



THUNDERBOLT

83rd INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, Inc.
WORLD WAR II

Vol. 64 Issue No. 2

Spring Issue 2009

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



King of Prussia, PA

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THE THUNDERBOLT

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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*
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1963 Manuel C. Martin*	1980 Samuel Klippa*	1997 Keith Davidson*	

*Denotes Deceased



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

MIKE CATRAMBONE

Dear Fellow Thunderbolts and Descendants,

Well, here we are on the threshold of another Spring. I know some of you are still digging out of the winter-wonderland stuff, but pitchers and catchers have reported to Spring camp and the games have begun. That also means we need to think seriously about our 63rd Annual Reunion at Valley Forge. Remember to circle these dates on your calendar--Aug. 12-16, 2009.

First Vice President Carmella Catrambone and I have been working diligently to make sure we have crossed all the t's and dotted all the i's. We think we have organized a great Reunion which will be as pleasurable and unforgettable as any you may have attended in the past.

For openers, the Dolce Valley Forge Hotel has been completely renovated. After almost a full year of work it is now a new 4-star hotel. You will love it. All the rooms have been enlarged and beautifully re-decorated and each and every facet of the hotel has been carefully laid out for your convenience. The food is excellent and the service is above reproach. I have never been in a hotel where the personnel works as hard as these people do to make sure everything is as you would like it to be.

At top right is a sample picture of a guest room.

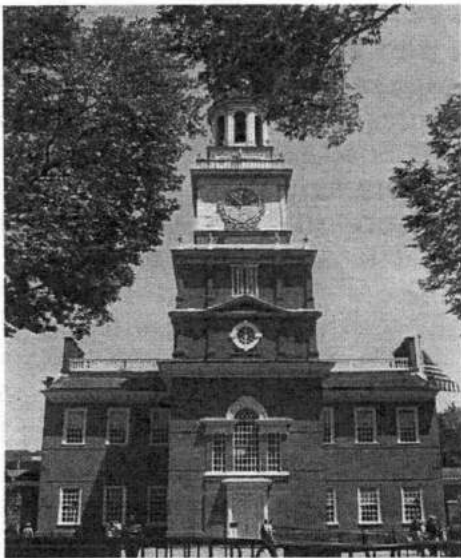


Thanks to Chuck Abdinoor and Cliff Wooldridge, who charmed management into a state of euphoria, we have an unbelievable room rate with ample free parking. We have an entire wing of the hotel at our disposal for all our activities. Instead of going from place to place or floor to floor for our various functions everything will be within easy walking distance of each other. No road signs or directions will be necessary. Once you are in the wing area you won't have to leave for any activities.

Our tours will take us to Historic Philadelphia and Valley Forge National Park. We will have several buses, one of which will be a lift coach to accommodate those of you who are wheelchair bound. Those persons who need that service and have been reluctant to take the tours can re-consider and sign up for one or two. We have tried to arrange the tours so that on-and-off times are held to a minimum. Informative tour guides are being provided for each bus for the entire tour thereby eliminating dead space which often occurs while traveling to and from a location.

This year we are going to handle our tours differently. Instead of everyone waiting in the heat for all the buses to be loaded or unloaded each bus will go its separate way. When your bus is loaded, it will take off on its leg of the tour. All buses will not be at the same spot at the same time. We will have a sign-in sheet for each bus if you have a specific person or persons with whom you would like to travel on the tour. That will eliminate a lot of waiting around for the "other" buses and could reduce the length of the lines at any given venue.

Our Philadelphia Tour on Thursday will be one which those of you interested in history will enjoy. Of course we will pay our respects to our national symbol, the Liberty Bell, in its lavish new home. We would love to be able to tell you we have eliminated the security line there but I am afraid that will never happen in our lifetime. But, it all becomes worthwhile when you stand right next to the Bell and the full impact of where you are begins to dawn on you. Try to tell me you won't get goose bumps!



Across the street from the Liberty Bell building we will visit Independence Hall. This is where much of the heavy lifting was done to establish our fledgling country. You may have read about all this in the history books, but when you stand on the spot where it all transpired something great happens. Your heartbeat quickens, your adrenaline begins to flow, and you can almost feel the tension that must have been in that small room as our Founding Fathers argued and planned our future.

From there we will go to the newly opened National Constitution Center. This one will knock your socks off. You can read all those documents you have always heard about, learn more about them than you really wanted to know, and have a chance to have yourself photographed signing the Constitution. When you walk into a room where you are dwarfed by more-than-life-size replicas of famous persons discussing the

Constitution, your heart will beat faster and your chest will swell with pride. (Bring your camera.)

You can have lunch there at the cafeteria while waiting for your tour bus to pick you up for the City of Philadelphia Tour. We have eliminated the last row on the bus so that everyone has a chance to see what the tour guide is talking about.

Of course, you won't see ALL of the Philadelphia sights. You can do that by extending your vacation time by coming in a few days early or staying past our reunion time. Dolce Valley Forge has graciously extended the room rate several days to accommodate those who want to take advantage of an opportunity to visit this historical venue with your family. If you have access to a computer, please go to the following web site <http://www.ushistory.org/tour/tour.html> and you will be introduced to the wonders of historic Philadelphia. You will see why no one can see all of it in a half day. A one day walking tour of center city is almost a must to really get the feel of the history of the City of Brotherly Love.

Friday's tour will take us to the Valley Forge National Park. Buses will pick us up at the hotel and take us directly to Valley Forge National Park. We will have professional tour guides on each bus who will stay with us for the entire tour of the park. After the tour, we will be taken to the Valley Forge Military Academy and College for lunch. After lunch in the Eisenhower Building, we will go to the Battle of the Bulge Monument adjacent to the lunch area where we will conduct a short wreath dedication. We have arranged chairs for those who need them. The proceedings will be visible from the Eisenhower Building for anyone who would prefer to remain indoors during the ceremony. Following that we will be returned to the hotel and the rest of the day will be free.

In past reunions we had some complaints about lack of free time so we have tried to allow for that when we organized the trips. By using the single bus arrangement we hope to better utilize our tour time, thus allowing

more free time back at the hotel. Please think seriously about coming on our two tours. We know you will enjoy them immensely.

Friday evening at 7:30 we have the pleasure of presenting a special guest to entertain us. Mr. Joseph Soprani is an accordion virtuoso whose career spans many years. We know you will find his appearance enjoyable as well as informative. As a young man he won numerous talent shows, including the Ed Sullivan Show. At age 14 he won the Arthur Godfrey talent show which many of us remember fondly. Mr. Soprani was too young to serve in WWII but served the troops as a member of a USO tour group. He was with a group which made an unscheduled ocean landing while traveling to a USO function. Mr. Soprani will explain. When he was old enough he joined the service and was a soloist with the United States Air Force Band. He has appeared in concerts with several symphony orchestras as well as opening for Bon Jovi in some of his appearances. Joe has also accompanied Luciano Pavarotti in his local concerts. You will enjoy Joe's talents immensely. Bring your song-sheet memory and singing voice with you for a sing-along.

The hotel restaurant has great food and the service is excellent. Since the hotel restaurant prices may seem excessive to some, Carmella and I checked out the surrounding area and found several places where the food is good and the prices are reasonable. We will have a flyer at the check-in table for those of you who would prefer a choice. The Dolce Hotel also provides free shuttle service to the World's Largest Mall (not under one roof) where there are many restaurants which can provide you with all the varieties of food and service you desire.

We would like to see all of you at this reunion but know that is impossible. However, please keep this one in mind when making your vacation plans. Take care, and have a great summer.

Michael Catrambone
President
2009 Reunion

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

CHUCK ABDINOOR

Hello Everyone,

Sincerely hope all is well. Here we are in February and the weeks are getting closer for King of Prussia. I must remind all that our host hotel, the Dolce Hotel and Conference Center has had a major rehab, and will be completed for our Reunion. Mike and Mell regularly check in, and report back that all is in readiness for our 63rd reunion. We are in a choice location, although I do not see many people taking advantage of that, since our itinerary is such that there will be ample time in the afternoon for shoppers to browse at their leisure. The Hotel has shuttle service for those that want to partake in this.

On a sad note, we lost one of our past presidents, that being Al Shrawder. He will be missed along with our other deceased members.

John Markuns, our Judge Advocate had been contemplating retiring, but has decided to stay one more year as a Federal Judge. He gives us five to eight hours out of his busy schedule a week to take care of our business. He lives ten miles from me, so Cliff and I usually meet for lunch with John and discuss issues and business pertinent to our Association. The Executive Board has expressed on holding our Board meeting in Lincoln, New Hampshire. We have been contacted by the Beacon Resort. This is a family resort that is nestled in the heart of the White Mountains. You all may remember the Old Man of the Mountain. This has been long gone, it was a natural rock formation of a man's head, through the years it has finally broke apart from its formation. Although the signs still point to the area, it is no more. Most of the National Officers live in the New England area, so it would be feasible to hold it there, but this is just the planning stage. Incidentally, I just noticed that I am the oldest Past President that is still here, hopefully that I can stay a few more years.

PLEASE send in your dues, Cliff is on my back.

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

FROM THE EDITOR

CLIFF WOOLDRIDGE

Well, I've had some health issues this winter but I'm on the mend. I ended up requiring eye surgery to reduce the pressure in my right eye caused by glaucoma. At one point I was taking 9 eye drops a day and was unable to drive. But I'm back to normal again thanks to two caring and skilled eye surgeons.

Mike and Carmella Catrambone are working hard to give us a fantastic reunion in Valley Forge! They have some great ideas!

The Hotel and Activity Registration Forms for this year's reunion in King of Prussia are included in this Thunderbolt. Please complete and return ASAP to help us get an idea of how many to expect.

Descendants - Would you like to join other descendants again this year in saying "**Thank you**" in a special way to those who sacrificed so much for us all? We are looking for as many descendants as possible to include their names on a special "**Thank You**" page (or pages) in the Program Book for our 63rd Reunion.

All names will be listed under the caption, "**Thank you to the members of the 83rd Infantry Division for our precious freedom and your sacrifice for us all.**" (Sample page from the 61st Reunion enclosed)

Veterans - See the Special Descendant page in this issue and be sure to **PASS IT ON TO YOUR CHILDREN** and their families. **DON'T LET YOUR CHILDREN MISS OUT ON THIS SPECIAL "THANK YOU"** that will be published in the Reunion Program Book and displayed in the Hospitality Room in King of Prussia for all to see.

All proceeds will be used to help defray the cost of the buses, equipped with wheelchair lifts, needed at the reunion. See form elsewhere in this issue.

