd, including pinpointing the locations of the 329th Infantry (Island Battle) and the 331st Infantry at the Le Ormeaux farmhouse on 4 July 1944.

In July, Jean Paul met with 83rd veteran Chet Kochan and his wife Mary at St. Mere Eglise, and provided them with a tour of Sainteny and other important locations in Normandy. At Sainteny, Mayor Michel LePourry presented Chet with a medal and introduced Chet to Pierre LePourry and Jacqueline Hodey, citizens of Sainteny who were there during the Liberation.

They also viewed Jean Paul's exhibit at the church, and then traveled to La Varde at Marchesiux, Carentan, Columbieres, Bricqueville, and Omaha Beach and Colleville American Cemetery where Chet and Mary rejoined their tour group.



Mary and Chet Kochan with the Mayor of Sainteny, Michel LePourry in front of the Church at Sainteny.



Chet and Mary Kochan with Jacqueline Hodey, a citizen of Sainteny at the time of the Liberation.

Fortunately, Jean Paul did not have to work on the day that Chet visited Normandy, so he was able to arrange the visit to Sainteny and other areas of Normandy with practically no advance notice. If there are any veterans and their families who are planning to visit Normandy next year for the 65th Anniversary of the Liberation, please contact me as early as possible, and I will get in touch with Jean Paul so that he has sufficient time to make plans.

This Hodiament is the newest Association member from Europe. This has adopted the grave of S/Sgt Benjamin Hynoski, E Company, 331st

Infantry, at Margareten Cemetery. Sgt. Hynoski was killed on March 2nd, 1945 in the vicinity of the Erft Canal near Neuss.

Another European member is Henry Scheitler in Luxembourg, who takes care of my Dad's grave at Henri Chappelle.

Eddy Monfort is writing a book about the actions of the 83rd Division in Belgium during January 1945, and he is looking for stories from veterans to include in the book. Eddy is also working with Robert Vandewiele (who is building a museum for Tony Vaccaro in Bihain) to hold a memorial for the Massacre at Ottre. This memorial celebration will take place on January 11, 2009 and will be held from Bihain-Ottre to Petit Langlir. They hope to see a lot of people coming to this, especially veterans and their families.

Wilfried DeBacker is working with a friend to restore an old Dodge command car. Although the car is in terrible condition, they have hopes that it can be restored and the car will be donated to a local school for a student project. Wilfried would like to see the car restored as an 83rd Division vehicle. The students would also learn a little bit about the 83rd Division. If anyone has a photograph of an 83rd command car, Wilfried would appreciate a copy. The restored vehicle would be used with Wilfried's jeep (the Ohio Express) in parades in Belgium and other European countries.



Here is the new stele at Beaugency Bridge commemorating the surrender of German General Elster and his 20,000 troops to General Macon. Photo: Jean Paul Pitou.

Dear Cliff,

Aug. 25, 2008

I've enclosed this article on Dad from years ago and a picture of him in WWII.



1979 ARTICLE ON DAD

RAY PIKE, Operations Div., PEWARS, loves the river. His work and his life revolve around it.

He began working on Lock #12 on the Ohio River 37 years ago, when he was only 16 years old. Because he loved the river and longed to work on it, Ray said he was 18 years old to get the job. He managed to delay showing his birth certificate until two years later, when he was of legal working age.

The first 23 years of his career were spent as a diver on the Ohio River. Ray has many pleasant memories of these years. "I loved the excitement and challenge of diving. You knew there was some danger involved but I guess that's what made it so thrilling," he recalled.

In the days when he worked as a diver, Ray was paid \$15 a day, in contrast to the \$50 a day now received by divers. According to Ray, "...even \$25 a day seemed like a lot of money in those days" More important than the pay was the extensive knowledge of the river that he gained during his years as a diver. "I remember working down in the dark, muddy river. You had to know the river and the different tools like the back of your hand to get the job done in the dark."

It was this knowledge of the river that earned Ray the job as a foreman of the district's repair party. As a foreman, Ray

supervises repair jobs done on the locks and dams throughout the district.

Ray Pike has worked on the river for so long that it reflects even in his personal life. His daughter was named after a boat called the "Nancy Jane". Ray and his wife Betty also have one son named Michael Joseph, after two of his friends who were killed in the war.

Although he left to serve four years in the Armed Forces with the Combat Engineers, Ray has worked in the Pittsburgh District his entire career. He has found a permanent home within the district and has a very positive attitude towards both the Corps and his job.

"I have really enjoyed working for the Corps and especially working out in the field." He added, "sometimes I think I might have liked a strictly office type job and then I realize the truth – my place is on the river."



**Raymond D. Pike, 83rd Thunderbolt Division
C Company, 308th Engineers**

Your friend, Mike

**Michael Pike, Descendant
6301 Camp Robinson Rd., Apt. 219
N. Little Rock, AR 72118**



"Thank You, Lou"
For All the Years of Dedicated Service

Lou,

Many thanks for all your help to me and my family as we researched the history of the 83rd Division for the documentary film, "Thank You, Eddie Hart." Your assistance was so valuable. You answered all my questions and sent me many, many helpful documents! Enjoy your retirement! **You are the BEST!**

Debbie Holloman and family

* * * * *

Lou,

Congratulations on your "official retirement" as 83rd Historian, although I know that you will always be active in preserving the history of the 83rd Division. I would like to nominate you as our "**Historian Emeritus**", an honor that you richly deserve. All my best wishes and thanks for all that you have done for the 83rd.

