



Ferris selected as new 29th Infantry Division command sergeant major

RICHMOND, VA – Command Sgt. Maj. Alan M. Ferris has been selected to serve as the new 29th Infantry Division command sergeant major, according to an announcement made Oct. 26, 2018, by Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia.

Ferris succeeds Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald L. Smith, Jr. who now serves as the Virginia Army National Guard command sergeant major.

Ferris has served as the Virginia National Guard senior enlisted leader since Dec. 1, 2014, in a traditional Guard status, and his effective date of assignment in the new position will be Dec. 1, 2018.

"Command Sgt. Maj. Ferris has been my trusted advisor for the last four years, and his advice and counsel have been invaluable as the Vir-

(Continued on page 25)

Centennial Convention in Roanoke features the D-Day Memorial & D-Day witness Bernard Marie

As the forces of nature converged on Roanoke on 11 October, so too did the members, families and friends of the 29th Division Association. The day before, Hurricane Michael made landfall on the Florida panhandle as a Category 4 hurricane with sustained winds of approximately 155 mph.

The storm literally destroyed the gulf coast town of Mexico City. By the 11th the remnants of the storm were bearing down on western Virginia with torrential downpours. For those who made the drive south down Interstate 81, it was a white-knuckler most of the way with flash flooding in the Roanoke area. The sight of the Holiday Inn – Valley View was a very welcome one after such a harrowing trip.

Even more so was the hospitality suite. As soon as one entered, the storm and nasty ride were forgotten, as the warmth and camaraderie were palpable throughout the room. As old friends renewed acquaintances and newcomers introduced, the atmosphere raised the spirits and confirmed that this was an organization that revered and cherished its purpose. There was laughter and spirited conversation with the food that would be ever present throughout the weekend available in abundance. PO Frank Shilow was doing a brisk business with everything from books to pins to jackets and hats available for purchase.

After an evening of reminiscing and reacquainting, Friday morning dawned with clear skies and the blustery winds that always trail the hurricanes' rainstorms. As everyone

boarded the bus to travel to Bedford one had to marvel at the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains as they provided the backdrop for the day's journey. As the group travelled the 30 miles from the hotel to the D

-Day Memorial, PNC Bill King, Post #64 Commander, provided commentary about both the history and nature of this area of Virginia.

One story really resonated with the group and that one involved the roots of the 116th Infantry Regiment. Citing BG Ted Shuey's book "Ever Forward," PNC King recounted the Battle of Point Pleasant which some consider to be the beginning of the American Revolution. The site of the

battle was in the western part of the Virginia colony near the Ohio River, now West Virginia, and part of Dunmore's War.

Lord Dunmore was the British colonial governor of Virginia and the last royal resident of the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg. The Augusta County Militia, recruited in the Shenandoah Valley, fought the Shawnee and Mingo tribes. On 10 October 1774 the Indians under Chief Cornstalk ambushed the militia at Point Pleasant but were soundly defeated and forced to retreat.

The Battle of Point Pleasant predated the battles at Concord and Lexington that occurred in April 1775. The Virginia militia played a major role in the Revolution and ironically forced Lord Dunmore and the British troops out of the colony. Thus began the rich history that led to the Stonewall Brigade and ultimately the 116th Regiment.

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Monsieur Bernard Marie

THE TWENTY-NINER

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MEET YOUR NEW

National Commander – J. David Leighton

I would like to thank you for your vote of confidence in electing me as National Commander of such a historical unit. I will try to uphold the high standards of the commanders before me.

We have a lot to accomplish in the upcoming year. During the annual conference, several changes to the by-laws were discussed and approved. When making changes to by-laws, we want to ensure that the verbiage accurately depicts what we are trying to accomplish, while ensuring the language protects us and/or other individuals.

I wish to thank everyone for coming to Roanoke for the convention. I think everyone enjoyed seeing our beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. The tour of Black Dog Salvage was a real experience. For those who don't know, Black Dog Salvage has become famous for the television show Salvage Dogs on the DIY Network. Check it out sometime.

Our convention was a great success! As always, that success can only be accomplished with the help of our ladies. Many hours are spent planning activities, decorating the tables, and making our



Hospitality Room the place to be. Also want to thank other Post 64 members who gave a lot of their time as well.

Next year we have another major milestone of the 75th anniversary of the D-Day invasion. I'm so glad many of you had the opportunity to visit the D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia. This is an experience you can't forget and I'm moved with every visit. It is a stark reminder of those who sacrificed for our freedom.

We are planning our next conference to be held in Virginia Beach and are working to finalize the venue. More information to come regarding dates and location.

The next National Executive Committee (NEC II) will be held on Thursday, January 24, 2019 in Pikesville, Maryland; same

place as last year. I am working to schedule the NEC III meeting in Winchester, Virginia for June 2019.

The Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery will be held on June 29, 2019 at 12:15. Lunch will be provided afterwards at Spates Community Center at Fort Myer.

My plan for next year is to visit as many Post meetings as possible. I want to offer my support for any needs they may have or challenges they may face. Our local Posts are the backbone of the association so I want to make sure they are strong.

The biggest focus for this next year is to continue growing the 29th Division Association. Specifically, we would like to draw in some younger members to allow our efforts to continue. We are not getting any younger and need these guys to carry on the tradition of the 29th.

I plan to visit as many National Guard Armories as possible to tell our story and encourage the troops to join us. I think when they learn about all we have accomplished and how we honor those who sacrificed so much, they will see the importance of carrying on our legacy. I challenge each one of you to think of other ways to bring in new members. Working together, I believe we can grow the 29th Division Association to be the best it has ever been.

*J. David Leighton
National Commander*

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Important Notice

We have now decided to offer the *Twenty-Niner* in electronic format.

This effort will start with the Spring 2019 edition.

If you would like to receive a 'pdf' of the *Twenty-Niner* in the Spring, please send an email to:

Bill Held, @ **29erNewsletter@Gmail.com**.

Please include your name with your request.

He is creating an emailing list for this purpose.

This will not affect those of you who wish to keep receiving the printed copy.

Donations to the *Twenty-Niner*

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our membership for their generosity in contributing to the *Twenty-Niner* for this Summer issue. From July 1, 2018, through October 31, 2018, these donations totaled \$1,005.00. Note our cut-off time. If your contributions did not reach our National Executive Director by October 31, 2018 then it will not be listed until the next issue. **Donation checks must be made payable to the 29th Division Association.**

Adler, Eric, Post 94, Son, Wappingers Falls, NY

In memory of his father Harold Adler, C/116

Byrne, Thomas, Post 93, Associate, Wellesley, MA

DeSimone, Richard & family, Post 1-72, 29th CAB, Baltimore, MD

In memory of PNC I. John Vaccarino

Dooley, PNC Ivan V., Post 110, HHC/121ENG, Parkville, MD

In memory of PNC I. John Vaccarino

Fleming, Thomas J., Post 93, Son, Auburn, MA

In memory of his father SGT Thomas F. Fleming, G/2/115

McLaughlin, John D., Post 94, HHC/29ID(L), Aston, PA

Meylor, Thomas E., Post 29, B/115, Longmont, CO

Northrop Grumman, P.O. Box 17319, Baltimore, MD

In memory of PNC I. John Vaccarino

Post 78, Cresap's Rifles

In memory of Carl L. Culler, A/1/115

In memory of Richard T. Kreh, Sr., A/1/115

In memory of Everest M. Moxley, Jr. A/1/115

Post 93, New England Post 93

In memory of PNC I. John Vaccarino

Post 93, New England Post 93

Veteran Corps, Fifth Regiment Infantry

In memory of NFO/PRC Robert W. "Bob" Jones

In memory of Veteran Corps Past Commander I. John Vaccarino

In memory of J. Thomas Nissel

Zwerin, David, Post 94, Associate, Merrick, NY

Attention!

Post Adjutants & Finance Officers

New member information should be forwarded to National Headquarters as soon as possible. Some posts send the information weeks and in some cases months later.

This results in the new member not receiving the latest issues of the *Chin Strap* and *Twenty-Niner* to which they are entitled.

Please email this new member information to Will Mund at duster197329@gmail.com or by telephone to 443-529-4233. To delay their addition to the mailing lists is a disservice to our new member.

Email addresses are an important tool in lowering the cost of mailing the *Chin Strap* and the *Twenty-Niner*. We are now emailing the *Chin Strap* to around 800 members. We hope to attain the same amount of participation with the emailing of the *Twenty-Niner*.

Remember: Do not delay sending in new member information.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Message from the National Finance Officer

Greetings fellow 29er's. I am honored to have been elected as the National Finance Officer for the 29th Division Association. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the 100th Annual Reunion and Convention as I was in Albuquerque, NM attending the Retired Army Finance Organization reunion which was held at the same time.

For a little background I enlisted in Co C, 103rd Medical Battalion in 1971 and transferred to Detachment 2, 28th Finance Company in 1975 after beginning my fulltime career with the Guard.

I was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Finance Corp in 1980 following my graduation from the State Officer Candidate Program and I served as Company Commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 29th DISCOM, 29th Infantry Division (L) as a young Captain while also serving as the Comptroller at the USPFO.