Well, here I go again - We have many members who have not paid their membership dues. If you want to keep the Association going and continue receiving the Thunderbolt, please pay your Dues - \$25. Dues for 2009 were payable in August of 2008.

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!

At this year's reunion we will be presenting the second group of flags for Sainteny. We are still accepting donations to cover the cost of these flags. See the sign-up sheet elsewhere in this issue.

Would you like to have a buddy call you or do you know of a veteran who would like a call? Or would you like to call a buddy? I'd like to compile a list of telephone numbers of anyone who is interested.



I think we should 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. **All you have to do is say "Hi, I was in the 83rd" and then just listen.**

Remember - Pay Your Dues!

Remember - Pay Your Dues!

Cliff Wooldridge

Editor's Note: Sadly, after this issue was ready for press, we learned of the passing of Al Shrawder and Joe Camp who are mentioned in reports included in this issue.

CHAPTERS

BOSTON CHAPTER NEWS

TONY PIANTEDOSI

CLEVELAND CHAPTER NEWS

BOB GROBELNY

DIXIE CHAPTER NEWS

ELLSWORTH MASSIE

Dixie - Gatlinburg, Tenn - 2008

Every time we meet we make news! Attendance is the gigantic item this year!

We have gone from "hundreds to dozens" in attending our Christmas Meet. It's 30+ years we've met at the same hotel. Carol Brown and his wife hosted our meet for many years. Frank and Flo Jackson for many more - now only Flo remains leading us. This year she had family and friends 12+ at our meet! That's a record to be remembered!

Waldo Singleton taking over for his deceased brother "James" an Engineer 308 came through with 12+ at our meet! All had enough fun to plan to be back next year! Come join the good times!

Many other large family groups are present but not enough to get a prize!

I was early this year! I had one whole day as the only 83rder on the premises - what a weird feeling! Let's all come early next year.

The dozens present had enough fun for everyone who couldn't make it.

We had many cancellations and a couple of first timers! Let's keep on doing this.

Our newly elected officers installed and acting kept us straight. I look for much progress under their leadership.

My wife was able to be with me but not well enough to take an active part in the meet. We have both been hospitalized in this past year but are finally showing some signs of improvement! We are grateful for your prayers and best wishes.

The ladies provided lots of good food in the hospitality room. I counted 6 crock pots going at one time with enough ham, chicken, etc. for an army!

My special German Chocolate Cake person brought "two" this year. I was able to get a piece of each. Gets better each year. Frank Morris is back from the "New England" Move! Now stay home Frank!

We regret to report the deaths of some members but we have to remember we are not young any more - Even our grandchildren are getting bald headed!

Our gift exchange and visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus was a refreshing and delightful experience!

My camera blew its wig so I don't have any pictures. I welcome any that you can spare. I'll try and do better next time.



Ellsworth Massie, Christmas Elf and Lisa, John and Bobbie's daughter-in-law (picture courtesy of Bobbie's camera)

A great time was had by all! We can keep on with our young leadership in the chapter and national level. I look forward to many more years of comradeship with each one -

Your Reporter for Dixie,

Ellsworth Massie
A 322 & 908 F.A.



Dixie Christmas Reunion
Some of our Active Members

**DIXIE CHAPTER MINUTES
DECEMBER 6, 2008
GALINBURG, TENNESSEE**

The meeting was called to order by President, John Mantooh. John introduced the present slate of officers. They are:

- Eddie Poole - Vice President
- Clyde Miller - 1st Vice President
- John White - Secretary/Treasurer
- Ellsworth Massie - Chaplain

Chaplain E. Massie led the group in prayer.

It was noted by the president that the following members have passed away - Rosario Durand and Emory Calculture.

Secretary/Treasurer J. White read the minutes of our last meeting that was held in Williamsburg, VA. The Treasurer reported a balance on hand of \$4,435.58.

OLD Business: John Mantooh indicated that a majority of our members live in Tennessee and North Carolina, and it would be more beneficial if our reunions could be centralized more in that geographical area.

NEW Business: John White explained the Legacy Chapter to the group that was formed at the National Reunion. He indicated that we need the history that is found in most people's attics to keep the organization going. It was brought to our attention that Carol and Ruby Brown may have some of this information in their attic.

John indicated that the slate of officers for 2009 would remain the same as in 2008.

John Mantooh thanked Flo Jackson for the great job she did in hosting our reunion this year. John also thanked Ellane and Jeanette for their help with the hospitality room. The

Riverside donated a sheet cake to the group that will be cut immediately following the close of this meeting.

Flo Jackson has agreed to host the 2009 Reunion at the Riverside. She thanked everyone who helped and brought food. Don't forget the drawing for the 50/50 and the Auction after the banquet tonight. Charlotte Loukas gave us a brief overview of the day trip that we will enjoy in Williamsburg this year. Don't forget to pay your dues to John White. E. Massie led the group in prayer. The meeting was then adjourned.

Sincerely,
John White, Secretary/Treasurer

FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

**ROBERT TAYLOR
B Co. 329TH**

We of the Florida Chapter met recently at the Inn on The Lakes in Sebring, Fl. and, as usual, had a great time.

The Ladies brought snacks for the Hospitality Room and played their favorite card game, "nickels". The men brought their aches and pains, and talked freely about them. But mostly we just enjoyed being together again with our friends who share a common heritage. A year is a long time away from these dear friends.

We were especially happy that Joe and Donna Camp, who have helped to hold this group together for many years, were able to stop by briefly and join us for a drink. They live in the Sebring area but Joe is having some serious physical problems, which restricts them.

Aside from the Camps and Taylors, those who attended were the John Prinzi's, the Sam Castelli's, the Mike Pettiti's, the Jim Brennan's, the Bill McKee's, the Manny Lamb's, the Bob Olners, Paul Dillon, Manny Epstein, Geri Gunderson, and Glenn Wible with Eunice, his special friend. Also in attendance were our Descendant Members, Tom and Mary Jean Houlahan. This couple

have made themselves pretty much indispensable to this Chapter with their willingness to assist with any endeavor or task. Mary Jean's Father was KIA with the 83rd Div. in July, 1944.

The National Association was also pretty well represented. Bob Taylor, Mike Pettiti, and John Prinzi have served in the past on the National Executive Board and Manny Epstein and Glenn Wible are current Executive Board Members.

Needless to say, we all sadly missed those Chapter Members who could not make it to the meeting. We are planning to have another meeting in Feb. 2010 and hope that you'll all be there. One of the decisions that was made in our Chapter meeting is to continue meeting once each year on the 3rd weekend in February, on a year to year basis, for as long as feasible. So any of you who no longer have an area Chapter to attend are welcome to come join us in sunny Florida. Our next meeting will be at the Inn On The Lakes Hotel, Sebring, FL on Feb. 19/20, 2010.

Hope to see y'all at the Dolce Valley Forge!!

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

NICK FRANCUCCIO

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER NEWS

STAN BIELEN
stanfran83rd@aol.com

February 5, 2009

The Chapter was saddened by the loss of two of our beloved members. Andy Socha and Margarita Whitehead. Andy Socha served in Company I, 331st Infantry. He was with the company from Camp Breckenridge to the end of the war in Europe. Andy attended all the meetings of the chapter in Garfield and was always available to help in anyway. He was always available to attend to his close buddy Charlie Sihlanick, who is wheelchair bound,

at the meetings and the National Reunions. It just won't be the same without Andy as we shared so many great times together. After the war Andy was on the 331st baseball team as their catcher. The pitcher for the team was Frank Sabine also from New Jersey who served with Company D, 331st . That team won the Division Championship and went on to represent the 83rd Division to play other Divisions that were in the George Patton's 3rd Army.

Russell Whitehead (Company G, 329th Inf.) had called me to inform me of his wife Margarita passing on October 27, 2008. I want to express the Chapter's condolences. We always enjoyed her company at our Chapter activities and the Reunions.

Manny Epstein had stopped in Princeton, NJ to visit Frank and Paula Reichmann. Frank is 97 and still goes shopping and takes care of household chores. I can't imagine how he does all that at his age. God bless you both and both Manny and I are looking forward to seeing you when you celebrate your 100.

Joe DePeri called me to tell me that like most of us he has been doctoring for his back which has effected his walking. Joe is one of the youngest to serve in the 83rd, he keeps reminding me. He still goes to his trucking business every day but has given up driving those huge rigs.

At the reunion in Carlisle, I had the pleasure of spending time with Al and Nancy Rinaldi (329 Inf.). After the reunion they went on to New York to board a cruise ship to Bermuda. Al was a high school football coach at two central New Jersey Schools and also at one in Virginia. Al, I just want to remind you of what you could have earned if you went to the college level. Urban Green, Ohio when he coached Bowling Green at a salary of \$250,000, then went on to coach Utah for \$500,000 to an undefeated season. Now at Florida he earns \$2,000,000 plus. Get back in the game Al.

I recently received an email from Helene Lehay's family, the daughter of Auguste Ferey the former mayor of Sainteny, France. This is what she writes "I have a reunion with

the mayor of Sainteny. He showed us the flags the 83rd Division gives to Sainteny during your reunion in Pennsylvania in August. I want to say thank you to the 83rd Division for the gift. It's very nice for a little village like Sainteny. We are very touched." Helene is also involved in planning the 65th Anniversary of D-Day this year in Sainteny.

Enclosed are 2 pictures taken at the Carlisle Reunion.

Wishing you all the best.

Stan Bielen



Charley Sihlanick, Andy Socha, Joe Deperi at Carlisle



Stan Bielen, Al Rinaldi at Carlisle Reunion

PITTSBURGH CHAPTER NEWS

SAL SCICOLONE

Enclosed are some photos of members of the Pittsburgh Chapter Christmas Party. I hope

you will be able to print them in the next Thunderbolt.



Bill Nese, Sal Scicolone, Chuck Caven, Paul Diethrick, Jules Desgain (L to R)



Agnus Desgain, Lee Reuss, Veronica, Theresa Scicolone, Rita Diethrick (L to R)

COMPANIES

Co. "A" - 330TH

CHARLES ABDINOOR

sgtchuck83rd@comcast.net

Hi Buddy's,

Sincerely hope that all is well, with all. I am looking forward to our 63rd reunion which will be held in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania August 12-15. I expect our regulars to

attend, namely Nellrita and Steward Barrick, and Pauline and Ed Brown. We had the pleasure of seeing Nellrita and Steward, who were guests of Susan Pray. They heard so much of the foliage in New England, that they had to come to see for themselves. They were in for a treat, as the Pray's had a motor home, and took them on a tour of the White Mountains, and Nellrita being a retired school teacher enjoyed it immensely. They also toured along the Coast of Maine, and sampled our famous New England Clambake. There is plenty more, but I have to get on with the rest of the news.