Dave Curry

* * * * *

Lou,

Thanks for the wonderful Job you have done as Historian for the 83rd Infantry Division. This is wishing the best of everything and enjoy your "Retirement".

Mrs. (Ames) Helen Miller

* * * * *

Lou,

I on behalf of the New Jersey Chapter, want to thank Lou Gomori for his excellent work in researching the 83rd Divisions history and his efforts for the Division to get it's 6th Battle Star which is so deserved. We will miss your Thunderbolt History Articles.
Respectfully yours,

Stan Bielen/New Jersey Chapter

* * * * *

Lou,

Thank you for all that you have done for the 83rd Association, especially the long campaign to get the Presidential Unit Citation, now in its final phase. If you run out of things to do in "retirement," come down to the National Archives in College Park - there are still 127 Hollinger boxes of 83rd records that need to be looked at!

Rudy Zamula, 83rd Archivist"

* * * * *

Lou

Being a relative newcomer to the organization, I have no anecdotes to recall but Lou you have been very helpful to me in my capacity as President. Your kindness and willingness to share your extensive knowledge of the 83rd Association enhanced my understanding of its internal operations. I am certain that whatever you choose to do next will be as successful as your tenure as Historian.

Mike Catrambone

* * * * *

Dear Lou;

I will always remember the fun we had, few years ago (2001), going back to Barby, Zerbst and to other parts we fought east of the Elbe River in WWII. The German veterans who opposed us in the spring of 1945, were having a reunion there and they invited us to join them for this celebration at a Restaurant and beer joint in Walternerenberg. Most of the Germans were fine people except for a few drunken die-hard Nazis who expressed the opinion that there, East of the Elbe, they could have won the war. You, with your knowledge of History, like a gentleman, stood up and educated them. That is

typical of you - let the truth be known.

You are my friend and a fine man. I thank you for all your help you gave me in the past. Have a good life my friend and I hope to be able to keep in touch with you for many years to come!

Eternally, Tony Vaccaro

* * * * *

Lou,

As you step down from the position of 83rd Historian we thank you for all your years of loyal service to the Association. You've been a great advocate and representative of the 83rd Infantry Division's story. Your Historian column was always interesting and informative. If anyone had an 83rd question you could always find the answer.

The members of the 83rd will always be grateful to you for all the time and effort you put into our quest for the Unit Citation, and it's not over yet.

We hope you will enjoy your "retirement" and now have time to start on your book.

We trust you will stay active with the 83rd. We may need your help in the future and will count on you when we get in trouble. Stay healthy, buddy!

Our relationship with you and Mary Ellen has been wonderful and hope it will continue for many years to come. "We were the best of the best!"

Cliff and Nancy

* * * * *

Many of you do not know or realize the painstaking work it takes to keep our Association going at these times as they are.

Lou Gomori, "Cuzin Lou", has worked as our Historian these past many years and has initiated our goal for recognition for crossing the Elbe River and being the first American Troops to meet the Russian Army on their assigned territory.

Lou, out of his own expense, went to Germany twice to share comradeship with the German Forces that we fought against, and relived the horrific battles we fought at their Army Reunions. They greeted him with open arms, and shared stories with one another.

"Cuzin Lou" Gomori, who was such the man has stepped down as Historian. He leaves behind him endless hours of work that he has done these past years. I can attest to his e-mails to me at all hours of the morning, and sharing all his information and knowledge. His successor has big shoes to fill. "Cuzin Lou", keep sending me material,

YOU ARE THE BEST.

Chuck Abdinoor "Cuzin Chuck"

* * * * *



The Famous 83rd Div. "Rag Tag Circus"

Sat., August 2nd – 10:30 am

The famous 83rd Division "Rag Tag Circus" will be recreated with a five-mile convoy from the Hotel Carlisle to the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center. It will take place as part of reunion activities on Saturday August 2nd. At the conclusion of the general session meeting at 10:30AM members of the Rag Tag Circus and any other 83rd veterans will mount restored WWII vehicles that will be parked in front of the hotel.

WWII vehicles scheduled to participate are a Military Police Harley Davidson WLA motorcycle, a Willys MB ¼ -ton jeep, a Dodge WC 52 ¾ -ton Weapons Carrier, a "captured" German Ford troop truck, a GMC 2½ -ton hard cab truck, a "captured" German Kubelwagon, and leading the column will be "Mickey" the authentic 83rd Division Jeep.

Around 10:50 the convoy will depart the hotel grounds and reenact the "Rag Tag Circus" as they convoy about five miles to the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center where everyone will dismount. Others may follow the convoy in their personal cars.

Around 11:30 we will have a small ceremony with Lt. Col. Meredith Bucher USA Rt., and associate member history teacher and 83rd jeep owner Jim Swope, in which we will recognize the achievements of the "Rag Tag Circus," and recognize the 83rd Division's only known "mechanical veteran". At this time all the members of the 83rd Division on site sign their names on the 83rd jeep. Around 12:30 we will remount and return to the Hotel Carlisle.