Following my Command time, I returned to State Headquarters where I spent most of my career supporting all the Maryland Guard units. I retired from the Maryland Army National Guard in 2005 as a Colonel serving as the J-8, Deputy Director of Property and Fiscal Affairs.

I am a member and Past Post Commander of Dundalk Post 58. I have some very big shoes to fill as NFO and I look forward to working with and supporting National Commander Leighton, the Executive Committee, and the membership of this great organization.

For the past several weeks I have been working with Past National Finance Officer Brian Becker and National Executive Director Will Mund on transferring the banking accounts and financial records and understanding my duties. I ask for your understanding and support going forward as I begin my journey.

If at any time you need something or have a suggestion to better this great organization, please email me. I have established the following email address for the Association NFO: NFO29thDivAssoc@gmail.com.

Tom Knight
National Finance Officer

Important Notice to all posts

All posts are requested to submit one of two documents to the National Finance Officer for Fiscal Year 2018.

One document being a statement that the post's "normal revenue stream" is less than **\$50,000** a year; or, a copy of a current financial statement that shows the "current revenue stream". Whichever document you chose to send it **MUST** be signed by the Post Finance Officer or Post Commander.

Failure to provide either of the documents to the National Finance Officer by 15 January 2019 will result in the requirement that the Post must file their own **IRS Return 990-N**.

If any Post has a "normal revenue stream in excess of **\$50,000** per year" they will be required to file their own **IRS Form 990 EZ**.

The National Finance Officer has filed all **IRS 990** documents for all posts for Fiscal Year 2017. If you have any questions please contact the NFO.

Email is the preferred method of sending the document, however, if that is not an option please mail the document. Below are both email and USPS mailing address.

Email: NFO29thDivAssoc@gmail.com

USPS: NFO, 29th Division Association (Tom Knight)
1702 Mews Way
Fallston, MD 21047

TAPS

The following list shows names of known 29ers and their ladies or family members who died and their deaths reported from July 1, 2018 through October 31, 2018. We are indeed saddened and mourn their passing. We extend our deepest sympathy and love to their families and loved ones. We pray that they and all of our earlier deceased 29ers and ladies may rest in peace. Amen.

LAST ROLL CALL

Bazzell, Carlton E., Post 78, USN, Grasonville, MD 8/26/18
 Faulk, Ray W., Post 110, 29RECON, Plumerville, AR 6/11/18
 Friedel, Donald J., Post 110, HHC/3BDE, Towson, MD 7/19/18
 Gorum, Clyde, G., Post 64, I/116, Shreveport, LA 6/9/18
 Harlan, Amos H., Jr., Post 85, E/115, Titusville, FL 10/22/18
 Hedley, Clifton F., Post 1-72, HHC/175, Princess Anne, MD 4/15/18
 Huntsberry, Paul, Post 85, E/115, Perryville, MD 10/25/18
 Johnson, Delbert, Sr., Post 85, E/115, Elkton, MD 10/14/18
 Jones, NFO Robert W., Post 88, HQ/2/115, Stevensville, MD 7/12/18
 Kramer, Paul, Post 2, HQ/2/175, Bradenton, FL 7/2/18
 Lansing, Wayne, Post 94, B/821TD, Portland, OR 3/22/18
 Losinski, Francis A., Post 48, H/115, Winona, MN 10/7/15
 Oster, Dr. Walter, 104 Med, Cumberland, MD 7/9/18
 Riley, Thomas M., Post 64, E/116, Augusta, GA 7/17/13
 Recard, Glenn T., Post 729, 729MB, Waynesboro, PA 10/12/18
 Simons, John, Post 94, I/175, Roswell, NM 5/26/18
 Vaccarino, PNC I. John, Post 1-72, HQ/1/175, Ellicott City, MD 7/9/18

LADIES

Atkins, Helen, Widow, Elliston, VA 2/28/18
 Bryant, Barbara "Barbie", Baltimore, MD 9/22/18
 Douglas, Ruth H., Widow, Smithsburg, MD 8/19/18
 Levin, Agnes, Post 64, Widow, Roanoke, VA 8/21/18
 Robertson, Margaret, Widow, Cumberland, MD 8/29/15
 Smith, Patricia M., Widow, Smithsburg, MD 2/9/16

Official Announcement

NEC II

24 January 2019

0930 hours

Pikesville Military Reservation

NCO Club

Cost is **\$15.00** with check made payable to **29th Division Association** and mailed to:

William Mund
441 Chalfonte Drive
Baltimore, MD 21228-4017

For accountability purposes all checks must be received by **17 January 2019**.

LEST WE FORGET

It was decided long ago, that as long as two 29ers survive, we shall remember and honor our comrades and ladies who have passed to the great beyond.

You have just read a list of 17 comrades and 6 ladies who have died and whose deaths were reported to us since our last publication.

We ask survivors, friends, Post and Regional Officers to forward information, as complete as possible, on the deceased to the National Executive Director, so that we can include them in the next issue of "The Twenty-Niner" and in the National Reunion Memorial Service. This will only be possible with your help.

Reverend John Schildt
 National Chaplain
 P.O. Box 145
 Sharpsburg, MD 21782-0145
 Telephone 301-432-0087

William S. Mund, Jr.
 National Executive Director
 441 Chalfonte Drive
 Baltimore, MD 21228-4017
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Legion of Honor Recipients

In recognition of the French government's noble effort to award the Legion of Honor to veterans who participated in the liberation of France during the Second World War, the editorial staff of the *Twenty-Niner* wishes to publish the names of those recipients in the upcoming issues.

29th Division veterans who have received this award must submit the following information to the address listed below:

Name:
 Unit served in:
 Current address (City and State):
 Post number:
 Date award was received:

William S. Mund, Jr.
 441 Chalfonte Drive
 Baltimore, MD 21228
duster197329@gmail.com

Note: If you've already submitted your name and it has been published, please do not submit it again.

Out In Front — All The Way

Part 2

an account of James Slade Morris – 115th Infantry

by his Grandson, Gregory L. Stapleton

CHAPTER 8 Return to Combat

After several weeks of plodding through the hedgerow country, the 29th Division was ordered to take the vital crossroads town of St. Lo. The fighting leading up to this point had been brutal and casualties had been high. Both Corps and Army commanders wanted St. Lo taken so that its strategic location could be used as a jumping off point for the next phase of the allied effort, the breakout from Normandy. As the regiments of the division paused to prepare for the assault on St. Lo, the depleted ranks of their units were sent replacements to try to bring them up to fighting strength. Major Morris got his wish to return to the fight, it was a role he did not anticipate, but one he would fill well over the coming weeks and months.

General Gerhardt sent the veteran Morris to the 2nd Battalion 115th Infantry after his displeasure with an attack by that unit in the opening campaign for St. Lo. Gerhardt ordered Maj. Maurice Clift relieved as CO, and Col. Ordway replaced him with the Battalion's S-2 Major Asbury Jackson. Morris with experience as both a CO and XO was sent on a temporary basis to help out. It was the first of several "pinch hitting" assignments he would draw. The 115th Infantry was right in the middle of its attack on St. Lo but on the 13th of July Morris wrote home: "I have not had a moment to write for the past few days, there will be times when I won't be able to write for several days". He knew that the 2nd Battalion was going to be involved in some of the worst fighting so far in the campaign. This was going to be a different kind of fighting. They were now out of the hedgerows and open country. Now it would be brutal street warfare, fighting house to house and it would not let up until they took the whole town.¹

The 15th of July he wrote: "Things are pretty hot and heavy still...there have been a few (casualties) but very few that you know"... "My feet are in pretty fare shape now". He seems to indicate that he returned to combat even before he should have, and his feet were not fully recovered. But the battle for St. Lo was to be a pivotal battle and he did not want to miss it. The 2-115th captured one of the last strong points on the road to St. Lo, La Panache on the 18th.²

On the 19th of July, the 2-115th moved into positions that had been hard fought and won by the 116th Infantry. The 116th badly in need of rest and resupply was being pulled from the lines. In the fight the 3rd Battalion 116th Infantry had lost its CO Major Thomas Howie, a personable and well-liked officer. General Gerhardt had ordered that the body of Major Howie be carried into St. Lo, where his flag draped body was laid upon a pile of debris in the town square for passing troops to see. He was immortalized by the press as "The Major of St. Lo".



With the death of Major Howie, On July 20th Gerhardt again called on Morris, and assigned him to the 116th Infantry to fill one of its battalion XO positions. Noted 29th Division historian and writer Joe Balkoski in his book 29th Division in WWII wrote:

"Major Jim Morris was a veteran soldier, he had come ashore on D-Day with the 115th Infantry, but had been withdrawn from the front a few weeks later after suffering foot troubles that nearly crippled him. Gerhardt respected his command ability, and when he recovered Morris returned, Uncle Charlie transferred him to the 116th Infantry as XO of one of its Infantry battalions."