The Pillion's are now in their new home, close to their son, now, Walter has company restoring old farm tractors, this was his hobby, besides gardening. I stay in touch with Pearl and Walt throughout the year. We hope to see the Dunn's this year. I do not know about Cookie Senica, he sent me a greeting card, but is unable to travel. Stan Bielen usually links up with him and family at our Reunions. I also keep in touch with Shorty Glasser, who was our jeep driver, and had that fifty caliber mounted on his jeep. He cannot travel too much now.

I now have some bad news; Paul Reed who was my platoon leader lost his wife Dolores. They attended many reunions, but since she lost her sight, she could not travel any more. Our condolences go out to the family. I use to visit with them on my way back from Florida; Paul taught me how to eat crabs, they being from Baltimore, and also their famous Oysters.

I would also like to report the passing of Esther and John Ferreira, Esther passed on February 1st, and John passed on February 4th. I had two funerals to go to, in one week. John held dual membership in the Boston Chapter and New England Chapter. Friends PLEASE take notice. I guess that is about all the news that I have, hopefully I have GOOD news next issue.

Chuck Abdinoor
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Co. "D" - 331ST

**BILL MCKEE
GERI GUNDERSON**



Gerri Gunderson - Pompano Beach

2009 is nearly three months gone and we have experienced "cool" weather even in the deep south. But we are more fortunate than many of you living north of us. No snow, ice, sleet, and we have phone service and electricity too!

The McKees have spent 2009 in sunny Pompano Beach just 3 miles from Geri Gunderson's home. This week-end we spent in Sebring, Fl. enjoying the 83rd Div. Florida Chapter annual meeting. There were 23 of us there - which is not too bad considering some of us could be called "Seniors."

The McKees spent a week-end in Venice with Jim and Dot Brennen and the coldest week of the year at Disney with their family.

Company D does keep in touch - Since no one had heard from Frank Cancassi at Christmas I called. His sister told me Frank is now residing in a Nursing facility near Cleveland. Marcella Nolte (Gene's sister) is fine. She calls and writes often.

R.C. & Louise Hamilton were hit hard by the ice storm that plagued their area. For over a week they experienced being without all phone service, electricity, having ice covered tree branches on the roof, and unable to travel due to roads being impassible. Their family was there for them. R.C. has not been well but is feeling better we are so happy to report.

We also have some very sad news to report: Al R. Shrawder, of Evansville, Ind. went to his mail box and did not make it back to the house on Monday, January 5th. 2009. Al was the Co. D historian, served as 83 Div. Assoc. Pres., and wrote a quarterly Co. D newsletter. Belonged to Florida & Kentucky Chapters, hosted get-to-gethers in Gatlinburg, Evansville, Las Vegas, Chicago and places in between. He will be missed but when entering the Pearly gates he was greeted by his wife Carol, Ralph Gunderson, Sam Clippa, Nep Campbell, Bernie Cove, Art Haught, Jimmy Lynch, Andy Churpak, Gene Nolte, George Odenwaller, John Miklos, William Nagel, Norman Schuster, Vern Mueller, Frank Sharp, Harry Adkins, Merle Akam, Whit East, George Komlos, Frank Meyers, and the rest of Co. D too. Our condolences go to his children: Lois, Mary, Paul, Joan & families, His dearest friend, Charlotte Literal, and all of the 83rd. Al was one of a kind and will be missed by all who knew him. He was 89.

Paul and Mary Dallas are eager for spring to come. (I have encouraged them to move to Pompano Beach.) The ice and snow have little regard for "older bones"! The e-mails are great- I love hearing from you Mary.

Doris & Dan McDermott are doing fine. Keeping busy and entertaining their family. Doris usually e-mails in the middle of the night. She is a night owl. The Sabines are doing O.K. I heard from them at Christmas time.

Dana Sharp also wrote at Christmas. She is O.K. has her family near by, but is lonely since Frank is now in a better place.

Harry & Barb Gravelyn will be celebrating very special birthdays shortly. Barbara will obtain the wonderful age of 90 on March 4th. Her handsome husband. Harry, will reach this same age on April 14th. Congratulations and Happy Birthday to both of you. Wish we were there to celebrate with you.

Co. D would like to send a Get-Well note to Joe Camp F 330th. We are thinking of you, and you are in our thoughts and prayers.

See you in King of Prussia, PA at the 63rd Reunion on August 12-15. (Maybe)

Geri

Editor's note: Sadly, John Prinzi has informed us of Joe's passing.



Cliff,

A couple members of the 83rd Div. asked me if you could print my Memorial Day speech in the 83rd Thunderbolt - I was deeply honored.

Sgt. Ray Orsene
Co "C" 331st



I would like to start by thanking the Veterans Parade Committee for the honor of being Parade Marshall for 2008 here in my hometown of Branford.

How well I remember as a young boy growing up on Ivy Street. It was such a convenience to everything in town. In the summer my brother Joe and I and our friends would cross the green on our way to Hammer Field to play ball and we would always stop at the

Civil War Monument, on the hill by Town Hall to read all the names of the different battles. Gettysburg is the battle I remember the most, that is where the war ended and President Lincoln gave his most famous speech.

It seems that the United States has always been involved in outside conflicts, helping countries resolve their problems. However, there were always those countries that didn't agree with our involvement. This brings thoughts of World War I which was supposed to be the war to end all wars. But that wasn't to be. On December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in an early morning attack. The very next day President Roosevelt declared war on Japan launching us into WWII.

Many your men and women stepped up and volunteered in all aspects of life to help preserve the freedom and integrity of the United States.

The United States was already involved in Europe by helping England. It was a very dangerous mission trying to get supplies across the Atlantic Ocean, many of our supply boats were destroyed by the German U boats.

I entered the armed services in 1942 as a member of the US Army, stationed at Camp Atterbury, Indiana. After basic training we moved on to maneuvers in Tennessee and then on to Camp Breckenridge in Kentucky. After all of my training in the US I had an opportunity to transfer to Battalion Headquarter, I declined the offer so that I could remain with my brothers in C Company. Shortly after we were shipped out to England for more training in preparation for the Invasion of France. Germany was very prepared for the US. At that time they had most of Europe under their control. C Company had been on a training mission in Wales when they were stranded by a huge storm that flooded the area making it impossible to return in time to be in the initial landing at Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944. The 83rd Division landed on June 12th 17 days after the initial invasion. If I had taken the

transfer to Battalion Headquarters I never would have known the horrors of combat and I never would have been wounded. However, I have also NEVER regretted my decision to stay with my brothers.

When the Germans decided to invade Russia and create a new front I feel that was their biggest and most significant mistake resulting in the downfall of the German Army, ending the war in Europe, which made the United States prepare for Japan. Many people were critical of President Truman for using the atomic bomb; however, allied forces in the invasion of Japan would have involved 5 million men, dwarfing the allies of the D-Day invasion by 4 million. Estimated pre-invasion American deaths were as high as 500,000. Americans estimated the Japanese would respond with 5000 kamikaze attacks against allied forces prior to the invasion.

Major General Graves B. Erskine, Commander General 3rd Marine Division had this to say about Operation Downfall, the top secret invasion of Japan in 1945: "Victory was never in doubt. Its cost was... What was in doubt was whether there would be any of us left to dedicate our cemetery at the end or whether the last Marine would die knocking out the last Japanese gun and gunner."

On August 6, 1945 the American B-29 bomber Enola Bay dropped the 1st atomic weapon on Hiroshima, 3 days later a second atomic weapon was dropped on Nagasaki. The war was effectively over. The Japanese surrendered unconditionally on August 15th, 1945. The planned invasion of Japan never took place.

In closing I would like to say: At one of the Parliament meetings one of the members asked the Prime Minister Tony Blair "Why he was so high on the United States?" His answer was, "Everyone likes to go there and when they get there they don't want to leave, and I want you to remember this, Two people died for us, God and the American GI." Thank you.

MY STORY OF BEHAIN, BELGIUM by Steward Barrick

It was January 9, 1945 around 2:00 a.m. our unit, "A" Company, 330th Infantry Regiment, 83rd Division had just recaptured the St. Vith-Houffalize highway crossroad coming out of Germany. Looking around you would think it was a military junkyard. When the German offensive began December 16, 1944 the American units in the area had destroyed their equipment so as to deny the Germans using the military trucks, artillery guns and much more.

I was assigned to the weapons platoon, light machine gun squad. We loaded into 6X6 trucks traveling to an area overlooking the small town of Bihain, Belgium about a quarter mile down a hill and across the Langlier River (it was only a very small stream,) We were spread out in a skirmish line in hip-deep snow. Before long we all funneled into a single line headed for the town. Enemy mortar and artillery shells were landing all around us, but because of the deep snow I don't think anyone was injured, By nightfall only three houses near the river were captured. The Germans had us pinned down by a hidden machine-gun. They used smokeless gunpowder making it impossible to know from where they were firing .

About three a.m. PFC Will Lenz who also spoke fluent German and was our interpreter crawled through the snow and located the enemy machine gun. He threw two grenades in the window killing the two Germans. He then jumped into the house to secure it. A German soldier in the basement came up through a trapdoor in the floor and severely wounded Will in the leg. The Kraut soldier then dropped ~~back~~ into the basement. PFC Lenz told him to come out or he would drop a couple grenades down. To his surprise ten enemy soldiers came out of the basement. Will's action helped us continue capturing the town. Will went to the aid-station but they were too busy but told him if he could hobble to the Battalion aid station they would evacuate him. He later told me they gave him a shot of morphine and he said he woke up in England. By nightfall of January 10 the town was secured. We set up a machine gun at the edge of town. Because the sky was overcast I have always thought we had set our gun at the west edge of town. Our squad was lucky to be joined by a Sherman tank crew. The tankers had a supply of ten-in-one rations so we were glad to eat their rations instead of our K rations. About nine o'clock on the eleventh, the Germans counter-attacked with two small Mark 4 tanks and about seventy-five infantry, attacking toward the middle of town. The tank crew seeing the Germans hurriedly got in their tank and left the scene.

They were part of an armor division. It has been sixty-four years and I will not name the unit they were in. If any of this crew is still living, they know of their guilt leaving us to manage by ourselves. A tank-destroyer crew setting about a thousand yards away knocked out the German tanks. The infantrymen we took care of. Late that day Battalion headquarters moved into town and moved us about two hundred yards from town where we set up a defensive position. My wife and I flew too Frankfurt in April 1992. We met my nephew who was stationed at Weisbaden, Germany. We rented a car and drove Bastoyne, and on to Bihain, Belgium. In 2004 I attended the dedication of the WWII memorial in Washington, D.C. and then flew to Europe and once again returned to Bihain, Belgium.