Brevet General Bob Keck has reiterated that the Memorial Service in the Windsor Ballroom will start promptly at 2:00PM!

* * * * *

"Mickey" The Authentic 83rd Infantry Division WW II Jeep



- * Type: 1/4 ton Jeep Willys
- * Hood Number: 20678560
- * Operation Served In: ETO
- * Date Restored: 1994

- * Serial Number: 421892
- * Date Of Delivery: January 30, 1945
- * Location Now: Reading, PA
- * Owner: Jim Swope

The vehicle data plate delivery date located on the glove box door is 1/30/45, Willys factory, Toledo, Ohio. Ironically, this date was also the 12th and last anniversary of Hitler's Third Reich and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 63rd and last birthday. During February of 1945 the jeep was shipped across

the Atlantic to Liege, Belgium where Warren Rangnow, Les Wolf, and 4 other members of the 83rd Division's 783rd Ordnance Company picked up six new jeeps for the division during the first week of March 1945 as recounted in Warren Rangnow's book *Hut Two*. Jeep hood number 20678560 (this number was found under several coats of paint) served with the 83rd prior to and during the Rhine crossing, the Central Europe campaign, occupation duties, and then was turned in at the huge depot at Rhiems, France when the division was shipped home. Major Metro Bodnyk, U.S.A.A.F., purchased the jeep from the Office of Foreign Liquidation Commission in Paris for \$250.00 and picked it out at Rhiems. After picking out a number of jeeps for Generals and Colonels he picked one out for himself, according to retired Lt. Col. Metro Bodnyk, the bumper markings read: 83rd Division. For years, the jeep was located in a barn on the Bodnyk farm near Kutztown Penna. It was discovered and restored in 1994 to 83rd Division markings. It is named in honor of Metro Bodnyk's brother Michael Bodnyk, known as "Mickey", a P-47 pilot who was killed in action in the European Theatre. The jeep now serves as a rolling 83rd memorial in parades, museum, and school events, as part of the Archbury Foundation's mission to Preserve and Present the American Experience from 1935-1945. After all- what is more symbolic of WW II America than the good 'ole jeep.



"Mickey" was with the 83rd division for the Central Europe Campaign, which took place from March 22nd to May 11th 1945. The 83rd rolled across the Rhine River on March 30th 1945 and then struck swiftly to clean out pockets of resistance, which had been by-passed by the second Armored Division. After eliminating these enemy strong points, the division crossed the Lippe River at Hamm Germany to aid in the encirclement of the Nazis hopelessly trapped in the Ruhr Pocket. On being relieved by other units the 83rd again smashed eastward in pursuit of the fleeing Wehrmacht toward the Russians advancing westward. The division advance ran beside and a little ahead of the 2nd Armored Division as part of the XXIXth Corps, 9th U.S. Army. Utilizing tanks, tank destroyers, motorbikes, captured German Army Vehicles, captured German civilian busses, trailers, and fire trucks, the division rode herd against the disorganized Nazis for 215 miles to the Elbe River Germany. The newspapers picked up on this use of captured transport and labeled the division "The Rag-Tag Circus." In accomplishing this feat the 83rd wrote a new chapter in infantry history as they liberated over 75,000 Allied prisoners-of-war, took some 34,000 Germans captive in the 14-day assault that carried them across four rivers into the very heart of Germany and gave the Allies the only permanent bridgehead across the Elbe. After winning the battle of Barby Germany on the west bank of the river, where German civilians fought side by side with Wehrmacht and SS troops in a futile effort to stem the 83rd advance, elements of the 329th Infantry made assault-boat crossings of the river. After the engineers established an Elbe bridgehead, named the Truman Bridge, the 83rd fought off several vicious enemy counter-attacks and defended the bridge itself against air attacks and floating mines. The pitched battles on the east bank of the Elbe took the 83rd as far as Zerst Germany, leaving Berlin a mere 30! miles away. It had been decided at the Yalta conference that the Russian's would take Berlin and General Eisenhower was not about to incur more American casualties for an objective he could not keep. So the 83rd division instead of attacking Berlin withdrew back across the Elbe River as the war came to an end. Historical footnote: members of the 83rd Division fought and died on the East side of the Elbe River technically making them participants in battle in WWII on the *Eastern Front!*

July 13, 2008

Dear Cliff:

I would like to submit the following letter and photo for publication in the next Thunderbolt.

Dear Friends,

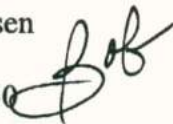
After reading my letter in a recent Thunderbolt, Mr. John Alley of Marion, Virginia wrote me of his service during WWII in the 331st, 83rd Div., Co. A. I called John and we enjoyed a lengthy phone conversation.

On July 10, 2008 my wife Deb and I traveled to Marion, Virginia to visit John. We located his home and were welcomed in by a remarkable, Christian gentleman of 92 years young. John and I enjoyed sharing stories of our experience while serving overseas with the 83rd. John was a member of Co. A, 331st and joined the 83rd at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, before going overseas, including involvement in the D Day Operation. I joined the 331st, Co. K as a replacement during the Bulge. I was wounded on April 2, 1945 and he was wounded on April 3, 1945.