"Morris was accepted by the Stonewallers of the 116th because he was a skilled military leader."³

The 116th Infantry was a "sister" battalion to the 115th Infantry in the 29th Division, and it had a long and proud military legacy of its own. A legacy that now included being part of the costly first wave to land on the shores of occupied France on D-Day. The Secretary of War Robert Patterson called the actions of the 116th on D-Day as "*Deserving a place in American History as heroic as the charge of Pickett's men at Gettysburg and the charge of Hancock's men at the 'Bloody Angle' at Spotsylvania*".

Their baptism of fire had been bloody and had cost some companies dearly in young men's lives to secure the first foothold on the continent. These brave troops were veteran soldiers now and held leaders to a higher standard, one required by the friends and comrades left behind on Omaha Beach.

After the fall of St. Lo, the 29th Division is relieved by the 35th Division on the 20th of July, and is sent to a rest area near St. Claire-sur-elle.⁴

Four days after his transfer to the 116th, Morris wrote to his wife to catch her up on all that had happened:

"I have gone back to the Infantry, but instead of the 115th I am with the Virginia outfit, the 116th"...."my job here will be an XO of 3rd Bn., the same job I had in the 115th ...The Bn's here have CO's but a couple of the execs were knocked off recently so they need me, sore feet and all. My feet are much better and I don't think they will be too bad from here to Berlin".

He filled her in on some of the people he wrote to her about or they knew from before the war:

"It is fairly certain that Scotty (Capt. Rich'd Scott, HQ Co. 2 -115th) is a prisoner of war since a soldier who was captured with him, escaped and said that Scotty was a prisoner. Warfield (Col., 2-115th CO) was killed at the same time as Scotty was taken".

"Newcomb (Capt., S-3, 1-115th) was going forward to be sure that one of the companies got an urgent message and was killed instantly by rifle fire through the head. He never knew what hit him. We got his body out very soon afterwards and is buried in a cemetery near here". "Blatt was hit on D-Day and died June 12. Grat (Capt. Haskins) is XO of one of the battalions in the old outfit and I hear he is to be promoted to Major".

He describes how the fighting is taking its toll on the men:

"It is surprising how these young fellows get old and serious so quickly, while we old men break down in the feet, etc."... "I don't claim to be old but youth is a big advantage to a fellow in this business"

Jim Morris was 36 years old when he wrote that.

He then told Clara that he did not like hearing the things he was writing home about were making it into the local papers. His mother had sent the entire letter he wrote on June 21st to the local paper The Delta Herald-Times and it had been printed nearly in its entirety. The once a week paper was regarded by Morris as little more than a gossip sheet.

"Please tell mother when I write about my experiences I don't want all the publicity I have been getting. Its all right to tell our people and friends, but not the newspapers, Please". "I don't like publicity, especially when there are so many other fellows down in the front lines who are doing a dam tough job, although it may not be spectacular".

"I have been fired at by every weapon the Germans have and by some of our own...but some of the boys have fought with knives, bayonets, and even bare hands".

"My weapon is only a pistol, but on occasion I have carried a carbine or rifle, and once I had an occasion to throw 3 hand grenades, but I haven't cut anyone's guts out yet, and when I do then you can put my name in the paper, then I will feel I deserve some press notice".

"It is true that not many dogfaces have been singled out as a target by a tank but I only did what any Joe would have done – try to save my skin. I didn't lose my head or give up, it never entered my mind to give up, but I did speculate on how many seconds I had to live". "I'm not out to get a bunch of medals and I don't care who knows it. ... Those who get medals are either lucky or good politicians. There are so damn many that talk a good fight. ... I want those boys who live day and night across the fence from jerry to have my medals".

Morris felt very strongly about his part in the war, but his admiration for "the boys" came out again and again in his letters. It was one of the reasons he could not leave division, he wanted to stick out this fight until the end, the average soldier had no choice in his assignment, but Morris wanted to be there for them.

CHAPTER 9

Operation Cobra

Now that St. Lo was in American hands, Bradley, the U.S. Ground Commander in Europe planned for a breakout from the Bocage country that would end the near stalemate in Normandy, and allow the Americans to utilize the greatest strengths of the U.S. Army, mobility, and firepower. The close confines and patchwork nature of the Normandy region had neutralized the power of the Americans to employ "Fire and Maneuver", a basic tenant of their military doctrine. If they could move the fight out into the open French countryside, the speed of its maneuver elements, particularly the armored divisions, and overwhelming firepower would shift the balance to the American's favor. The plan to bring about this breakout was known as "Operation Cobra", and it was set in motion on July 25th 1944.

The 29th Division, enjoyed only a brief rest after its conquest of St. Lo, before First Army needed it back on the line. The division was ordered to cross over the Vire River at St. Lo on July 28th, and take a position on the left flank of the Army's penetration. ¹ The next day found the division deployed near the village of Percy, a major road intersection. The 175th Infantry was deployed forward and they encountered German armor near Villebaudon, the first real meeting with an armored force for the Twenty-niners. ²

The attack ground to a halt, later in the day the 115th tried to resume the assault on the division's right but it met stiff resistance outside Percy and could not proceed. The next day the regiment was attacked by German tanks and suffered severe casualties. ³

The 116th Infantry was put into the attack on August 1st along the left flank of the division and given the job of taking the crossroads village of Moyon. This assignment was a guarding attack on the flank of the Cobra offensive to protect it from German counterattacks, and to keep the Germans reeling from the impact of the main assault. The Germans pulled back to Vire and First Army ordered the 29th to assault and take the vital crossroads town. ⁴

The division made a slow steady advance toward Vire with the 115th and 116th Regiments in the lead. The Germans employed mostly delaying tactics while they retreated and prepared to defend Vire. In a single day, the Third of August the division, mostly taking ground by soldiers on foot advanced six miles, a "lightning pace" compared to the progress achieved while in the hedgerow country of Normandy. ⁵

The Division's units closed to within a mile of the city. On the 4th of August the assault on the city of Vire begins with the attack to take the strategic hill # 219 overlooking Vire. Attacking from the northwest the 2-116th began the assault on the hill, but it was stopped, and the 3-116th advanced through the stalled attack. The attack was successful and the momentum re-ignited the 2nd Battalion attack. After two days of fighting the 116th held the hills overlooking Vire. The 3rd Battalion took the left and the 2nd took the right side of the hill. The other two regiments (115th and

175th) swung south of the city to cut it off from reinforcements. The CO of 3-116th Major Puntenney suffered a non-battle injury and Major Jim Morris took over command of the battalion.

Word came from Gen. Gerhardt to immediately take important the road and market town. The assault seemed an impossibility. Col. Dwyer (CO, 116th Inf.) disputed the decision, but was ordered to implement the attack. Even the normally confident Gerhardt appeared to have misgivings with the plan.⁶

The town lay on the eastern side of deep ravine with hills and ridges surrounding it and these conditions presented an ideal defensive location. The Vire River cut through the western and southern sides of the city forming a steep ravine that was a "natural moat"⁷

The attack on Vire was supposed to commence at 1800 hours as Major Morris, in command only one day would lead his 3rd Battalion alongside the 2nd Battalion of Major Charles Cawthon, but the assault did not get underway until 1915 hours.⁸

At dusk as the daring attack was beginning the near bank was shadowed in darkness, however the fading sun illuminated the enemy side and the town beyond. The assaulting companies began the decent into the ravine, followed close by the battalion command group, with the reserve company bringing up the rear. The attack was a "highly audacious undertaking" and caught the Germans who were accustomed to the Americans digging in for the night by surprise.⁹

The Germans fired flares to try to light up the riverbanks and allow the defenders to see the attacking GI's. The attackers rapidly descended the steep eastern slope of Hill 219 toward the river below, which was not much more than a large stream at this point. German 88's * opened up on them as they reached the bottom, but the attack could not be deterred. They rapidly forded the river and ascended the sharp opposite slope under considerable small arms fire.¹⁰

Using the hillside for protection as they climbed, they gained the crest and faced rifle and artillery fire from the town. The troops crossed the road and advanced into the streets of Western Vire in force. The battalions reached the city center by about 2300 hours, and by midnight the town was in American hands. They began rooting out snipers and searched for enemy soldiers hiding in the basements of houses. The GI's then began preparing defenses for the expected German counterattack. By four in the morning, the town was secure and the Americans were ready for the usual German attempt to retake the town. The assault companies were regrouped and defensive positions were set up at the five main roads that led into the town. * German 88's, a multi-purpose 88 mm artillery gun was extremely accurate and powerful.

The cannon's long and range and lethality earned it the respect of all GI's.

Jim Morris in his after action report (AAR) noted "The town was none too secure, and we had only bazookas for defense against tanks".¹¹

The ravine that they had used to make the successful assault had also prevented bringing up anti-tank resources, however only probing attacks were done by the enemy armor that night.¹²

The town of Vire was now securely in American hands, and reinforcements were brought in the next day. The 2-116th ad-



Captain Jim Morris, 115th Infantry, 1942 - family photo.

vanced past the town to take Hill # 251, which commanded the town from the south and 1-116th moved on Hill # 203 and secured it. These two attacks eliminated the threat from the last of the high ground that dominated Vire. LTC Thomas Dallas (CO, 1-116th) was wounded in the attack and the Regimental XO, LTC Cassell led the assault.¹³

The latest round of fighting had seen the 116th Infantry in almost constant contact with the enemy for two months, during which they suffered nearly 4500 casualties, including about 1000 killed in action.¹⁴ To the men of the 3-116th Infantry Jim Morris had proven himself in the daring assault on the city.¹⁵

The 116th was pulled back to division reserve on the 9th of August, and Jim Morris had a chance to write home, telling his wife he was still with the 3rd Battalion of the 116th and said:

"Believe me we have made history". ... "The Bn. CO was evacuated the other day, and again I have taken command of a Bn." ... Don't know how long he will be away. He wasn't wounded, it was more fatigue than anything else" ... "This command business is a hell of a strain and no matter how tough the going is the CO must be a shining example".