I had been contacted by Sam Tannenbaum whose father Henry Tannenbaum and his patrol squad had been killed when they walked upon some German tanks A memorial had been erected by local Belgium citizens. I told him I would go to Ottre and take pictures of the memorial. To my surprise Ottre was only three kilometers from Bihain. The little town only consisted of two buildings, but the memorial was placed where his father and his squad had died. I took pictures of the beautiful memorial and mailed them to Sam.

SEBRING, FLORIDA PICTURES from Mary and Robert Olney



Front: Robert Taylor, Paul Dillon, Manny Epstein, Glenn Wible, & Mike Petiti
Back: Jim Brennan, John Prinzi, Bill McKee, Sam Castelli, Manny Lamb & Robert Olney



Front: Bob & Gladys Taylor, John & Ona Prinzi
Back: Tom, Waitress, Mary Jean Houlahan



Mike & Nina Petiti



Sam and Ruby Castelli



Glenn Wible and Eunice Goodwin



Ruth and Manny Lamb



Jim and Dot Brennan



Bill and Jeanette McKee



83RD INFANTRY DIV. ASSOCIATION WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT

Margo Elaine Raikos, the youngest daughter of the late Colonel John D. Raikos, 329th HQ and Harry Roll "Mac" McLaughlin, Jr. were married on June 1, 2008 at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Indianapolis, Indiana with the reception following at Allison Manson. Mac is a Realtor with Century 21, Realty Group 1 Office, and Margo is a Middle School Reading Teacher at Thomas Carr Howe Community High School. The couple resides in Carmel, Indiana. Margo and her mother, Mary P. Raikos, proudly continue their descendant membership with the 83rd Infantry Div. Association.

Mr. and Mrs. Mac McLaughlin
11201 Basswood Court, Carmel, IN 46032
317- 815-6631

**Guess
who
this
is**

(Answer in next
Thunderbolt)



Answer to Last Thunderbolt's "Guess who this is" - Manny Goodridge -
No one had the correct answer - Try again this time!

Dear Cliff:

I enjoyed reading the press release in the Spring issue of 2008 Thunderbolt by Gary Wallace.

Cliff, I went overseas with the 69th Infantry Division landing in Southampton, England October 1944

We stayed a couple of days at the Winchester Barracks of the British Army, then we were sent up to the northern part of England where we were living in quantsit huts.

We were not there long when orders came down that they were breaking up the division. They pulled men out of rifle companies and heavy weapons companies because they needed troops real fast as the Battle of the Bulge had started. We were loaded onto l.c.is (landing craft infantry), crossed the channel and landed at Leharve, France. Then we were loaded onto 40/8's, sent up to Liege Belgium at a big replacement depot. That is where I was assigned to "B" Company 330th Regiment 83rd Div. The second day in combat I lost two of my best buddies who I trained with back in the states. I was very fortunate the worst thing I got was a severe case of trench foot. I was with the company in all those things mentioned in the press release. As mentioned we started moving fast, just before they made the big push across the Rhine River we were staying in Düsseldorf. We were there about 2 weeks training just like we did back in the states. It was really quiet, once in a while a shell would come in.

When the day came we were moving out they had all the trucks lined up on the main drag. As we were loading all hell broke loose, the 88's were coming in like crazy. The civilians all ran into their houses and tried to lock the doors so we could not take cover. Finally the shelling stopped and we moved out, it wasn't long after that the war in Europe ended. I was transferred to "B" Battery 324th Field Artillery I55 howitzers.

Cliff, do you remember when the division was classified category 2 which meant with our battle experience we were slated to go to the Pacific and they sent us up to the northern part of Germany for simulated jungle fighting. Well as you know, VJ Day in August of 1945 and then they started the point system the more points you had the quicker you went home.

I did not have quite enough points. I was transferred to the 5th Infantry down in Austria for occupational duty and there was a large P.O.W. compound there. What a deal that was - you pulled 14 hrs. guard duty and 72 hrs. off. We had rooms in a hotel on the Danube River. We had German POWs clean our rooms and do our laundry. We had our own night club with a band. It was beautiful down there. Finally, I had enough points to come home. They wanted me to stay. They would make me a Sgt. I said "No". I was discharged in November of '46.

Cliff, I just want to say how proud I was to have served with the best division in the world. As they say, "We were the Best". "God Bless You and all the Buddies".

Your buddy,

Roland N. Grebinger,
B Company, 330th
7030 72nd Place, Ridgewood, NY 11385-7335

(translation of newspaper article below)

The 83rd Infantry Division Association gives 13 flags to the Town of SAINTENY

After the D-Day ceremony at the SAINTENY Stele, Michel LEPOURRY, Mayor of SAINTENY, spoke of the strong ties between SAINTENY and the 83rd Infantry Division Association. He read the letter of the 83rd Association President, Robert KECK, who thanked the people of SAINTENY for their welcome of STUDOR family on the 19th of May and for the SAINTENY medals presented to the 83rd Association for the past two years. The Mayor said he would welcome Mr. Keck or his representative to SAINTENY "very soon".

Emmanuel LEDOUX, 32 years old, was born in SAINTENY and lives and works in the UNITED STATES. At the end of August 2008, during his holidays, he came back to SAINTENY with 13 American State flags which he was entrusted with at the 83rd Division Reunion in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The following flags were given to LEDOUX for presentation to the Mayor of SAINTENY: GEORGIA, PENNSYLVANIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, MARYLAND, CONNECTICUT, NEW YORK, NEW HAMPSHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS, NEW JERSEY, RHODE ISLAND, DELAWARE and VIRGINIA. Michel LEPOURRY commended the contribution of Jean Paul PITOU who maintains contact with the 83rd Infantry Division Association and contributes to the continued strong ties with the 83rd Association

* * * * *

Last year we sent 13 United States flags (representing the first 13 American colonies) to the Mayor of Sainteny as a token of appreciation. At the 50th anniversary of D-Day, the then Mayor presented each of the two busloads of 83rd vets with a commemorative medal. For the past two years, Jean Paul PITOU has presented an additional 24 of these medals to our veterans. In addition, Sainteny has erected a memorial stone to the 83rd and citizens of the town tend nearby grave sites of US soldiers. This year we will send an additional 13 US flags for presentation to Jean Paul PITOU (or his representative) at our Reunion in King of Prussia, PA. . . . Rudy Zamula

WE STILL NEED ADDITIONAL DONATIONS

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION, PLEASE FILL OUT THE SLIP BELOW, INCLUDE IT WITH YOUR DONATION
(CHECKS PAYABLE TO 83RD INF. DIV. ASSN), AND MAIL TO:**

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

FLAGS FOR SAINTENY - DONATION		
NAME _____	STATE _____	UNIT _____
MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF SAINTENY (OPTIONAL) _____		

L'association de la 83^e offre treize drapeaux à la commune

Suite aux commémorations du 6 juin dernier à la stèle, Michel Lepourry, maire, avait rap- pelé le lien fort qui unit Sainteny à l'association améri- caine de la 83^e. A cette occa- sion il avait témoigné d'un courrier reçu à son attention de la part de l'association Thunderbolt 83^e signée par son président Robert Keck en remerciement de l'accueil que la commune de Sainteny avait réservé à la famille Studor et aux médailles qui avaient été remises à ses représentants lors de leur visite le 19 mai der- nier. Robert Keck espérait bien recevoir le maire ou son repré- sentant very soon ! C'est chose faite, Emmanuel Le- doux, 32 ans, saintignais, vit aux États-Unis. Fin août 2008, à l'occasion d'une période de congés, il est rentré en France avec 13 drapeaux américains qui lui ont été remis, en pré- sence des élus américains de l'état de Pennsylvanie, à l'at- tention du maire de Sainteny, Géorgie, Pennsylvanie, Caro- line du Nord, Maryland,

Connecticut, New York, New Hampshire, Caroline du Sud, Massachusset, New Jersey,

Rhode Island, Delaware et la Virginie sont les treize états re- présentatifs des drapeaux of-

erts. Michel Lepourry rappelle que Jean-Paul Pitou, en rela- tion avec l'association de la 83^e, contribue à pérenniser l'échanges forts avec l'assoc- tion américaine.



Michel Lepourry et Maurice Proux déploient les treize drapeaux américains offerts par la 83^e.

"Flags for Sainteny" Donations

Steward Barrick
Mike & Mell Catrambone
Mary Jean Houlahan
Rudy Zamula
Eugene A. Peloquin
Manny R. Goodridge
Susan D. Pray
Cliff Wooldridge
Nancy McCarthy
Quinto DeAntoni
Henry Hauser
Harold Geisinger
The Boston Chapter
Edward J. Pogoda
Eugene Peloquin

Elizabeth Faber Brusa
Roger E. Dumont & Family
Glenn Wible
Michael Gottlieb
The Pittsburgh Chapter -
Salvatore Scicolone, Pres.
Charles Caven
Jules Desgain
Paul Diethrich
Charles Hawkins
William Mattes
William Nese
Lee Reuss
Michael Rudy
Doris Heine



Mayor of Sainteny holding up Flag for Town Council to view

Messages to the People of Sainteny (accompanying their donations)-

My father Lt. Col. James Faber, Headquarters 2nd Battalion, 331st Infantry, 83rd was killed in Sainteny, July 10, 1944 after Allies took Sainteny. My husband and I have always enjoyed your hospitality every time we have been to Sainteny and Jean Paul Pitou treated us like V.I.P.'s . . .

Elizabeth Faber Brusa, California

My father, SSgt. Walter A. Knapp, Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 331st Infantry, died in Sainteny on July 17, 1944 for the most wonderful people there. Thank you for your support and love for the 83rd. Please visit his grave at the cemetery in Blasville when you can and pray for him. God bless you all. My stepfather Raymond Bernard was a French soldier from Brittany who was a POW for five years. He is buried in America. So now you and we are bound together forever by these brave men, we children and a commitment to Freedom. Vive la France! . . . **Mary Jean Houlahan, Connecticut**

My Dad, Pvt. Ben Gottlieb, G Co, 329th Inf. Reg., was killed in action at St. Lo on July 23, 1944 and is buried in Normandy. Thanks to the people of Sainteny! **Michael Gottlieb, New York**

he spoke fluent French, took dictation and typed with a typewriter – or manual impaction device for those too young to remember pre-computer technology. Like most veterans I know, Dad spoke little of his war-time period other than he did his duty and was proud of it; he and his fellow soldiers made a positive difference in the world, and they knew it.