Sharing photos, life stories, war stories and dinner out at Kentucky Fried Chicken made for a delightful afternoon.

A photo of John (Left) (92 yrs.) and me (Right) (82 yrs.) in front of his home.

O. Robert (Bob) Freesen
1572 Liberty Road
Jacksonville, IL 62650



July 20, 2008

Dear Cliff:

I would like to submit the following letter and photo for publication in the next Thunderbolt:

Dear Friends,

I am please to write again that after reading my letter in a prior Thunderbolt, I received the attached correspondence from Mr. Raymond Morrison of Georgetown, KY.

We recently traveled east to visit family and had the great privilege of stopping and visiting with Raymond and his lovely wife Mary Betty. They welcomed us into their home and we shared stories of not only our war experiences, but of our lives after the war. The next morning we enjoyed a breakfast out at Cracker Barrel.

A photo of Raymond (right) (86 yrs.) and me (left) (82 yrs.) in Raymond's Georgetown, KY home.

O. Robert (Bob) Freesen
1572 Liberty Road
Jacksonville, IL 62650
Co. K, 331st

Bob



83rd Infantry Division Association, Inc. approves Legacy Chapter

From Dave Dimmick, Descendant member - 217/473-9524 davedimmick@irtc.net

On August 2, 2008 at the General session of the 83rd Infantry Division Association Annual meeting in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the members approved a petition presented by Judge Advocate and descendant member John Markuns to form a Legacy Chapter of the Association.

Webster defines legacy as something received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past. In 1946, the 83rd ID was deactivated by the United States Army. The 83rd as with many other divisions during WW II had completed their assigned mission to defeat the threat to our freedoms and therefore was deactivated. The 83rd may have been deactivated but it was not disbanded as the 83rd Infantry Division Association, Inc. was chartered in the same year and has held 62 consecutive annual reunions to date. Since there are no new young veteran members coming into the 83rd Association ranks as there are with active divisions such as the 82nd Airborne, 10th Mountain and other divisions. the majority of new 83rd membership has been from descendants. However, I am pleased to report there have been several first time WW II veteran members in recent years.

Father time ticks away at all of us. Descendants of the 83rd thought it was overdue to form a group to help preserve and protect the 83rd legacy of courage, personal sacrifice, ultimate sacrifice, resilience, inventiveness, patriotism, duty, and honor for unborn generations to come. Ellsworth Massie, 83rd Chaplain for many decades so eloquently referred to the Legacy Chapter as "A Continuation of the Spirit." In a nutshell, this should be our goal in the present and as we look into the future.

Granted, the newly formed 83rd Legacy chapter is a work in progress. It will take a great deal of commitment, communication, and heart to develop a network and an alliance toward a common goal of preserving the legacy of this division and the men who got it done during WW II.

At a steering group meeting of 13 legacy chapter members held in Carlisle, one of the ways to get this chapter rolling may be to identify 83rd representatives by state. The State Representatives would serve as points of contact within the assigned state to support and assist primarily our regular/veteran members or their widows in such situations as reunion information, transportation logistics, explaining ways to preserve 83rd history or access it, or just helping them stay in contact with their buddies. The depth of involvement may if desired, involve other aspects such as oral histories, independent research, sharing of independent research, or efforts to gain recognition for the 83rd Division as a whole. We are working to secure a contact list of current 83rd members by state which may be assigned in some cases geographically to those who agree to serve as a State Representative. A list of those who thus far have made a commitment to our efforts accompanies this report.

As the assigned state representative coordinator in unison with acting Chairman John Markuns and Administrative Coordinator Mary Jean Houlahan, I am seeking current descendant members of the 83rd Association or those who desire to be a descendant member of the 83rd to serve as a State Representative for the legacy chapter. This WW II generation set an example for all of us to follow. I hope you feel as I that it is our duty to preserve it. Feel free to contact me at the above cell # or preferably via email.

(If you read this far thank a teacher and since it's in English thank a soldier.)

Sincerely,

Dave Dimmick
State Representative Coordinator, Legacy Chapter
83rd Infantry Division Association, Inc.