The 29th Division lost one of its great soldiers on August 12th when General Cota was transferred to command the 28th Infantry Division. That same day the division returned to V Corps command.

Jim Morris again was called on to take over commanding another unit when he was sent to the 1st Battalion of the 116th Infantry after the wounding of Major Dallas. He wrote on the 14th to Clara:

"Long time, no write. The past 3 weeks have been plenty busy. I am now commanding the 1st Bn. 116th having been transferred here a couple of days ago. I had the 3rd for a few days til the regular CO returned from the hospital." ... "This is a swell outfit and has really made a good name for itself, so I hope to stay with them right through to the end." ... "I have a swell orderly who takes good care of my feet by keeping dry socks and plenty of powder available".

The 29th Division begins withdrawal from the Normandy lines and is sent to a rest camp. In the just completed cam-

paign, the division suffered over 12,000 casualties including 2300 killed in action.¹⁶

CHAPTER 10

Brest

The 29th Division was ordered to the French region of Brittany on August 21st to liberate the port city of Brest and clean out the cutoff enemy troops on the peninsula. Now attached to the VIII Corps, the division fell under the command of Lt. Gen. George Patton's Third Army. The port of Brest was a major component in the "Overlord" plans for success of the invasion. General Omar Bradley (CO, 1st Army Group) wanted Brest taken as quickly as possible. The fall of Brest and the opening of the harbor would alleviate the Allies reliance on bringing supplies in over the Normandy beaches as well as through the wrecked harbor of Cherbourg. Patton always a cavalryman at heart tried to send an armored division racing to Brest and seize the city, but was stymied by unexpected defensive resolve from the presence of an enemy Fallschirmager (paratrooper) division that higher Allied command did not know was on the peninsula.

Patton and Bradley now knew it would take foot soldiers and lots of them to do the hard fighting to conquer the city, much like the battle it took to take Cherbourg in June. That job was given to the 2nd and 8th Infantry Divisions alongside the Twenty-niners under the command of VIII Corps commander Maj. Gen. Troy Middleton. Middleton an ex-infantryman, was the former commander of the 45th Infantry Division, and he was beloved by the front line "dog faces".¹

The division had to move its 14,000 men more than 200 miles from Normandy to Brittany and be ready to launch an attack on August 23rd. 2 Six Quartermaster Truck Companies were assigned to the 29th and the troops piled into the hundreds of trusty GMC "deuce and a half" * trucks. These workhorse six wheel drive trucks were the backbone of Army mobility, carrying supplies, towing weapons, and carrying up to 25 combat troops. The rare use of trucks to travel for the foot soldiers allowed them to arrive fairly rested and with all equipment in 36 hours.²

The 116th led the way departing early in the evening of August 21st. Huge traffic jams ensnared the column as it vied for space on the tiny Norman roads, bucking the tide of the massive Army movement of troops and supplies that were mostly heading the exact opposite direction than the 29ers.

The 29ers were greeted with cheerful welcomes by the inhabitants of Brittany, which was in stark contrast to the welcome given by many Norman residents. Of course much of Brittany had not yet been fought over between the two opposing armies, destroying any and all objects in their path.³

* The GMC Model CCKW truck was dubbed the "deuce and a half" by GI's because of its load carrying capacity was rated at 2 ½ tons of cargo.

As the trucks deposited the 29ers in Brittany for the campaign to take Brest, they found forty to fifty thousand defenders were encircled in a tightening trap around the city of Brest. The Americans took positions on the front lines in this order; 2nd Infantry Division (ID) on the left (east) flank, the 8th ID in the center, and the 29th ID on the right (west) flank of the semi circle lines. The order of deployment for the 29ers was as follows, 115th on the

left (east), 116th in the center, and 175th on the right (west).

Jim Morris found some time after they arrived in Brittany to write the following lines in a V-Mail home to Clara:

"I have been busy chasing jerries all over France. ... Got the good news that Paris has been liberated. "I am still commanding the 1st Bn.-116th Infantry, and I think we have the best damn outfit in the U.S. Army"

"Time seems to fly, summer will soon be over and it doesn't seem long since we cracked the beach". "This business of commanding a Batt'n is no cinch, but there is nothing else I would rather do in this mans army".

The 116th joins the siege of Brest on August 26th with attacks on Lezvingant and the intersection town of Keriolet. They made good progress through Lezvingant and as they proceeded toward Keriolet resistance stiffened and the attack slowed to a stop about half way to the town. The battalion having suffered high casualties dug in short of its desired objective on high ground for the night.

The next morning at 0900 the 1st Battalion prepared to attack with Co."A" on the left and "B" on the right with Co."C" in reserve. Morris in his AAR noted; *"The skirmishing took the usual form. The enemy resisted with a MG and 5 or 6 rifleman covering each hedgerow. The battalion advanced by fire and movement – mainly along the ditches...In this way the Bn. worked its way into the outer edge of the prepared defenses of Keriolet, losing quite a few men as it proceeded"*.

Morris moved to the Co."A" front line and observed the Germans had cleared wide-open fields of fire at least 100 yards in width. 3 Co. "B" was also halted and effectively pinned down by enemy fire. An attempt to send Co."C" around the left flank to find a vulnerable point could find no better route.

Morris determined that a dreaded direct frontal assault would have to be attempted. He ordered Co."A", the first unit to land on Omaha beach, and now down to 60 men to carry out the attack. 4 Co."A" commander Lt. Wilbur McCormack took a look at what seemed like an impossible attack across the open field and said simply *"I'll try sir"*.⁵

Morris called for tactical air support from the 9th Air Force. Strafing attacks by P-47 Thunderbolt dive-bombers pounded the defenses and at 6:30, just as the bombers finished, Company A dashed across the open field.⁶ Morris was a student of the military maxim of "fire and maneuver", often leading and exhorting his men to "move and shoot". His plan called for Co."A" to advance employing "marching fire" utilizing the high volume of fire that American troops could lay down with their "trusty M-1's" which would hopefully keep the enemy's heads down. Morris reported in the AAR; *"It looked like an old fashioned charge, the men firing rifles from the hip and shoulder as they advanced"*.

The attack suffered relatively light casualties and they reached an anti-tank ditch about ¾ of the way across the field. A single platoon then was able to infiltrate the main line of resistance (MLR) by way of a communication trench. Joined by a second platoon they attacked a strong point and overtook the defenders capturing a number of Germans. However, the surprising success of the attack was not supported fast enough when the other companies did not get word to go. A massive German artillery barrage and counterattack forced the GI's to give up the gains

and withdraw. Morris quickly organized a defense and called in artillery fire to cover the withdrawal.

It was later determined that Company A's attack had faced a force of defenders in the strongpoint about five times their number. 7 Casualties in Co."A" had been severe, but it showed the GI's that they could successfully attack and beat the defenses, especially utilizing the combined arms teamwork, but it also emphasized that this would be a hard fight and gains would not be lightly won. The strongpoint that had almost been taken by the 116th would hold off further attempts to take it for ten days. 8

The next day the 116th is pulled back to reserve and replaced with the 115th who had to stretch their lines to connect with the 175th. Morris in this brief respite writes to Clara; "A few seconds to say hello before we jump off again" ... "I think it is

Tuesday August 28th".

"When this was over I don't think I want to travel. Have seen enough of Europe at any rate". I don't mind admitting I've had enough of this business" ... "am still CO of this Bn. and they are still the best damn bunch of foot sloggers in the army". "At the moment my feet are immersed in a canvas bucket of water, in a few minutes the medics will carve on them a little and I will be OK for a few more days".

The next day the 116th is moved around to the right flank of the division, further lengthening the American lines, and stretching the defenders even more. An attack on the 31st on La Trinite by the 2nd and 3rd battalions stalls, and the 1st Battalion is added to the attack, but its thinned ranks are of little value, and the battalion is pulled back to Regimental reserve. Morris writes two V-mails, one to his Mother and the other to his Wife. To Mom he writes:

"The job we have right now is a tough one but it is only a matter of time till it is cleaned up and then we will move someplace else. I suppose unless the war is over by that time. The news is good from other fronts and maybe this bloody business won't last much longer."

"I am still CO of the VA outfit, at least it used to be from VA, but now it is from all over".

To Clara he writes:

"While munching a K-ration I can use the other hand to say hello. We are still on the go and kept plenty busy. When we clean up this job (Brest) we are on now, maybe we will get a couple of days to relax and take a bath. I don't remember how long it has been since I've had one (bath) or had a change of clothes".