Following his 1946 discharge, Dad married Ruth Mae Braen of Hawthorne, New Jersey, and became a successful printing sales executive in northern New Jersey; he was instrumental in developing a new roll-label printing process for the pharmaceutical industry.

Every summer Dad would make certain that his family, which now included my sister Michele, my brother Douglas, and me, enjoyed a vacation. He took us to Canada, Washington, DC, Florida, and most frequently, The Jersey Shore. It was here, at The Shore, that Dad had his most enjoyable moments from suntanning on the beach to boating and its necessary corollary, crabbing and clamming. In fact, Dad was so successful at harvesting shell fish, he sold whatever was left to a local fish store, but only after he had given away copious quantities to neighbors and friends.

Dad was a philosopher and his wisdom and strength helped others, especially through life's sometimes challenging times. In a November 2002 "Memo" to me, Dad wrote: "Life has its ups and downs. We can become stronger as we overcome all difficulties presented to us. Keep your spirits high, work even harder and look forward. . . ."

Football. . . Joe Namath and the New York Jets . . . Dad's greatest sport's passion. He was at the 1969 Super Bowl in Miami and never stopped celebrating the Jet's upset win. In that timeframe plane hijackings to Cuba were common; ever practical, Dad had flown to Miami two days early in case he was diverted to Havana.

After retiring to Florida in 1987, Dad kept busy with boating and bowling. He and Ruth traveled the world from Alaska to Tahiti. He was also actively involved in the Veteran of Foreign Wars' 83rd Infantry Division Association and its annual meetings, including one in France and Belgium to commemorate D-Day; Dad subsequently donated his Army jacket to a museum in Belgium where it is displayed today. And his war journal is part of the archives housed at the Institute on World War II and the Human Experience at Florida State University in Tallahassee.

Dad was also proud of his relationship with and involvement in the Knights of Columbus' he successfully sold memorial bricks to aid in their fundraising efforts; Dad could NEVER stop selling!

Completing Dad's Florida activities, he was an active member of the New Jersey Club where he formed many friendships with fellow New Jerseyans who, like Dad, never again wanted to see snow or experience bone-chilling temperature.

Dad and Mom were active members of Epiphany Cathedral's congregation; as mentioned, Dad was a man of great faith. Before illness stole much of his memory, Dad and I talked about life-and-death while sitting by water, both my California swimming pool and his Florida dock on the lagoon overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway and Casey Key Island. When he first saw this location, he said "This is the place," and lived in and enjoyed Osprey for more than twenty years.

Dad did not fear death, acknowledging it is a necessary part of life, a transition on a path of eternal journey. And now Dad has joined his father and mother, Albert and Stephanie, his son, Douglas, his close friends, Jimmy, Tommy, Phil and Kitty, Charlie and Ronnie, and so many others. . . Together again with them but always a part of our lives, we are all better for Albert Leon Bensimon's time with us.

In the words of Leo Rosten, "The purpose of life is simply to count, to matter, to have it make some difference that you lived at all. Maybe that's essential. "Dad, you most definitely mattered and made a difference; I'm exceptionally proud to be your son . . . thank you for your love, companionship and guidance. Rest now, Dad, you have earned your place in eternity.

On behalf of my mother and our family, thank you all for participating in this celebration of my Dad's life. Albert P. Bensimon

*Thank You to the members of the
83rd Infantry Div. for our precious
freedom and your sacrifice for us all*

T. STEWARD BARRICK

Nellrita Barrick - Spouse
Ross Barrick - Son
Justin Barrick
Cooper Barrick
Paula Barrick-Glancy - Daughter
Ty (Barrick) Taylor
Gentry (Barrick) Glancy



CHARLES O. DIMMICK

Dave Dimmick
Becky Dimmick
Sam Dimmick
Karen Renoud
Dallas Renoud
Anne Kaiser
Laura Hill
Jeff Kaiser
Chris Hill
Mason Kaiser
Ava Hill
Sarah Kaiser
Carter Hill

STANLEY BIELEN

Judy Bielen - Daughter
Joyce McNally - Daughter
Emily McNally
John McNally
Evan McNally

ROGER DUMONT

Susan D. Pray - Daughter
Gregory Pray
Nicholas Pray
Lisa (Pray) Boston
Tony Boston
Lisa Brennan - Daughter
John Brennan
Joseph Brennan
Katie Brennan

ROBERT C. BROWER

David C. Brower - Son
Bonnie Brower Whyte - Daughter



JAMES C. BURTON

Judy Peterson—Daughter
Paul Peterson
Kaitlyn Peterson
Matt Burton

NORMAN W. EARLS

Mary C. Earls, Wife
Sherrie Wiesmann, Daughter
Norman Dale Earls, Son
David Earls, Son

Please pass this on to interested members of your family

Greetings to the Descendants of the members of the 83rd Infantry Division, The "Thunderbolt Division"

Would you like to join us again in saying "Thank you" in a special way to those who sacrificed so much for us all? We are looking for as many descendants as possible to include their names on a special "Thank You" page (or pages) in the Program Book for the 83rd Association's 63rd Reunion to take place in King of Prussia, PA on August 12th through the 16th. All names will be listed under the caption, "Thank you to the members of the 83rd Infantry Division for our precious freedom and your sacrifice for us all." (Sample page from the 61st Reunion enclosed.)

Your name may be included for a contribution of \$10. If you would like to include the names of additional family members (for example spouses, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews etc) all we ask is another \$5 per name. We will print as many names as we receive, no matter how many pages! All proceeds will be used to help defray the cost of the buses, equipped with wheelchair lifts, needed at the reunion. We will also include a display of this special thank you in the reunion hospitality room.

. *Chris Markuns, Susan Dumont Peay, Anna Jisdell - descendants*

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____ Descendant of: _____

2nd Name _____ 3rd Name _____

4th Name _____ 5th Name _____

6th Name _____ 7th Name _____

*** Attach sheet for additional descendants ***

Contact Name: _____ Relationship to Member: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____ email: _____



Make check payable and send with form to:

83rd INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN.

P.O. Box 406

Alton Bay, NH 03810-0406

Special Note: Are you coming to the reunion? Would you like to give us a hand?
We need your help with:

- Hospitality Room (3-hr. blocks) (e.g., setting up refreshments, serving, clean up)
- Transportation Assistance (assigned per trip) (e.g., monitoring a bus, assisting passengers in and out)
- Registration (3-hr. blocks) (registration, information, special assistance)
- Event Coordination (assigned per event) (Assistance at Banquet, Memorial Visits, etc.)

Dolce Valley Forge, King of Prussia



Directions

From the Northeast

Take the New Jersey Turnpike South to the Pennsylvania Turnpike Exit 6. Follow the Pennsylvania Turnpike West to Exit 326 (Valley Forge). After the toll plaza, take the third right, Exit 328 (Route 202 North - King of Prussia). The hotel is one mile on the right.

From the South

Take 95 North to Route 476 North (Exit 7). Take 76 West (Schuylkill Expressway) following signs for Valley Forge to Exit 328 (Route 202 North - King of Prussia). The hotel is one mile on the right.

From the East

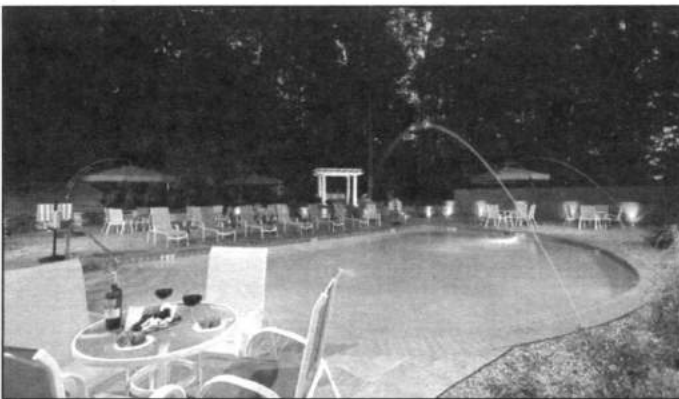
Take the Atlantic City Expressway to Route 42 to the Walt Whitman Bridge. Follow 76 (Schuylkill Expressway West) to Exit 328. Follow the exit signs to Route 202 North - King of Prussia. The hotel is one mile on the right.

From the West

Take the Pennsylvania Turnpike to Exit 326 (Valley Forge). After the toll plaza, take the third right, Exit 328 (Route 202 North - King of Prussia). The hotel is one mile on the right.

From Philadelphia International Airport

Take 95 South to Route 476 North (Exit 7). Take 76 West (Schuylkill Expressway) following signs for Valley Forge to Exit 328 (Route 202 North - King of Prussia). The hotel is one mile on the right.



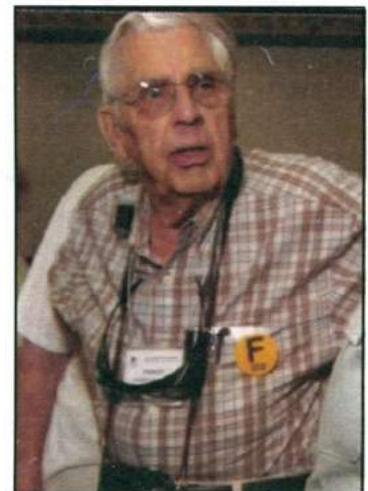
Deceased List

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>
Batty, Sr. Harry J.	A Co., 330th	August "Mousie" Farias
Bensimon, Albert Leon	783rd Ordinance	Son Albert P.
Camp, Joe	F Co., 330th	John Prinzi
Culclasure, Emory L.	E Co, 329th	John & Bobbie White
Durand, Rosario (Ray)	M Co, 331st	John & Bobbie White
Ferreira, John	G Co, 330th	Chuck Abdinoor
Pogoda, Edward	I Co, 329th	Niece Debra
Shrawder, Allison	D Co, 331st	Paul & Jennifer Shrawder, Geri Gunderson, Dave Curry
Socha, Andy	I Co, 331st	Stan Bielen, Charlie Sihlanick
Walters, Cecil	C Co, 308th Engineers	Nora Lee
Whitcomb, Bob	F Co, 329th	Wife Lavona, Russ Whitehead, Bob Keck



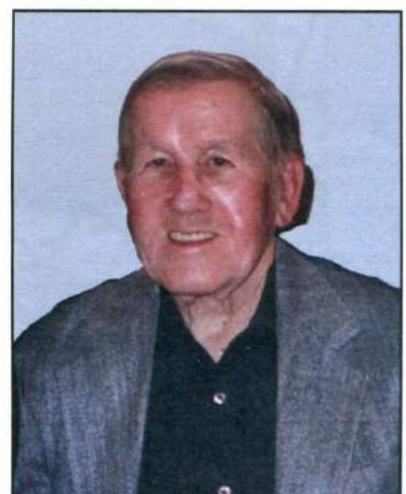
Al Shrawder (left)