**83RD LEGACY CHAPTER
STATE REPRESENTATIVES**

<u>STATE</u>	<u>ABV.</u>	<u>Vets</u>	<u>Wid</u>	<u>Desc</u>	<u>Assoc.</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
ALABAMA	AL	3				3
ALASKA	AK	1				1
ARIZONA	AZ	4				4
ARKANSAS	AR			2		2
CALIFORNIA	CA	12		5	1	18
COLORADO	CO	2				2
CONNECTICUT	CT	7	1	1		9
DELAWARE	DE	3				3
FLORIDA	FL	33		8		41
GEORGIA	GA	4				4
IDAHO	ID	2				2
ILLINOIS	IL	12	1	4	1	18
INDIANA	IN	14	5	6	2	27
IOWA	IA	2	1			3
KANSAS	KS	2		1		3
KENTUCKY	KY	18		1		19
LOUISIANA	LA	2				2
MAINE	ME	2		1		3
MARYLAND	MD	10	1	6		17
MASSACHUSETTS	MA	15	1	9	2	27
MICHIGAN	MI	16	1	1		18
MINNESOTA	MN	4		2		6
MISSISSIPPI	MS	1			1	2
MISSOURI	MO	4		1		5
NEBRASKA	NE	3				3
NEW HAMPSHIRE	NH	7		4	1	12
NEW JERSEY	NJ	25	1	5		31
NEW YORK	NY	22	1	2	2	27
NORTH CAROLINA	NC	17	3	4	2	26
OHIO	OH	47		9		56
OKLAHOMA	OK	3		1		4
OREGON	OR	2		1		3
PENNSYLVANIA	PA	55	3	9	6	73
RHODE ISLAND	RI	9	2	2		13
SOUTH CAROLINA	SC	5	3	2		10
SOUTH DAKOTA	SD	1				1
TENNESSEE	TN	9	4	7		20
TEXAS	TX	9		7		16
VERMONT	VT	1				1
VIRGINIA	VA	12		5	1	18
WASHINGTON	WA	5		1		6
WEST VIRGINIA	WV	7		1		8
WISCONSIN	WI	7		1		8
		419	28	109	19	575



MEMORIES

To Atterbury we came by train
Where soon we'd be introduced to pain

A few EM's however most were draftees
We later were marched right down to our knees

Our cadre was tough from Fort Riley they came
They learned our States and our last names

Down they came to the squadroom yelling like sin
To let us know all Hell would begin

On to breakfast we went at a trot
In one door a few gulps and out

Back to the barracks to wield a fast map
The Lt. pops in for a quick look about

Our Platoon Sgt. yells fall out front and fall in
Words we were to hear again and again

That's before we'd be properly dressed
For whatever Training Manual was to be addressed

The number of Uniform changes unknown
Subject to whatever flags were flown

This was not to be blamed on our Colonel however
As Division Headquarters liked to play with the weather

After four or five changes we're on our way
Clad in boots and raincoats on a dry sunny day

C. R. Bob Whitcomb
Co. F 329th Inf. 83rd Div.

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>
Aigner, Riley	L Co., 329 Reg.	Bob Keck, Anita Randall
Barrett, Fred (Capt.)	Commander, Co D, 330th	His Friend Willis M. McKeon
Bensimon, Albert Leon	783rd Ordinance	B. John Prinzi
Durand, Rosario (Ray)	M Co., 331st	Ann Durand (wife)
Holt, Edwin Graves	HQ, 329th	Son, Edwin
Johnson, Leslie T.	330th, CN Co.	Ellen Johnson (wife)
Palazzola, Vito	G Co., 329th Inf.	Daughter, Niece
Rodenberg, Warren "Rody"	Alpha Co., 329th	Al Shrawder
Rogers, Everett E.	K Co., 331st	Normand Malo, Eilene McGee George Baker Sr., Al Belvedere Herbert Gibson
Whitcomb, Robert "Bob"	F Co., 329th	G. Russell Whitehead
Housley, Dale J.	G Co., 331st	Don Housley, Son



Riley E. Aigner



Vito Palazzola

Cliff,

6-05-08

I have had this book for a while and decided to start on it. It really has some strange stories: then I saw the one enclosed and wanted to let you know about it.

I'm always keeping an eye out for any stories because it isn't a long article, do you have room for it in an up-coming issue of the Thunderbolt.

Thank you for keeping up the Thunderbolt.

Richard E. Ammon Jr., Descendant

U.S. Navy Retired

3652 Hedgewood Dr., Winter Park, FL 32792-3028

"A Publisher Visits the Front"

Early in May 1945, with the once-vaunted German Wehrmacht crumbling into chaos and peace in Europe only days away, Amon Carter, Sr. the publisher of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* in Texas, was among a group of sixteen leading U.S. newspaper executives who had been asked by Secretary of War Henry Stimson to come to Europe especially to view the concentration camps.

Publisher Carter had a deep personal interest in the outcome of the war: His son, Lieutenant Amon Carter, Jr., had been a German prisoner of war since the day General (later Field Marshal) Erwin Rommel's famed Afrika Korps overran young Carter's 1st Armored Division battalion at Faid Pass in North Africa in February 1943. In common with many American parents whose sons had been captured during the war, Carter, Sr., had long had to bear a gnawing anguish: Was his POW son dead or alive?

One stop in the tour for publisher Carter and the other media executives was lunch with Lieutenant General William "Big Bill" Simpson's U.S. Ninth Army. Simpson's outfit was dug in north to south, along the Elbe River, the geographical landmark ninety miles west of Berlin which had been chosen by SHAEF as the stop line for the American advance into the battered Third Reich.

Just as the luncheon, held at the headquarters of Major General Robert C. Macon's 83rd "Thunderbolt" Infantry Division, broke up and the media executives walked out the door, a vehicle carrying a small group of just-liberated American POW's came to a halt in front of the building. One of those who climbed out was Lieutenant Amon Carter, Jr., who, in disbelief, came face-to-face with his father.

As the Texas publisher stood rooted in astonishment, the young lieutenant strolled up to him and said quietly: Well, here I am, Dad."