"My orderly is making up my bed now, it is a foxhole dug for two. He has found a stack of wheat straw and has made up quite a nice mattress. He has taken an old gate off a fence and laid that over the hole and covered it with dirt to keep out the shell fragments".

La Trinite is assaulted in a middle of the night attack by the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 116th Infantry on September 4th, the attack takes the town. A subsequent German counterattack is repulsed.

The 29th Division as part of the VIII Corps pass from the 3rd Army of Patton to the new 9th Army of Lt. Gen. William Simpson.

9

The 116th Infantry Regiment is moved out of the lines and into

division reserve on the 8th of September. Jim Morris gets a chance to write a V-Mail to Clara on the 9th of September.

"A chance to draw a deep breath and drop you a note. The old CO of this Bn. returned today (in the hospital in England for a month). Now that he is back I will either be out of a job, or they will make me a LTC, Don't know which it will be, but I hope I stay on here. After what I've been through with these boys for the past three or four weeks I'd hate to leave them now."

He ends by asking her to send him two pair of Major's leave. "I have lost mine in the bushes". He is a little less upbeat in a letter he writes to his mother later the same day:

"After being told by the General (Gerhardt) 'I like the way things are being run' and then the Col. a few hours later telling me the General put me in for a promotion to LTC. and to say 'Congrats on doing a good job'.

Less than an hour later I walked the old Bn. CO. After apologies from a few brass hats, I find myself as Bn. Exec. again. "It is a hell of a strain being in command for a Bn. but I like it. In the Bn. is where battles are won or lost. For the past 26 days while I had this outfit we won all our battles and have been up against the elite of the German army.

"Maybe I'll get another chance later...one of the fortunes or misfortunes of war."

"I hope to get a chance to get a helmet bath and change some clothes before getting on with our job".

Again Jim Morris was ready to "get on with our job". His superiors knew they could count on him, he was a battle-tested commander who could be trusted in a tight situation. He quickly could take command of a unit and lead it on the attack, and accepted lesser roles when necessary without complaint. He was loyal to the 29th Division and to the boys, and wanted to stay with them. He most assuredly could have sought a command outside the division if he wanted to pull the strings. His steadfast loyalty to "his old unit" probably cost him speedier promotion, he was extremely valuable to Division and Regiment as a XO who they could plug into about any job and know it was in capable hands. If he were promoted, he would surely be transferred as there were no battalion commands available for him in the 29th.

The Division did get on with "Our Job" on the 11th of September as the Battle for Fort Montbary began with attacks by the 115th. Ft. Montbary was an old 19th Century French fort built with 40-foot thick earthen walls surrounded by a moat. The old fort was then surrounded by hundreds of gun and fighting emplacements in the adjoining fields. 10

The 116th relieves the 115th around midnight on the 13th of September. The 116th attacked the outer rings of the fort until they had it partially surrounded. The main assault on the fort itself was about to begin.

The 1-116th moved into positions on the night of the 13th for a pre dawn attack the next morning. Engineers from the division's 121st Combat Engineers moved forward to clear paths through the minefields. At the same time the battalion finished cleaning out the remaining outer defensive positions. Co."C" attacked at sunrise and cleared or captured all of the German positions west of the fort. In a hard day of fighting at close quarters with bayo-

nets and hand grenades, they seized all of the outposts, effectively isolating the fort from its support.¹¹

While Co."C" cleared the outer ring, a combined arms attack by the rest of the battalion closed the noose around Ft. Montbary. Three tank destroyers (TD) moved into position to fire on the fort to suppress enemy fire while four British Churchill tanks equipped with flamethrowers, nicknamed "crocodiles" joined the attack. Faced with armor and flames, the Germans retreated into the fort.¹²

The main assault on the fortress by the "crocodiles" through the lanes cleared by the engineers made it to the outer defenses, but the second tank was disabled blocking the path leaving the first tank in an exposed position. That tank responded to its predicament by raking the walls of the fort with flames, shells, and MG fire. The 1st Bn. CO called it "as bold an act as I have ever seen". Co."B" moved up in support of the tank, and took shelter in the German outposts and held through the night.¹³

The next day, September 15th the battalion improved its positions and pounded the fort in preparation for an assault the next day. The battalion CO tried to get the fort to surrender but was refused.¹⁴ He then ordered TD's to pound the fort's main gate and they expended a full load of shells but could not budge the door. A self-propelled 105 mm gun was brought up and finally breeched the door, and was able to fire directly into the fort itself with high explosive and white phosphorous shells. While the battering of the fort was occurring troops were also infiltrating the fort by way of an underground entrance that was blasted open with TNT. The fort walls partially collapsed and the infantry attack overtook the garrison with light resistance.¹⁵

The 116th remained in the center of the division's lines as they moved toward Recouvrance and the old walls of the city. They crossed the old city walls of Brest rather easily and moved into the streets of Recouvrance. Street fighting soon cleared the town and on the 18th of September the battle for Brest west of the Penfield River was over. The campaign had cost the 29th 2646 casualties, they had helped destroy an entire enemy army, captured 27 major strongpoints and taken 13,000 prisoners.

On the 21st of September Jim Morris took a moment to write home: *"just finished a tough job and will be getting another one soon. ... The sooner the better because we all want to get this thing over with. ... It is a hell of a strain ... but we must keep after the 'paper hanger' (Hitler) while he is on the run".*

To be continued in the next edition.

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- 2 29 Let's Go!
- 3 29th Division - WWII
- 4 29 Let's Go!

Chapter 9

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Chapter 10

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BOOK REVIEW:

Dawn on Omaha Beach: We Were There

The famed "Bedford Boys" have been the subject of a best-selling book, numerous articles, several documentary films, and even theater productions. But no memoir of any of the Bedford Boys has ever been published—until now. "Dawn on Omaha Beach: We Were There" by the late Elisha Ray Nance was released at a book launch party at the National D-Day Memorial on October 26.

The Bedford Boys—a title that seems to have been coined by Captain Taylor Fellers in a 1943 letter—were part of Company A, 116th Regiment, 29th Division. A Virginia National Guard unit until 1941, Company A was chosen to be among the first men to land on Omaha Beach in the first wave of the Normandy Invasion, June 6, 1944.

Because so many men from one rural county were there and

came under such intense fire, Bedford holds the distinction of the highest per capita losses of any community in the US on D-Day. Nineteen men from Co. A, and another Bedford Boy in Co. F, were killed in the first hour of the invasion.

The Bedford Boys who made it home were indelibly shaped by their experiences. Lt. Ray Nance was wounded multiple times on the beach, and evacuated the next day. Eventually returning to Bedford, Nance married a former army nurse, got a job, raised a family, and continued service with the National Guard, retiring as a major.

But through the years he never forgot the sacrifice he had witnessed on Omaha Beach and struggled with the need to pay tribute to his brothers from Co. A. When the National D-Day Me-

(Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 1)

As the bus approached the National D-Day Memorial climbing the winding road traversing the 88 acres that sit at the base of the Blue Ridge, the first sight that dominates the memorial is the Overlord Arch. This magnificent structure is 40 feet tall and represents the strength of the Allied forces as well as their ultimate



SGT Austin Cook and Steve Melnikoff.

victory in World War II. The arch has long been a symbol of military victory going back many centuries to the Romans whose victorious legions would march along the Appian Way and through an archway.

It was at the base of the Overlord Arch that WW II veteran of the 175th

Infantry (Company C), the venerable and ever-young Steve Melnikoff, along with SGT Austin Cook, 29th Division Soldier of the year, representing 29th Division HQs, presented the 29th Division Association wreath. The presentation included the playing of Taps as a reminder to all of the great sacrifices that those who are memorialized made on D-Day and throughout the war.

As the sound of Taps faded away a number of the group took the opportunity to have their picture taken with Steve and SGT Cook. Others proceeded to tour the rest of the memorial either on guided tours or on their own. There was much to see for both the first time visitor as well as those who have been there before. As PNC Bob Wisch noted, "every time that I come here there is something new."

The driving force behind the memorial was the vision of "Bob" Slaughter who spearheaded the effort to build the memorial in Bedford. He had served in Company D of the 116th IR and landed in the third wave after the "Bedford Boys" of Company A landed in the first wave. Bob was there on 6 June 2001, standing proudly next to President George W. Bush for the dedication of the National D-Day Memorial.

However, the memorial is not just about D-Day alone. The grounds take a visitor on a journey through World War II. There are three plazas: the Reynolds Garden symbolizes the planning and preparation, the Gray Plaza symbolizes the landing and fighting stages and the Estes Plaza, where the Overlord Arch is located, celebrates the victory. There is also a plaque among the many at the memorial that lists all 4,413 allied soldiers killed on D-Day.

Among the many sculptures and statues, including the Rangers scaling the cliffs at Point du Hoc and 29ers disembarking from their Higgins boats under heavy fire, is the statue memorializing the "Bedford Boys." These were the young men who had joined the 116th IR in Bedford and trained for the great invasion.