Bob Whitcomb (right)



Ed Pogoda (left)



Andy Socha (right)

The Thunderbolt Chronicles



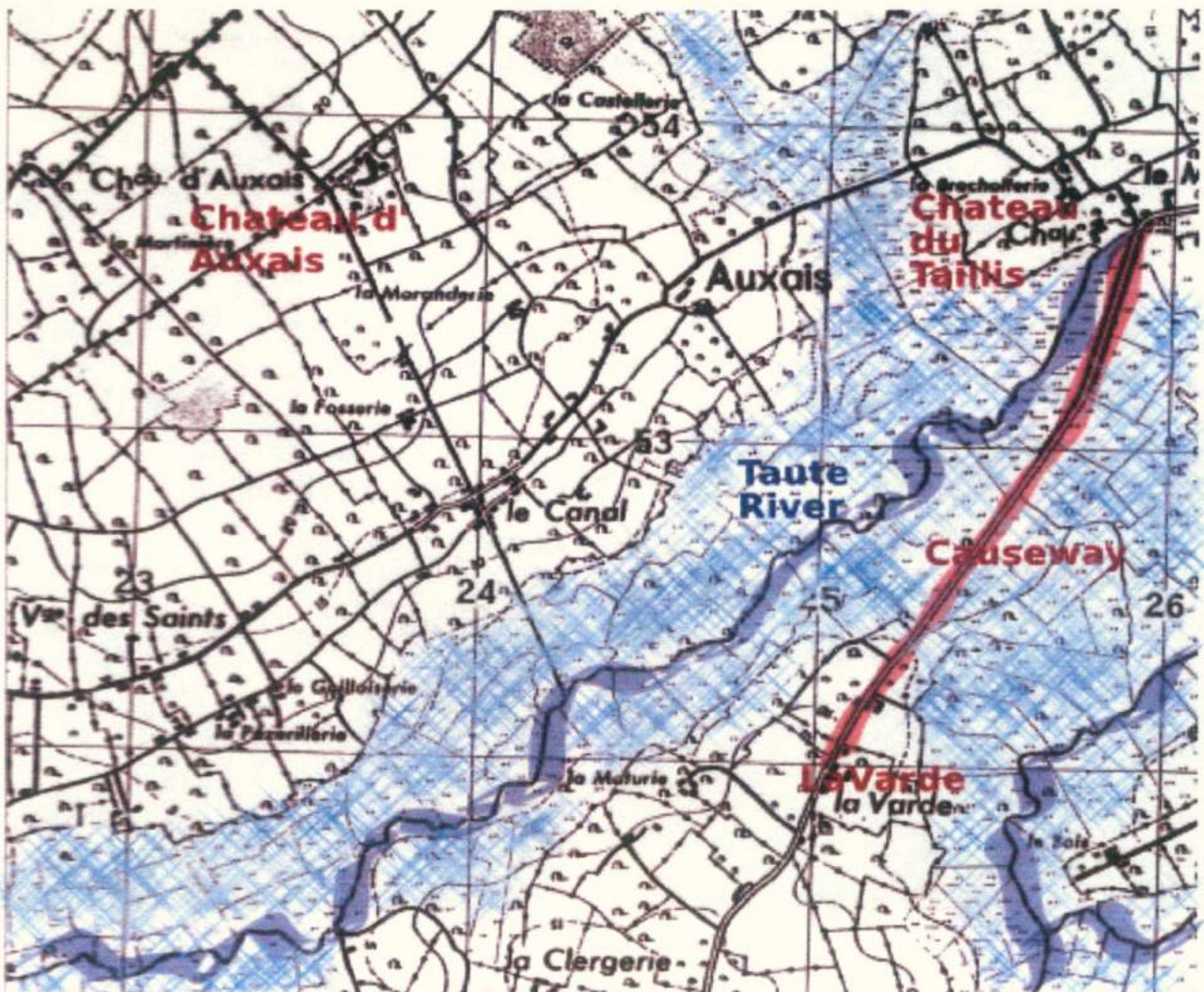
*Dave Curry
Historian*

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Stalemate at LaVarde

On the 12th of July 1944, the 331st Infantry came under the command of Col. Robert H. York. The 331st, along with the 329th and 330th Infantry Regiments, had lost most of the front-line soldiers in their infantry companies, and the 331st had lost

several commanding officers since it began its combat just south of the city of Carentan on July 4th. Some of these COs were killed in action, and some relieved of command. York had served as 1st Battalion CO of the 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, and he had led his battalion in North Africa, Sicily, and had landed with them on D-Day in Normandy. He had the leadership abilities and combat experience needed to forge the 331st into an effective fighting unit after so many losses of front-line soldiers. The 331st had fought its way south beginning on the 4th of July through swamps and hedgerows to capture the town of Sainteny on July 10th, and then moved southeasterly to the area around Bois Grimot. The 331st had just lost its most recent Commanding Officer,



Col. James E. Bender on the 11th of July when his jeep took a direct hit from a German 88-mm shell. Progress was slow: German tanks supported by small infantry units made it almost impossible for the bazooka teams, anti-tank guns, and tank destroyers to get within striking distance.

No sooner had Colonel York assumed command than he was ordered to attack. According to Vernon Bobo, who was an assistant squad leader in I Company in the 3rd Battalion, York persuaded the division commander to postpone the attack in order to give the GIs some needed rest and so that York could visit each company and reorganize all of the combat elements.

The next day, July 13th, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions attacked with the Taute River as the objective. A coordinated regimental attack was planned, with all three battalions attacking. The 1st Battalion on the left fought through the village of LaLande and the point of land to its south, then reverted to regimental reserve. The 2nd Battalion in the center of the line and the 3rd Battalion on the right cleared Bois Grimot, and by noon were in position on the edge of the open, swampy ground south of Bois Grimot, preparing to cross it.

In the fierce fighting that took place that day, Bobo was awarded the Silver Star for taking out a German tank near Chateau d'Auxais. When I Company was subjected to intense machine gun fire from the enemy tank, Private Bobo took an anti-tank launcher and an extra round of ammunition and advanced along a hedgerow under machine gun fire and artillery bursts. Finally, when he was close enough to hit the tank, he stood up in direct view and fired his first round. As the tank began to turn he fired his second round and made a direct hit on the turret.

By nightfall the 3rd Battalion had pushed about 1,000 yards south of the

Chateau d' Auxais and the 2nd Battalion was south of the village of Auxais, on the 3rd Battalion's left, with its flank on the Taute River. The 3rd Battalion received a strong tank-infantry counterattack on its open right flank, and part of the Battalion was forced to withdraw to the Chateau, where it was cut off for the next two days.

On the 15th and 16th, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions pushed forward along with the 329th Infantry on the right to reach the cut off portion of the 3rd Battalion. The 2nd Battalion reached Village des Saints but was forced to pull back under a heavy counterattack.

Then on 17 July, the soldiers of the 331st were ordered to force a crossing of the Taute River near Le Canal and Auxais. At 1800 hours, the 1st Battalion attempted a crossing of the river to the LaVarde Peninsula, but was unsuccessful. Another



Col. Robert H. York came to the 331st Infantry on July 12, 1944, just before the attack on the LaVarde Peninsula. He led the 331st throughout the war, earning the respect and loyalty of the GIs who served under him. After the war, York went on to command the 82nd Airborne at Ft. Bragg. He later assumed command of Ft. Benning and the Infantry School. York finally became commanding general of XVIII Airborne Corps and Ft. Bragg. He retired with the rank of Lt. General.

crossing was planned for 0300 hours the next morning , 18 July, and an engineer patrol was sent out at dusk to scout the main stream for crossing sites.

It was found that the 1,000-yard wide flood plain of the river, which had recently been flooded by the Germans, had almost completely dried out except for the main stream of the river in the center. It was about six feet deep and 18 feet wide with perpendicular banks--more like a canal than a river. There was a trail which could move one-way traffic, but no bridge existed over the river. No bridging equipment was available for the planned attack from LeCanal , but in the meantime a platoon of the 308th engineers began placing a 50 ft Bailey bridge across the Taute at the north end of a causeway leading from LeMoulin south to the LaVarde Peninsula. It was planned to use this bridge and the causeway to cross tanks and anti-tank guns to support the 1st Battalion once it had made its crossing from LeCanal

The problem with the flood plain was that it offered no cover for the 331st. According to military historian Martin Blumenson, not many Germans held LaVarde, but the level ground of the flood plain permitted the enemy to cover the area with only five machine guns. According to one source, it was as if the Germans were "shooting across a billiard table."

According to Captain Harry Gravelyn, commanding officer of D Company, their orders were to clear the peninsula because it was thought to be a possible German observation point with a view of the highway that Patton would be using to launch a large-scale tank attack. Their intelligence report informed them that the peninsula was defended by "fifty cooks and bakers." They were also told that the canal was less than 10 feet wide

and, at best, only four feet deep. Relying on this misinformation, the Battalion commander decided to make the assault with one rifle platoon and a section of Company D machine guns. The plan was to first cross the canal, and then the mortars would begin a "creeping" barrage that was 100 yards ahead of the attacking platoon.

The assault began in total darkness with the Battalion observation post at the edge of the swamp, 150 yards in front of the German positions. The men were provided with long heavy planks on which to cross the canal rapidly and then cross the open area on the other side before daylight. Unfortunately, the canal was found to be much wider than the length of the planks and the assault team began to get some sporadic fire from the Germans. The GIs took to the water, and were forced to swim to the opposite side. The machine gun section tried to walk the bottom with their heavy loads, but in the muck of the canal, had to abandon their guns or drown.

As the rifle platoon reached the wooded area on the other side of the stream, there was small arms fire and then silence. Gravelyn and his men waited for word from Lt. Voght, who commanded the platoon. But as the morning stretched

Looking east to LaVarde from LeCanal. Photo courtesy Glyn Nitingale.



into hours, they heard nothing from the platoon, and were forced to accept the fact that the mission had failed.

Colonel York had moved up to the OP to observe the initial assault. If everything had worked according to plan, it should have been an easy victory. Not knowing what was happening on the other side, and receiving no word from Lt. Voght, the 1st Battalion CO suggested that a platoon of machine guns be sent across to help Lt. Voght's platoon hold the area. Reluctantly, Gravelyn passed the word to his 1st platoon sergeant, Sgt. Haught. Neither of them were happy with the new plan, and they decided to scout the area a few hundred yards from where the initial attack had been made, and where the distance across would be shorter, but more open.