Choking with emotion, the elder Carter silently embraced his son and held him tightly, patting the back of his son's head.

This story taken from the book *Unexplained Mysteries of World War II* by William B. Breuer

Letter to the Editor

June 21, 08

Dear Nancy & Cliff,

My niece sent me this lovely work and I think you may want to put it in the Thunderbolt. Hope you folks are doing well, as the years just seem to race by -

Respectfully,

Henry & Esther Hauser

Before You Go

Quietly you've all turned gray, You did your job, you saved our way,
Our life and freedom you preserved, We thanked you less than you deserved,
You never boasted, bragged or asked for Adulation of your past,
You did the job you knew was right, and quietly
You cry at night
For bodies maimed and comrades lost, For sights beyond our furthest thoughts.
For what you've lived and felt and seen, For what the cost of freedom means.
You leave us blessed with every breath, That cost you arms and legs and death.
You won the worst and greatest war
We owe you more. We owe you more.
Thank you for your wondrous feats, For open speech and quiet streets
For worship as we choose to pray, For preservation of our way.
Before you go we need to show that in your silence we still know
What you accomplished and what you did for who we are and how we live
So go with love from wives and sons and daughters of a job well done
From kids who've never seen a tank, We give you thanks, We give you thanks.
For homes and jobs and baseball games
For many colors, many names
You saved our lives and we're still free from shining sea to shining sea,
Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.
Go in peace

Written by Sam Bierstock



War veterans to recreate famous drive to Berlin

83rd Infantry Division to hold 62nd reunion this week

By Joseph Cress, Sentinel Reporter, July 31, 2008

Last updated: Thursday, July 31, 2008 11:05 AM EDT

The Army's 83rd Infantry Division, renowned as the Thunderbolt Division, will recreate its 1945 "Rag Tag Circus" dash toward Berlin when it holds its 62nd annual reunion Saturday at the Hotel Carlisle. World War II veterans of the unit, together with friends and descendants of division members, will participate in a five-mile convoy from the hotel to the Carlisle Barracks Post Exchange Complex starting at 10:30 a.m. The veterans will mount restored World War II vehicles in front of the hotel and pose for photos before the convoy departs at 10:50 a.m. on the journey to recreate the lightning advance.

In late March 1945, the division received orders to turn east from Germany's Ruhr River and race toward Berlin. GIs commandeered anything on wheels from the surrounding countryside in a dash across northern Germany that war correspondents described as the "Rag Tag Circus." The vehicles included tanks, tank destroyers, motor bikes, captured Germany Army vehicles and captured civilian buses, trailers and fire trucks.

Period vehicles

World War II-era vehicles scheduled to participate in the convoy include a Harley Davidson WLA motorcycle used by military police, a Willys MB Jeep, a Dodge WC weapons carrier, a "captured" German Ford troop truck, a GMC hard cab truck and a "captured" German Kubelwagen. Leading the column will be "Mickey," a restored Willys Jeep which was actually assigned to the 83rd Division and used in its drive toward Berlin. The vehicle is owned by World War II re-enactor and history teacher Jim Swope of Reading.

About 11:30 a.m., a small ceremony will recognize the achievements of the "Rag Tag Circus" and the division's only known surviving "mechanical veteran." Division members will then sign their names on "Mickey," which now serves as a rolling memorial in parades and museum/school events as part of the Archbury Foundation's mission to "Preserve and Present the American Experience from 1935-45."

Mad dash

In 1945, the Thunderbolts fought their way across 280 miles in a span of 14 days as unit after unit leap-frogged and flanked one another to continuously press the attack east, outracing armored units to the Elbe River. There, the division fought its way across the Elbe on April 13, 1945 and advanced to within 40 miles of Berlin to become the only American division to fight in the Eastern Front during the war.

Along the way, they liberated 75,000 Allied prisoners of war and took 34,000 Germans prisoner. The lightning drive to the Elbe bridgehead and beyond earned division members 289 Bronze Stars, 132 Silver Stars, one Distinguished Service Cross and one Legion of Merit.

The dash was immortalized in the book "The Last Battle" by Cornelius Ryan, author of the books "The Longest Day" and "A Bridge Too Far." "The Rag Tag Circus" was labeled by Lt. Gen. Raymond S. McLain in a recommendation for a Presidential Unit Citation.

The unit never won the citation, despite documentation found in the National Archives noting Army Commander Lt. General W.H. Simpson had formally recommended the division for the honor. Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., recently submitted his second application to the Army's Military Award Branch to recognize the division, which was de-activated after World War II.



Edwin G. Holt (Lt. Col., U.S. Army)

Edwin G. Holt (Lt Col, US Army) passed away in Thousand Oaks on June 2nd and went to eternal peace with the Lord. He was deeply loved by his family and friends. He was a friend, counselor, and leader to all who knew him and will be greatly missed.