As their Higgins boats headed toward the beaches, there were 30 of them left in Company A. Of those 30, 19 were killed in action. In addition, Company A contained three sets of twins and 4 of those 6 men were killed leaving no pair intact. This was the ultimate sacrifice and in many respects is symbolic of the *raison d'être* for the 29th Division Association, so that we never forget them.

Near the base of the statue is a collection of bricks that commemorate and remember family and friends that help to support the memorial. Among those bricks are four that have very familiar last names: Ralph C. Dooley, US Navy 1915-1918 and 1940-1945, Ivan V. Dooley, Sr., US Navy 1915-1919, Moses Dooley, Virginia Militia 1776 and Ohio Volunteers 1812, and our own Ivan V. Dooley, Jr., US Army 1952-1954.

After touring the grounds, reading the many plaques and viewing the magnificent collection of sculptures and statuary, the group was treated to lunch in one of the World War II era Quonset Huts. The 29th Division band provided entertainment and our good friends at Mission Barbeque provided the food.

April Cheek-Messier, President of the National D-Day Memorial Foundation, welcomed the group at lunchtime and provided some brief remarks about the memorial and its future. Ms. Cheek-Messier has played a major role in fund raising to expand and enhance the memorial during her tenure over the past 6 years.

She also invited everyone to attend the 75th Anniversary commemoration of D-Day on 6 June 2019. It will be the place to be in the US on that famous date.

After a delicious lunch and some gift buying the group boarded the bus to head to the next stop: Lexington and the VMI Chapel and Museum.

As the group entered Jackson Memorial Hall passing through a narthex and double doors and into the main chapel, the large painting at the front (18' by 24') drew everyone's attention. COL Keith Gibson, Executive Director of the VMI Museum, was there to greet the group and tell the story of the painting, "The Charge of the VMI Cadets." The action depicted in this massive painting took place at the Battle of New Market on 15 May 1864. The cadets marched to New Market from their barracks in Lexington and



"Bedford Boys" Statue



Ms April Cheek-Messier

and reverence on the other.

COL Gibson told the group that Clinedinst used his son as a model for one of the cadets. He had him bend backwards over a chair with his blond hair flowing to simulate a cadet at the moment he was hit by enemy fire. When COL Gibson was a cadet himself, he served as a docent in Jackson Hall. While on duty, he spotted a man in a pew near the front of the Chapel with his gaze locked on the painting. COL Gibson, being a good and responsible docent, approached the man to tell him about this work of art. He discovered that this was Clinedinst's son, the very one in the painting! One can only imagine the young cadet's reaction.

From Jackson Hall on the VMI campus the group took a short bus ride to the other side of the parade ground and visited the George C. Marshall Museum and Library. Although the visit was brief, there was enough time to explore the many aspects of the life of this great American leader, a former VMI cadet. Marshall was a remarkable man who played a major role in the victory in World War II as Chief of Staff and General of the Army, winning the peace after the war as Secretary of State, and leading the US military in the Korean War as Secretary of Defense. This is a museum that is definitely worth a second visit.

After a long day in the field the tired but happy travellers returned to the hotel and wonderful buffet dinner. Rosemary Coover (Post #1-72) from Denver, CO and Jay Garrison (Commander Post #94) spoke about success of the Legacy Campaign to attract family members of 29ers to join the Association. The highlight of the dinner was the distribution of 16 door prizes including a P. Buckley Moss print of D-Day's "Overlord." Of course, after the dinner many retired to the hospitality suite for more camaraderie to complete a memorable day.

On Saturday while the business meeting took place, spouses, friends and family enjoyed the attractions in Roanoke. The highlight of the meeting was the election of the Officers for 2018 – 2019. David Leighton was duly elected and installed as the National Commander. In addition now PNC Hayden was recognized for his outstanding contributions to the 29th Division Association over the past year.

After the meeting everyone was treated to a sumptuous lunch

were instrumental in defeating a Union force under MG Franz Sigel.

As COL Gibson recounted, Benjamin West Clinedinst, an 1880 graduate was so inspired by the stories of the heroic charge that he created this magnificent painting. It was unveiled in 1914 on the 50th anniversary of the battle and shows a double rank of cadets charging through the smoke of battle. It is at once inspiring showing bravery on the one hand

assembled by the men and women of Post #64 and provided through donations from many of the local Roanoke merchants. The folks from Post #64 deserve extra special recognition for being such wonderful hosts in the hospitality suite and throughout the convention. They made everyone appreciate the meaning of "Southern Hospitality" Roanoke style.

The highlight of the day was the plated dinner

held that evening in the grand ballroom. The 29th Division Band was on hand to entertain and accompany the presentation of the colors. SGT Jake Moyer, Virginia National Guard Best Warrior and NCO of the Year, joined SGT Austin Cook at the head table. Each received a plaque of appreciation from PNC Hayden.

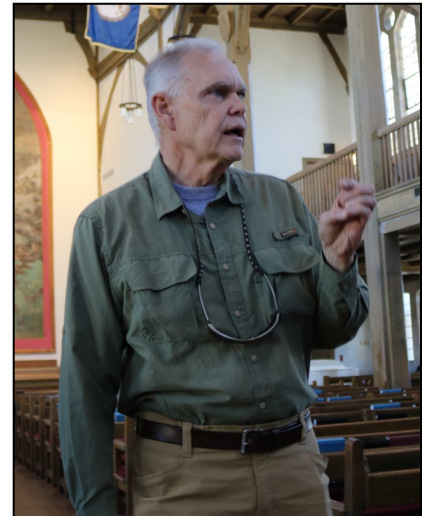
LTC Arthur Moore, commander of the First Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, also joined NC Hayden at the head table. LTC Moore provided an update on the status of his command. The unit has received a number of citations and commendations for outstanding performance. There was no doubt that the unit was continuing in the fine tradition of their predecessors in the 29th Division.

The guest of honor and featured speaker was Bernard Marie. Monsieur Marie currently lives in Roanoke, but on 6 June 1944, he was in Normandy, France. He had just celebrated his fifth birthday the day before and early in the morning of the 6th heard loud booming sounds throughout the area. Later that day he was surprised to see his mother hugging an American soldier. Bernard did not know his father. He had left the family to join the Resistance when Bernard was a baby.

Bernard learned his first English word from that soldier, Hershey, when he received a chocolate bar as a gift. His second word was "freedom." As Bernard recounted, he and his other young friends chased after the American soldiers wildly yelling Hershey!! Freedom!!

Bernard has never forgotten the fact that those soldiers liberated him and his family. His father soon followed the landing and they were all reunited. To remember the sacrifices of those soldiers who fought and died for his freedom, he has worked tirelessly to raise funds for the National D-Day Memorial. As a part of that effort, he travelled so often to the Bedford/Roanoke area that he decided to move to Roanoke and every year he holds a special dinner for the World War II veterans.

The American Legion has recognized him for his contributions to veterans groups. But most importantly he shared with the group his love for America. He holds dual citizenship in France and the USA and in his eyes the United States has always been great and will continue to be great as a beacon to freedom throughout the world. As a token of appreciation on behalf of the



COL Keith Gibson



PNC Grant Hayden receiving his Past National Commander's plaque from PNC Bob Wisch.

Cook joined World War II veterans, Norman Duncan, E/116, Post 94, and Steve Melnikoff, C/175, Post 1-72, for the traditional 29th

29th Division Association, PNC Hayden presented a plaque to Bernard recognizing the special role he has played to recognize our veterans.

After the dinner the group adjourned to the hospitality suite for a special toast. Bernard Marie, SGT Moyer and SGT

Division Calvados toast. As they held their glasses high, one could not help but to remember those who were no longer there. In many respects this toast spanned the generations and provided confidence in knowing that they those who were eternally departed would not be forgotten.

On Sunday the convention concluded with the memorial service led by National Chaplain, Reverend John W. Schildt. As the ranks of our World War II veterans thin and those who have followed them are passing, one cannot help but to recall Rev. Schildt's comment at the business meeting. He was touring the Antietam National Cemetery with a veteran of the 116th who remarked, "They may only be names on those stones to most people, but to me they are faces." This certainly brings to mind the significance of the 29th Division Association and the reason that it was formed:

To perpetuate the friendships we cherish; to keep alive the spirit that never knew defeat; to glorify our dead; and to further keep before our Country the record of the 29th Division in all wars.

"29, Let's Go!"

*Article by Frank Armiger, Assistant Editor
Photos by Frank Armiger, Will Mund;
PNC Bob Wisch and Dick Snyder.*



The Calvados Toast: From left to right: Steve Melnikoff; Dr. Marilyn Moriarty; Bernard Marie; Norman Duncan; SGT Austin Cook and SGT Jake Moyer.

Centennial Convention & Reunion 1918 - 2018



The first sight that dominates the memorial is the Overlord Arch. This magnificent structure is 40 feet tall and represents the strength of the Allied forces as well as their ultimate victory in World War II.



PNC Grant Hayden and Steve Melnikoff after the wreath laying at the D-Day Memorial.

Centennial Convention & Reunion 1918 - 2018



After touring the grounds, reading the many plaques and viewing the magnificent collection of sculptures and statuary, the group was treated to lunch in one of the World War II era Quonset Huts. The 29th Division band provided entertainment and our good friends at Mission Barbeque provided the food.