It was not a good location. The woods on the far side looked ominous and were deadly silent, and the machine gun platoon would have to make a run for it, wade the canal, and hope that there were some friendly rifleman on the other side to help out. It was a suicide mission.

Gravelyn reported to the battalion OP and informed the CO that the platoon was ready, but if they were to go, he was going to go with them. Col. York, who was listening, said "You don't like this idea, do you Gravelyn?" Gravelyn replied, "No sir," at which time Col. York cancelled the mission. Gravelyn tried not to show his relief, but I could hardly wait to get back to Sgt. Haught and pass on the good word. His respect for Col. York had never been higher.

The longer Gravelyn served under York, the more his respect grew for the Colonel, and he is certain that if the plan had not been called off he would have lost his entire platoon. After the war, Lt. Voght told him that the Germans were well armed with tanks and personnel, and

the intelligence, most likely gathered from prisoners, was a falsehood. Voght's platoon was wiped out when the German's ambushed them in the wooded area, and Voght was hit by a concussion grenade that broke nearly every bone in his body.

The final attack on the peninsula was made on the night of 19-20 July. At 0330 hours, the 3rd Battalion was sent across the swamp astride the causeway from LeMoulin to the peninsula. The surprise attack allowed the battalion to gain a foothold on the peninsula, but as the battalion reached the end of the 1,500-yard causeway it was discovered that there were two gaps where bridges had been blown. Treadway bridge was immediately sent in to close the gaps, but they were damaged by fire and also needed to be replaced. Then the Bailey Bridge at the LeMoulin end of the causeway was destroyed by the Germans who set off demolition charges that been placed by the engineers as a preventive measure against counterattacks. This deprived the infantry of support from tanks and anti-tank guns, and a counterattack on July 21st forced them to withdraw from the peninsula with heavy losses.

Said Vernon Bobo, "We were overrun on the LaVarde Peninsula and my platoon had 33 killed." He was one of only two survivors in his platoon. The campaign to cross the Taute River had ended, and the 331st dug in on the west bank of the river to wait for the massive carpet bombing of Operation COBRA on July 25th.

Several sources were used in preparing this article, including the memoirs of Captain Harry Gravelyn, D Company/331st Infantry; a paper written for an Advanced Infantry Officers Course by Captain William M. Calnan, Company C, 308th Engineers; *Vernon Bobo—Remembering the War Years* from the McKenzie Banner, July 4, 2001; 331st Infantry Regiment after-action reports; and *We Saw It Through*, the official history of the 331st Infantry Regiment.

Raymond Perrussel "A Frenchman in the 329th Anti-Tank Company"

From: Gilles Billion

Paris, France



Barely 20 years old, Raymond Perrussel joins the Resistance at the end of 1943. His spying activities are greatly helped by the fact he's an artist. He goes regularly to Paris to give his reports. During his last mission, in May 1944, his hierarchy tells him that if he lost contact, he should wait for the allied troops, contact them and give them the last information gathered.

On August 8th, the Americans are rumored to be in Saint Servan, close to Saint Malo. The next day, he leaves on his bicycle and meets up with the first US soldiers at about 6 AM near Lorette, on the road to Saint Jouan.

The superior officer he delivers information to offers him to join the US Army, and after an hour, he's now a fully-fledged and armed G.I. He's affected to the 329th Anti-Tank Company, under the command of Lieutenant Durst.

The peloton he's affected to sets up in the Corbières Park, but after being fired on by machine guns on the Cité d'Alet, the three 57 mm guns are hidden behind the wall of the cloisters. Holes are dug to allow them to fire on their targeted armored pillboxes (traces of that fight are barely visible on the wall today, but they're easily identifiable on the pillboxes). For eight days, the unit fires on its targets without respite. On August 17th, at 3 PM, after the first two napalm bombs are dropped on European ground, Von Aulock surrenders. The fight for Saint Malo is over, except for the Island of Cezembre that still needs to be liberated. The division leaves Saint Malo to go towards the Loire, and Raymond follows the Anti-Tank company because, as he explained, "I had joined the US army to fight and free France, and morale was good because we were winning."

The unit goes towards the Loire through Angers. On September 7th, Raymond witnesses the surrender of the 20000 Germans of the Elster column.

On October 5th, the unit stops in Luxemburg. On October 7th, the French command meets up with them and Raymond has to go to Paris to state his situation. There, he's promoted to lieutenant Jg and his perfect knowledge of the English language and his recent actions make him the perfect tactical liaison officer. His affectation to the 83rd is refused and he's assigned to the 35th US Infantry Division. He will stay with this unit until the end of the war.

Today, he lives partly in Paris and in Saint Malo and he participates to all ceremonies organized in the honor of the 83rd in Saint Malo. Recently, he helped Mr. Penroze (Lee Miller's son) create a CD-ROM comparing the pictures his mother had taken during the war in Saint Malo and the different places as they are now.



Above, August 1944. Raymond Perrussel, second from the left, in front of a 57mm anti-tank gun at the entrance of Saint Servan.

On the right. Every day, he participates to ceremonies celebrating the liberation of Saint Malo.





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From the Archivist
Rudy Zamula

I have received a dozen or so inquiries from Descendants concerning 83rd Veterans, some referred to me by Dave Curry. Here are a few of the reasons that it is extremely difficult to find information about **individual veterans**:

- A fire at the St. Louis National Personnel Records Center on July 12, 1973 destroyed over 80 per cent of the Army personnel records for WWII.
- There are very few references to individuals in the Unit Histories, After Action (A/A) Reports, or Daily Journals. The example below records the heroic exploits of several officers. Enlisted men are rarely mentioned except for the highest honors. Awards, KIAs, MIAs, and wounded are listed at the end of Monthly Reports.
- There are no indices to the Hollinger Boxes which hold the records, only a "Finding Aid" that names the Unit(s) and dates. Each box contains up to 1,000 pages and there are 167 boxes for the 83rd.

For the reasons cited above, I advise Descendants to read the available histories of the 83rd and of the three Regiments. For more detail, read the A/A Reports and Unit histories for the time periods in which your veteran served. I have copied about 400 pages of Unit histories and AA reports. Dave Curry has photocopies of A/A reports for the three Regiments and will honor requests to search them for specific names and dates.

The A/A reports excerpted below will give you a sense of "what it was like." Bear in mind that:

- The Rag Tag Circus had advanced over 200 miles in 13 days.
- The 83rd crossed the Elbe River on 13 April 1945 and occupied territory on the East Bank earmarked for the Soviet army and held it until 6 May.
- The 83rd G-1 Journal for 0930 Hrs 13 April carries this entry: "CG (General Macon) announced there was no limitation on our advance. **On to Berlin!**"
- Hundreds of liberated US and British soldiers and thousand of displaced persons and German civilians were walking East.
- The 331st and 330th Regiments had liberated the Langenstein concentration camp, although no mention of it is made in the A/A report. Paul Reed, Jr. and Charles Abdinoor of the 330th witnessed this event and the US Memorial Holocaust Museum placed the 83rd on its Heroes Roster in recognition of this deed.
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945.

We are looking at a few options for capturing more of the 83rd records at NARA II and making them available to Association members in hard copy or on CD-Roms. Your suggestions are welcome. www.zamulare@verizon.net

11 April 1945 -

At 0730 the 3rd Battalion left for GOSLAR for attachment to Task Force Biddle. At 1200, CT 331 reverted to Division control, alerted to move to the vicinity of GOSLAR as soon as trucks became available. Upon reverting to Division control, the following attachments reverted to Corps control:

Co. "A" 823rd T.D. Bn. (SP)
Troop "A" 125th Cavalry.

The advanced elements of CT 331 crossed IP at 1530 and the Regimental CP closed out at ALFELD at 1630. At close of the period all elements of Combat Team had not closed in their new assembly areas.

The 1st Battalion was alerted at 1145 to move to vicinity of GOSLAR. The Battalion OP Group and company commanders were to move with Colonel York, leaving at 1630. The Battalion was to follow as soon as Quartermaster trucks arrived from Corps. At 2000 the Battalion moved out behind the 2nd Battalion and at the close of the period had not closed into their new assembly area.

2nd Battalion. The Battalion remained in SIBBESSE and WESTFIELD until 1800 when it entrucked for LANGENSTEIN arriving there at 0200, 12 April 1945, after a journey of 62 miles. Hot breakfast was served at 0430. Col. McDonald issued his attack order which called for a drive of 40 miles, the final objective being the town of NIENBERG. Co. "E" moving out at 0530 led the drive and had attached a platoon of tanks and two 2-1/2 ton trucks. It was to by-pass all resistance leaving that for Companies "F" and "G" to clean up. Very little resistance was met by the companies - the enemy preferring to surrender rather than fight. By 1730 NIENBERG was cleared after a fight - the only real one of the day. Lt. Clopton spearheaded the Battalion with skill and aggressiveness, personally taking care of many pockets of resistance. The Battalion's first objective, DITFURT, was taken at 0700 against little resistance - 900 British and 70 American PW's were freed including two original members of Co. "E". GATERSLEBEN, NACHTERSTADT, FRASE, and KONGISAUE were taken in quick order. In the latter town a few die-hards chose to fight but surrendered when they saw the infantry deploy. About two miles past WINNINGEN the point observed a train traveling across the front. A tank moved up and knocked out the engine with three rounds of 76-mm. About one mile beyond HECKLINGEN the convoy overran a German wagon train moving to the rear. This netted 250 prisoners and six officers and many souvenirs. At LEOPOLDSTALL no resistance was met but about 2000 Allied PW's were freed, mostly Poles and French. At HEBENDORF a few fanatics decided to fight. When nearing the town Lt. Slean observed a truck trying to get away. He immediately engaged it with .50 caliber MG fire, setting it afire. The company dismounted and with all guns blazing quickly cleared the town. The final objective of the day, NIENBERG, on the SAAL RIVER, resisted very stubbornly with small arms fire. The third platoon pushed to the far edge of town and set up road blocks on roads leading back into town. The other two platoons cleared the town of the enemy by-passed by the third. Two Hitler

Youth were met who fired on our troops. They were dealt with accordingly. At 1730 the town was cleared and outposted. Distance covered - 50 miles; Allied PW's recaptured - 2,500; enemy killed - 25; PW's captured - 1,149 including 57 officers. Companies "F" and "G" followed the lead company mopping up where necessary. At the close of the day Co. "F" helped Co. "E" outpost NIENBERG and Co. "G" moved to NEUGATTERSLEBEN to outpost it. Co. "G's" CP was set up in a castle built in 1537 containing 50 sumptuously furnished rooms.