Mr. Holt was born in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1914. He graduated from Davidson College in 1935 with a commission as an officer in the United States Army. He married Dorothy Creech of Smithfield, North Carolina, and went to work in New York City for Cone Mills, one of the world's largest textile companies. Mr. Holt was recalled in 1942 by the Army and assigned to the 329th Regiment, 83rd Division for training in preparation for the invasion of Europe. He landed at Normandy, commanded troops and fought through the hedgerows near Carentan and was wounded in the bloody fighting. After recovering from his wounds, he returned to France and commanded two Allied prison of war camps holding over 100,000 prisoners. He is the recipient of numerous medals and awards, including the Combat Infantry Medal, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, Purple Heart, Bronze Star and Battle Ribbons with Two Stars.

After the war, he returned to work for Cone Mills, living in New Orleans, then Dallas, and was promoted to vice president and national sales manager in New York City. He lived in Summit, New Jersey from 1951 to 1981 and was a member of Central Presbyterian Church and Canoe Brook Country Club. He retired after a 44-year career at Cone Mills and moved to Thousand Oaks, California in 1981 so the he and his wife Dorothy could be near their son's family.

After moving to Thousand Oaks, he enjoyed playing golf at North Ranch Country Club and worshipping with friends and family at Emmanuel Presbyterian Church. He was active in the Sergeant Michael A. DiRaimondo Chapter of Military Order of the Purple Heart and the Conejo Valley Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars, and received the Patrick Henry Medal for Patriotism. His loving wife Dorothy passed away in 1999.

Edwin was blessed with a very close relationship with his family and friends, and with his faith. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. He was a strong leader but did not seek to draw attention to himself. He is survived by his son Edwin C. Holt and his wife Susan, of Thousand Oaks, his grandson Edwin L. Holt of Irvine, and his granddaughter Kari Endries (Mrs. Robert) and her sons Alexander and Jack of Danville, California.

Funeral services will be held in Burlington, North Carolina under the direction of Rich & Thompson on Saturday, June 7th, and a Memorial Service will be held at Emmanuel Presbyterian Church in Thousand Oaks at 4 pm on Tuesday, June 10th. Donations in his name may be made to Emmanuel Presbyterian Church or the Military Order of the World Wars.

Raising the flag for our heroes in uniform

By Ed Jones

By joint resolution of Congress, Flag Day was celebrated in the United States on June 14, 1924, with the official Pledge of Allegiance that is identical to the one we say today, with the exception of the phrase "under God," which was added in 1954.

Americans have long venerated the Stars and Stripes, and many have fought and many have died under that banner.

One such serviceman, who was one of our "Greatest Generation," was Edwin G. Holt of Thousand Oaks, recently deceased. His story is typical of many but more dangerous and courageous than most. In fact, in reading his memoirs, one gets the feeling that he had lived on borrowed time since June 6, 1944 — D-Day.

Born in North Carolina in 1914, Holt received his bachelor's degree from Davidson College in Charlotte in 1935, which included ROTC training. By December 1941, he was beginning to do well in business and was married with a 2-year-old child when Pearl Harbor occurred.

Within a month, he received orders to report to Fort McClellan, Ala., as a first lieutenant in the infantry. Following two years of training in which he was promoted to the rank of captain, he and his group shipped out to England on April 1, 1944, in preparation for D-Day.

During training there, he made the rank of major, and by early July, he was to receive a battlefield commission in France of lieutenant colonel because of the leadership

Ed Holt is shown

plotting — in this 1944 photo

taken by an

Army combat

photographer

— the final

strategy for

relieving the

101st Airborne

Division at

Carentan. Holt

was 29 years

old at the time.

An Army censor

whited out the

map after the

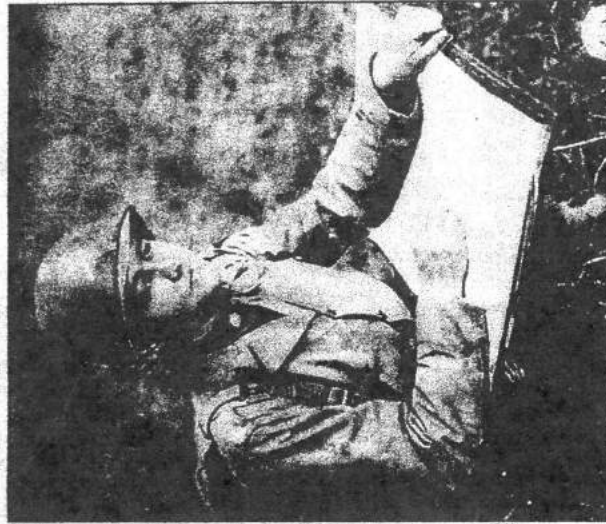
photograph was

taken fearing it

might fall into

enemy hands.

Photo courtesy of Ed Holt Jr.



he had shown and the tragic loss of intermediate officers — almost overnight he was in command of 5,000 men.

A detailed rendition of Holt's near-death experiences would fill many news pages of The Star. Shortly after June 6, his unit, the 329th Infantry of the 83rd Division, landed on Omaha Beach with the objective of relieving the 101st Division slightly inland at Carentan.

This mission was vital because the Germans were in strong counterattack mode, with their best SS Panzer divisions, for the purpose of cutting supply lines and pushing our troops back into the sea. And all of this was complicated by the difficult terrain: numerous hedgerows that had to be breached,

rivers that had to be crossed and often a sea of mud to struggle through.