Near the base of the "Bedford Boys" statue is a collection of bricks that commemorate and remember family and friends that help to support the memorial. Among those bricks are four that have very familiar last names: Ralph C. Dooley, US Navy 1915-1918 and 1940-1945, Ivan V. Dooley, Sr., US Navy 1915-1919, Moses Dooley, Virginia Militia 1776 and Ohio Volunteers 1812, and our own Ivan V. Dooley, Jr., US Army 1952-1954.

Centennial Convention & Reunion 1918 - 2018



The highlight of Saturday was the plated dinner held that evening in the grand ballroom. The 29th Division Band was on hand to entertain and accompany the presentation of the colors.



J. David Leighton, second from left, being installed as National Commander by PNC David Ginsburg, on far right, as Pete Hinz, National Senior Vice Commander and Past National Commander Grant Hayden look on.

Centennial Convention & Reunion 1918 - 2018



LTC Arthur Moore, Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry updating the banquet attendees on the status of the 29th Infantry Division.



Bernard Marie, speaking to the banquet attendees about his experiences as a child when the United States Army invaded and liberated Normandy, France from the Nazi oppressors in June of 1944.

National Officers - Elected and Appointed for 2018 - 2019

Elected Officers

National Commander: J. David Leighton

Senior Vice Commander: Pete Hinz

Junior Vice Commander: Ted Shuey

Finance Officer: Tom Knight

Chaplain: Reverend John Schildt

Welfare Officer: J. Brian Becker

Service Officer: Neil Ungerleider

Historian: Joseph Balkoski

Judge Advocate: Houston Matney

Surgeon: Dr. Howard Bond

Sergeant-at-Arms: Randall Beamer

Southern Region Vice Commander: Jimmy Kilbourne

Maryland Region Vice Commander: Bill Bullock

At-Large Region Vice Commander: Edward Tolzman



Appointed Officers

National Adjutant: Valerie Simmers

National Executive Director: William S. Mund, Jr.

Assistant to the National Executive Director: PNC Robert Moscati

National Property Officer: Franklin Shilow

Editor/Publisher *The Twenty-Niner*: William S. Mund, Jr.

Assistant Editor/Publisher *The Twenty-Niner*: Frank A. Armiger

National Parliamentarian: Thomas Insley

Editor *Emeritus The Twenty-Niner*: Donald M. McKee

Attendees at our 100th Annual Reunion & Convention

Armiger, Frank
Banik, Jeff & Christine Nichols
Beamer, Randall & Shirley
Becker, Brian & Gail
Bennett, Morris & Ann
Bernhard, William & Therese
Bixler, Bonita
Bixler, Michael & Linda Johnson
Bond, Howard
Boyle, Daniel & Doris Kozlowski
Boyle, Joseph & Sally Ryan
Bullock, Bill
Cook, Austin
Coover, Rosemary & Tom
Crosby, Gilbert & Carolyn
DeHaven, William
Dent, Chase & Gavin
Dent, Jane K., & Greg
Dillon, Nancy & Justina Wright
Dooley, Ivan
Duncan, Norman
Duvall, Harry & Roger
Faulconer, Buddy
Foreman, Charles
Garrison, Jay & Blonnie
Ginsburg, David & Amy Colton
Hayden, Grant
Held, Gavin
Held, Luba & Wm, Sr.
Held, William Jr.
Hess, Randy & Janice
Hinz, Peter & Lynda
Hofmann, Roland Lee

Insley, Thomas
Karnes, Daniel
Kilbourne, Jimmy & Sheila
Kincannon, Jay
King, PNC Bill & Juanita
Lane, John F. & Shirley
Lankford, Bruce & Raynelle
Leighton, David & Anne
Leighton, Nicole & Shanna
Linthicum, George
Malotte, Kenneth
Marie, Bernard & Marilyn Moriarty
Matney, Houston
McCabe, Robert
Melnikoff, Steven
Moyer, Jake & Samantha Bissey
Mund, William
Paris, Ed & James Sutton
Parker, Ginny & Tom
Raymond, Richard & Dianne
Roragen, Steve & Ulrika
Roush, Bruce & Carolyn
Schildt, John
Shilow, Franklin
Shuey, Theodore
Simmers, Valerie & Ken
Sink, Karolyn
Snyder, Richard & Lois
Stem, Richard
Tanczyn, Michael
Wisch, Robert
Zang, Joseph

Sunday Memorial Service

Every year at our Memorial Service on Sunday morning, we honor those who have departed us during the past year. Listed below are the names of all the deceased since our last Annual Reunion and Convention in 2017.

Baker, Roy R.
 Barton, Jon
 Bazzell, Carlton E.
 Boyter, Roy J.
 Brown, William R.
 Cannon, John R.
 Clemson, Claude L.
 Coffin, William E.
 Culler, Carl L.
 DiStefano, Frank G.
 Doombos, Donald
 Faulk, Ray W.
 Feldmann, Joseph
 Fenton, Stuart V
 Friedel, Donald J.
 Fuddy, John C., Jr.
 Gallimore, John W., Jr.
 Glaser, John L.
 Gorum, Clyde, G.
 Greenwood, Kenneth O.
 Harbaugh, Lawrence W.
 Herrick, LeRoy W.
 Huffaker, James R.
 Irwin, Charles W.
 Johnson, Roger J.
 Jolly, W. Wayne,
 Jones, NFO Robert W.
 Keeling, John M.
 Keyes, Sidney S.

Klausmeyer, Milton J.
 Kramer, Paul
 Kraushofer, John L.
 Kreh, Richard T., Sr.
 Lansing, Wayne,
 Leutz, Robert L.
 Lippincott, Don H.
 Lockhart, James L.
 Losinski, Francis A.
 Maly, John J.
 Manford, James W., Sr.
 Mangels, Roger N.
 Marino, Francis C.
 McCarthy, Donald A., Jr.
 Miller, Lewis F., Jr.
 Moody, Frank E.
 Moxley, Everest, M., Jr.
 Mummert, Paul L.
 Myers, Dick M.
 Nappi, Felice
 Newman, Edwin J.
 Oster, Dr. Walter
 Owens, Lester N.
 Renner, Ralph L.
 Riesett, Robert E.
 Riley, Thomas M.
 Ross, John K.
 Rutherford, Ernest C.
 Simmons, Welford, C.

Simons, John,
 Simpkins, Marion
 Sink, James R.
 Smith, Howard J. Jr.
 Steckel, James B.
 Vaccarino, PNC I. John
 Velleco, John M.
 Walsh, James F.
 Young, James

Ladies

Bullock, Betty Jo
 Damascus, Penelope
 Foxwell, Martha
 Gasparri, Roberta
 Hunt, Lillian R
 Levin, Agnes
 Robertson, Margaret
 Shawkey, Helen
 Slaughter, Margaret
 Smith, Patricia M.



VAARNG flight crews build trust, train with W. VA special forces

BUFFALO, N.Y. – A crowd of spectators started to form as two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters appeared over the tree line and landed along the shore of Lake Erie. It was almost lunchtime on Sept. 5, 2018, and already that morning a small group of Soldiers from the West Virginia National Guard's 19th Special Forces Group were busy preparing their equipment and getting ready for the day's training in Hamburg, New York, just south of Buffalo.

As the helicopter shut down and the blades stopped spinning, 1st Sgt. Kevin Vineyard, assigned to the Virginia National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, 29th Infantry Division, greeted Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mike, assigned to the 19th SFG. This wasn't their first time working together. Over the last half decade, the two have worked to develop training that meets the pre-deployment needs of the operators while also increasing proficiency for Vineyard's flight crews.

"It's almost like working with your doppelgänger," Vineyard said of Chief Mike. "It's so neat to find someone who thinks on the same level."

Both Vineyard and Chief Mike are driven by a similar desire to provide realistic, effective and relevant training to their Soldiers. Repeatedly working together over multiple years is part of what helps them reach that goal.

"The relationship with the Virginia National Guard has been unbelievable," Chief Mike said. "It's pretty much the same pilots and the same crew chiefs and it's been working like that for five years, which means we're always in synch with each other."

This year's training, like in years past, made use of standing relationships with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies in and around Buffalo, New York. Those relationships, according to Chief Mike, were a big part of the reason he decided to hold the training in that area and the training included support from the Town of Hamburg Police, Hamburg Water Rescue, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security.

"This is our third Buffalo evaluation and train-up for deployments," Chief Mike said. "We're pretty connected here."

The first few days of training were task-driven. The operators have a list of required skills they must certify on before they deploy and the Virginia flight crews, along with their helicopters, provided some of the necessary support to accomplish that certification.

On their first full training day, over Lake Erie, the focus was first on paradrops, which required the Special Forces Soldiers to jump from the helicopters and parachute into Lake Erie where they were then collected and brought to shore by local and federal partner agencies. After that, the training focus shifted to helo-casting, an airborne insertion technique where a rotary-wing aircraft flies just above the water's surface at a low airspeed as the special operations forces jump into the water.

While training like this certifies the operators on their special skills, it also helps the flight crews improve their readiness levels.