3rd Battalion. At 0100 orders were received that the IP time would be 0930 and Major Sellers would report to Colonel Biddle at the Division CP at 0800 the next morning. The Battalion crossed the IP at 0939 and closed into GOSLAR at 1100. At Division CP Major Sellers had received orders that we were attached to Task Force Biddle and that our mission was to protect the right flank of the 2nd Armored Division by capturing and securing ILSENBURG, DRULECH, DARLINGERODE, and WINGERODE. The Battalion moved out in a column of companies at 1230. Order of march was "I", "L", and "K". The towns of ILSENBURG and DRULECH were taken with no resistance, however DRULECH was very strongly defended and only after the commitment of both "I" and "K" Companies were the enemy driven from their positions. The terrain surrounding the town was very flat and open and only the exceptionally well executed marching fire kept our casualties to a minimum. At 1600 the battalion moved out for WINGERODE and entered the northern edge of town without difficulty. However, once into the town the enemy used sniper and panzerfaust fire to a maximum to delay our advance. After bitter street fighting against snipers, panzerfaust and automatic weapons, the town was finally cleared at 2000. A large prisoner of war camp was overrun and two or three hundred British soldiers were liberated. They were fed, given baths, and a place to sleep comfortably. To see the gratitude in their faces made us more fully realize the cause for which we are fighting. Several fanatical German snipers kept up harrassing sniper fire until they were located and killed.

Regimental CP closed out at ALFELD at 1630 and opened at DERENBERG at 0230, 12 April 1945.
Casualties: 7 Wounded; and 431 Prisoners captured.

12 April 1945 -

Regimental CP opened at DERENBURG (1868) at 0230. CT minus 3rd Bn. closed at 0900. Mission of CT 331, to advance on right sector of division to secure bridgehead over the ELBE RIVER at BREITENHAGEN (9078) and protect right flank of Division.

PLAN - 1ST BATTALION: Attack along Route "B" seize BORNECKE (2763), WESTERHAUSEN (2962), and DITFURT (3864) and be prepared to attack S.E. and secure GATERSLEBEN (4564), NACHTERSTEDT, and FROSE (5161) or follow 2nd Battalion to SCHADELEBEN (5066), continue N.W. and seize COCHSTEDT (5371), BORNECKE (5771), HODERBURG (6271), FORDERSTEDT (6873), BRUMBY (7474), CALBE (7874). In the event 2nd Battalion

Antoine Noslier
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Saint-Leonard
35120 EPINIAC
FRANCE

antoine.noslier@laposte.net

20854-3220

Dear Sir,

I am French and I live in Brittany. I am 21 years old. I am passionate by the story of the 83rd Infantry Division during the WWII. I created a website dedicated for the men of the Thunderbolt Division (not available at this time).

During a research, I contacted a french who lives near Dinan. He was a member of the 83rd Signal Company during some months : August 1944 - January 1945 and April 1945 - November 1945. He was friend with 2nd Lieutenant Sheldon Cubberley (Trenton, NJ) who died in 1985, Milenko Tomich (Medina, Ohio), Henry J. Bedard (Champlain, NY) and Philip B. Johnson (Michigan). He was decorated by a Good Conduct medal and he was probably one of the most young soldier of the 83rd (he was 15 years old in 1944). the name of this veteran is MARCEL BERTRAND, nicknamed "Kid French" and served on a SCR-399.

He would like to find his friends but he has not internet. I think that two of this friends are still alive.

* Henry J Bedard
28 Fiske Rd
West Chazy, NY 12992-3519
(518) 493-2844

* Philip B Johnson
19901 Cherry Hill St
Southfield, MI 48076-1080
(248) 644-3174

If you have any informations, contact me by a letter or an email.

Best Regards,

Antoine Noslier

Rudy's Reply

Dear Mr. Noslier,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter because I was a member of the 83rd Signal Co. I knew Joe Cubberley who was a master sergeant in the Radio Platoon of the Signal Co. until late in the war when he went to Paris to take 6 weeks officers training and became a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry, as I remember it. Shortly after he returned from Paris, the war ended.

I am forwarding a copy of your letter to David Curry, our historian and the son of one of our veterans, to see if he has any information. I will also see what information I can find. There will be a celebration of the liberation of the town of Sainteny, Normandy by 83rd troops on 6 June 2009. I hope to attend. Rudy Zamula

Dear Clifton:

I am contributing this report on my own for the Michigan Chapter. Still Looking for Peace, Joe Romano

**Three days in the life of a replacement combat infantryman in
Co. F – 2nd Bat. 331 Reg 83rd Division
July August – 1944**

Day 1

After the big breakout from the Hedgerows, we were loaded on trucks and headed for the St. Malo area to make contact with the retreating Germans.

As we drove along the road to our destination, we saw the devastation our guys in the sky had done. Dead Germans were everywhere along the road. Also, all kinds of equipment, trucks and tanks.

We stopped in a small town to take break. A French farmer approached us and asked us to follow him. He took us to a large stable. Inside the stable lying on the floor in almost perfect formation was at least forty to fifty dead Germans. The stench of death was unbearable. To this day when I smell decaying flesh I will get a flash back.

Day 2

The next day we arrived at our destination and left the trucks. In single file on both sides of the road we moved forward to make contact. Upon making contact our point man was killed and we all scattered for cover. Under cover of darkness we moved in closer to the Germans.

Day 3

When dawn broke we became pinned down by small arms fire and a machine gun, anything that moved was shot at.

The area that the Germans were defending was completely surrounded by barbed wire and on higher ground. Our sergeant using a blind spot in the defensive position, could see a good spot to blow up the barbed wire so that we could get through to the machine gun.

Since I was the new replacement I was chosen to blow up the barbed wire with a bangalore torpedo. I had never had any training in the use of a B.T., but I soon got a lesson on how to use it under actual combat conditions on the job training so to speak!

I refused to do this knowing I would soon be dead. I never was good at remembering names, but our Lt. told me flat out that if I did not obey his orders I

would be court marshaled. I knew I could not come home in disgrace to my family so I chose the inevitable.

He told me I would receive covering fire and a smoke screen so that the Germans would not see me.

The mortar shells began firing and I was given the signal to take off in a crouched position to make a smaller target, I began to run up to the barbed wire. The mortar shells for the smoke screen fell ahead of me. The regular mortar shells were falling in front of me, in back of me, and on both sides of me. I thought my God the Germans aren't going to kill me, my own supporting fire is going to kill me! My boots were smoldering from stepping on the remnants of the shells for the smoke screen. It was rough moving up the hill with the B.T. and my rifle so I dropped my rifle in a depressed part of the hill. I reached the wire. And pushed the B.T. under the wire. I think the B.T. was about ten to twelve feet long. I pulled the pin and then ran back to retrieve my rifle.

The whole ground shook when the B.T. went off. I quickly got up and ran to the opening in the wire barrier. I got through the wire and saw the machine gun emplacement I threw one of my grenades into it. I was told if I yelled "Comrade" the Germans might surrender so I yelled "Comrade!, Comrade!" To my complete surprise four more Germans came out at the end of a tunnel with their hands held up in surrender. The rest of the platoon came up and secured the rest of the position.

A German officer was at the machine gun when I threw the grenade. One of the guys asked me if I wanted his luger since I had killed him. I told him he could have it. I just felt that I could not accept some sort of trophy for having to kill another human being.

As the sun set that day some sort of inner voice seemed to say to me I would survive the crazy holocaust. At this time in the Brittany Peninsula one has to picture small battles like this going on in the Peninsula to clear out the Germans.

Philosophical Comments:

The law of averages dictates that as a combat infantryman in WWII, you were destined to be killed, wounded, or captured. It was just a matter of time. I was captured in the Hurtgen Forest and became a prisoner of war.

If there are any survivors of Co F 2nd Bat 331 Reg and can remember Day 3, please contact me. I'm in the twilight years of my life and would like to hear from you.

Joseph Romano, 586-949-4562

July 22, 2008

To: Editor Cliff Wooldridge
From: Paul Shrawder

Sir,

I am writing to inform you of the passing of my Father. Allison (Al) Roberts Shrawder. S/Sgt. D Co. 331st Reg. 83rd. Division, who passed on 1-5-09 at his home in Evansville, Indiana. Dad was just a month short of turning 90. One of the great enjoyments of his life was attending 83rd reunions. He and my mother Carol, attended nearly all of them from the early 70's until her passing in 1989. After that his friends in the 83rd convinced him to start coming again and he did, with his friend Charlotte. They attended all of them until just missing the last 2 for health reasons. Dad loved attending the reunions, the mini-reunions and often a group of friends would go early, or stay on for extra days. He really enjoyed being part of the selection committee for the reunions for many years including being President of the 83rd in 2004. Several of the reunions I or my sisters attended with him, probably one our fondest memories though was all of us attending the dedication of the WWII Memorial with Dad in Washington D.C. in 2004.

Dad was from Bridgeton, New Jersey. Drafted into the Army 6 months before Pearl Harbor he often told that he was supposed to be in the Army 1 year but after Pearl Harbor he was told his time was extended "for the duration of the emergency" which lasted, for him, the entire war. His other favorite story was when ~~was~~ drafted he was asked if he had ever been on a horse to which he replied no. He was then directed into the Calvary line, when he pointed out his answer had been no, they told him "we don't want people in the Calvary who have ridden horses before because they think they know how to ride, we will teach you the Army way to ride." My Dad was at Fort Riley in the Calvary and then Fort Dix, before he was told the Calvary unit was being disbanded and he was sent to Camp Atterbury to join the newly forming 83rd Division. He was with the 83rd from beginning to the end of the war and some occupation in Germany. Dad received a number of campaign medals and the bronze star. Asked what he did to earn the bronze star he would laugh and say that he got it for having delivered the mail under fire. When I was younger he did not speak much of the war but in later years he had many stories, such as: the convoy to England, aboard ship in the channel during D'day, their Company Commander being lost in the first days of combat, the hedgerows, the Hurtgen forest, the Bulge, concentration camps and much more.

Al Shrawder became a successful businessman in Evansville, for Shane Uniform Company and then Atlas Van Lines. Married Carol in 1945, whom he met while on weekend leave from Camp Breckinridge, KY and corresponded with daily through the war. He had 3 daughters and a son, all of whom he put through college, saw them married and gave him 9 grandchildren and 1 great grandson. While very proud of his family and his accomplishments, he often spoke of how being in the Army had caused him to travel the country and across Europe and what a experience of a lifetime it was for a young man such as he. He will be missed very much by his family and friends.

Paul Shrawder
2318 Pine Point Cove
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46814



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Cliff Wooldridge

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