Holt appraised himself of the situation and spent the next three to four weeks in the middle of a continuous firefight almost beyond description. Nothing seemed to go as planned; it was mainly reaction rather than planned action. There was no continuous battle line. At times he had the enemy on either side, and occasionally at his rear.

Here are a few anecdotes:

— At one point, Holt was talking to officers on either side, and they were simultaneously hit by enemy fire, leaving one killed and the other wounded.

— Holt's driver pulled their jeep under a tree for cover, and Holt's life was saved when one of his

troops shot a sniper out of the tree who was about to shoot down on him.

— On checking out a farmhouse, he thought to first stick his helmet on the end of his rifle and push it through a doorway; it was promptly shot off.

— A large shell exploded 15 feet behind him, knocking him some 10 feet in the air.

— One night, he and his men became completely surrounded by the enemy, but somehow they fought their way out by morning.

By the time Carentan was taken and the area secured, the Army Corps had sustained thousands of casualties. While Holt's story is more dramatic than most, I believe it is a good analogue for the typical GI of that period. Coming from civilian life with minimal training and thrown into savage conflict, with ingenuity and courage, they were able to sustain themselves and eventually carry the day.

But I believe that the underlying trait from which all else sprang was the unquestioning patriotism and love of country that inspired them on to victory.

Today, as we celebrate Flag Day, let us raise Old Glory high in recognition of Edwin G. Holt and all the other heroes who have fought valiantly under that ensign so that we might live in freedom.

— Ed Jones of Westlake Village is a political science professor at Piers College, which is part of the Los Angeles Community College District, in Woodland Hills. He is also a former Thousand Oaks councilman and Ventura County supervisor.



RAYMOND MORRISON
309 AZTEC TRL
GEORGETOWN, KY 40324-1063

May 7, 2008

Mr Bob Freesen
1572 Liberty Road
Jacksonville, Ill. 62650

Dear Comrade:

Saw your letter in the spring issue of the Thunderbolt magazine and decided to get in contact with you.

I took my basic training at Ft. Sill, Okla. in field artillery, then moved to camp Maxie, Texas for several months, then to Camp Gruber, Okla. before being called for overseas service. The first week in Jan. 45 I boarded the Queen Elizabeth in Baltimore, Maryland for Europe. After several days at sea we landed in Glasgow, Scotland and moved by train through England to South Hampton for crossing the channel to La Harve France. Two days later we boarded a train of box cars at night. It was so cold the car doors froze shut.

I joined the 83rd in Hq. Btry, 322nd F. A. as a replacement. The division had just been in the battle of the Bulge and lost a lot of troops. From there I was with them all the way to the Elbe River going across the Truman Bridge over the Elbe at Barby.

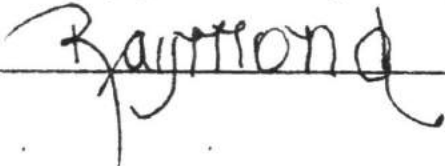
During Jan. & Feb. 45 I got my feet and hands frost bitten but would go on sick call, as they were taking them out of the hospital for inf. replacements. So I just stuck it out,

After V. E. day, they disbanded the division, I transferred into military Government in Munich and had a office job until my points came up to come home. At La Harve I boarded a Victory ship for a six day trip to New York.

I went into the army as a private and returned home as a S/Sgt and was very lucky to come back home.

I retired in 87 as President of one of the local banks here and enjoy a slow and peaceful life at 86.

Enjoyed reading about you.



**WOULD YOU LIKE A ROSTER OF THE
2008 MEMBERSHIP?**

This Roster includes all members who have paid their dues for 2008 and also includes their units.

The cost is \$6.00 plus \$2.00 postage & handling. Send your \$8.00 check to-

**83rd INFANTRY DIV. ASSN., INC.
P. O. BOX 406
ALTON BAY, NH 03810-0406**

**2009 Reunion will be held at
Dolce Valley Forge
King of Prussia, PA
www.dolce-valley-hotel.com
610-337-1200
August 12 - 15, 2009**

**2009 Membership Dues (\$25)
were
Due August 1, 2008**

**** Please check the date on
Your Membership Card ****

THUNDERBOLT DEADLINES

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

Return Address-
83rd Infantry Div. Assn.
P.O. Box 406
Alton Bay, NH 03810-0406



"Change Service Requested" 1

TO:

John N. Leonard
3rd HQ 331st
8 Elizabeth St.
Greenville PA 16125

724-
588-
6479

LEON008 161252017 1C08 04 12/15/08
RETURN TO SENDER
LEONARD
110 FREDONIA RD
GREENVILLE PA 16125-7911

Not checked Sent Card New address

RETURN TO SENDER

PLEASE E



\$25.00 (YEARLY MEMBERSHIP DUES)

Payable to and Mail to:

**83RD INFANTRY DIV. ASSN.
P.O. BOX 406
ALTON BAY, NH 03810-0406**

RENEWAL NEW

NAME (please print) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

Company _____ Regiment _____ 83rd Division

Phone _____ e-mail _____

DESCENDANT ASSOCIATE OTHER

Name of 83rd Division Member _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

IMPORTANT

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 change to the Association Office address above and not to someone else. Thank you for your cooperation. **Send old and new addresses.**