"This is the next level of proficiency for our crews," Vineyard explained. "It's a chance to get the younger crew mem-



Virginia National Guard flight crews provide aviation support to Soldiers assigned to the West Virginia National Guard's 19th Special Forces Group Sept. 5, 2018, over Lake Erie near Buffalo, New York. (U.S. National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Terra C. Gatti)

bers involved, take them to that next level and continue to challenge them so that they can become better crew members."

Sgt. Turner Welch, one of five crew chiefs to make the trek to New York, is one of those younger crew members. He's served six years so far, as a 15T UH-60 helicopter repairer.

"I've done some of this stuff before," Welch said. "But it's different because we're not just doing traffic patterns or bouncing around from airport to airport, you actually get to do what an assault unit is supposed to do on a deployment."

Vineyard said the training in New York occurred in a "dynamically fluid environment," much like he and his Soldiers would encounter on a deployment. He said it's hard to simulate that sort of environment at home, but that the training with the 19th SFG gets them close.

"The nice thing about this is that it takes everybody out of their comfort level," Vineyard explained. "The reality of it is that things change quickly, so we training our crews to be flexible so they can adapt in these kind of environments."

On the second training day, the Virginia and West Virginia Soldiers focused on fast rope insertion techniques as well as low cost, low altitude drops, a logistics aerial resupply delivery method where bundles of supplies or equipment are dropped from a low altitude.

Planning for this multi-day, multi-agency event started months ago, according to both Vineyard and Chief Mike. Vineyard said they received a concept of operations from Chief Mike and then worked to identify how best to support their training from there, then filled in the logistical details, like where they'd stay, how to maintain the aircraft and which route they'd take to get to New York.

The third day of training served as a kind of culminating event and was scenario-based. The flight crews flew throughout the Buffalo area, and made use of locations in and around Niagara

(Continued on page 22)

VAARNG flight crews build trust, train with W. VA special forces

(Continued from page 21)

Falls as well, like Old Fort Niagara. It brought together the training certified in the previous days and included a downed pilot rescue and fast rope insertion, along with additional operational skills honed by the operators during the training.

"They know our requirements, we know how they like to fly and that actually lets us take the training to the next level," explained Chief Mike. "We trust each other so we can kind of take a little bit more risk because we've been training together for so long."

Over the last five years, Vineyard and Chief Mike have gotten into a pattern of training together once every two years or so, and that's a pattern they both hope to continue moving forward.

"I know where we need to push our crews to make them better and more proficient, and he does the same thing with his guys," Vineyard said.

"Everything is perfect," said Chief Mike. "We push our guys, but it's been phenomenal."

Article and photos by SFC Terra C. Gatti.



Virginia National Guard flight crews help prepare special operators assigned to the West Virginia National Guard's 19th Special Forces Group for deployment with fast rope training Sept. 6, 2018, near Buffalo, New York. (U.S. National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Terra C. Gatti)

Official Announcement **NEC II**

24 January 2019 at 0930 hours
Pikesville Military Reservation — NCO Club
Cost is **\$15.00** with check made payable to
29th Division Association and mailed to:

William Mund
441 Chalfonte Drive
Baltimore, MD 21228-4017

For accountability purposes all checks must
be received by **17 January 2019**.

BOOK REVIEW

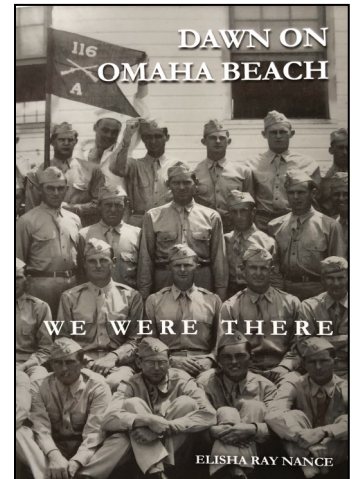
(Continued from page 10)

morial opened in 2001, Nance and his wife Alpha became devoted volunteers, eager to share the story of their hometown's sacrifice with visitors from across the globe.

In his years of retirement (and by then the last surviving officer from Co. A), Nance penned an account of his experiences before, during and after WWII. He intended to publish his book, but passed away in 2009 before he could achieve his dream. Now, nearly a decade later, his three children—John Nance, Sue Cobb and Sarah Jones—have published his concise, factual memoir under the title "Dawn on Omaha Beach: We Were There."

A book launch event was held Friday, October 26th at the National D-Day Memorial to unveil the book, with an appreciative crowd of family, friends, and history buffs in attendance. Nance's children tearfully discussed their father's story, from enlisting in the pre-war Virginia National Guard to his company's arrival to England to the fateful role his men played on D-Day.

In addition to his insightful recollections of the war, "Dawn on Omaha Beach" includes important and never-before-



published biographical sketches of some of Nance's brothers-in-arms. Primary sources also help to round out the story, and makes the book a must-read for those interested in World War II, and in particular the vital role played by the 29th Division in freeing Europe.

The book is available through the National D-Day Memorial's gift shop. All proceeds from the book have been donated to the Memorial by Nance's family. Go to www.dday.org to order.

"This book is an important first-hand account of truly remarkable men who made—and changed—history," said April Cheek-Messier, National D-Day Memorial Foundation. "Ray Nance witnessed history, and now his voice speaks to us from across the years."

*John D. Long,
Director of Education
National D-Day Memorial*

Notice to our readers

Current copyright laws prevent the Editorial Staff of the *Twenty-Niner* from reprinting any articles and/or photographs that have already been published in other publications such as newspapers or magazines. Please do not submit these articles for publication in the *Twenty-Niner*.

**Be sure to check out our
new and improved
website at:
www.29thdivisionassociation.com**

Memoirs of Paul Kramer's World War II Experiences

Part 3

Occupation Duty

Several weeks into May we moved to the town of Bremerhaven, near Bremen on the North Sea and settled down into occupation mode. We located the communication center in a nice large German home in the center of town. Irv and I were given the large living room for our switchboard and the main bedroom with a king size bed to sleep in. The owner's wife would come in once a week and clean the house. Some of our linemen (soldiers) would also stay in the house.

Major Wolfe moved the 2nd Battalion HQ into a fine home across the street from our place. The kitchen and mess hall section were located next to Major Wolfe's HQ. We had a horse stable that had about six nice riding horses and a dog kennel that had ten German Shepherd army dogs that had been trained to attack Americans. They were beautiful looking dogs, but very vicious.

We had a mountain man from West Virginia in our crew, his name was Singer. He had a way with animals so he took over the care of the horses and dogs. One of the German Shepherd dogs would lie by Irv's or my side when we were on duty at the switchboard at night. If the dog heard anyone outside, he would jump out the window and check around the perimeter of the house, then jump back in and lie by our side.

Major Wolfe would come over to our house to see the dog. The dog took a liking to Major Wolfe. In December of 1945, when Major Wolfe returned to the United States he took the dog with him. Singer had little success in converting the German Military Dogs to the American way of life, so most of them had to be put down.

It was not long before our officers were riding all over on the horses. The enlisted men could ride the horses when the officers were not riding. Since Irv and I were friends with Singer we would call and let him know what time we wanted to ride. He would have the horses saddled and ready when we arrived at the barn. One time when Irv mounted his horse, it took off across the field in a dead run and into some dense woods. The low branches knocked Irv out of his saddle, as he was unable to get the horse stopped. Luckily, he was not hurt, but he did not ride that horse again. We became friendlier with the German population however, we were cautioned not to fraternize with them, but some of us had German girlfriends. Sometimes Irv and I would take a ride

on the horses or by jeep to see our girlfriends, the mayor's daughters, in a little town several miles from our location. This was on the QT as fraternization with Germans was forbidden by the Army. Irv spoke fluent German so we were welcomed at the mayor's home. We sometimes brought the girls over to our residence in Bremerhaven for a party.

We had some trouble with returning German SS personnel, who had been POW's, but had now been released. At night, they would string up steel cables across a roadway just at windshield height. You could not see these cables in the dark. It could cut your head off, if not detected. They also tried to cut the wires of our communication lines. This activity subsided as the summer wore on. To avoid problems on the roadways it was better to ride horses through the woods and spend a few hours lying on the beach near our river location. The beach was supposed to be restricted for the officers' use.

There was a large barn section attached to our location. All of the Polish and Czechoslovakian women were rounded up from the German farms, where they had been forced to do hard slave labor for five years. They were temporarily housed and fed in this barn, until they were sent back to their homes. It was interesting to talk with them as Irv could also speak Polish. The boys in the wire section made friends with the women, which was a good deal for all concerned.

cerned.

All of these women wanted to go to America, because when they went home they would again have to do hard labor on the farms in Poland.

Irv was doing interviews of German Army and Government personnel. He interviewed a German woman who had been broadcasting for the German Government in Berlin during the war. She would attempt to demoralize the American and English units by playing American Jazz music and saying, "We know where you are located, you will be attacked, annihilated, and never live to go home." It turned out that she was really French and she said she had been taken from her home in Paris by the Germans. She was forced to do the broadcasting from Berlin, because she could speak perfect English, German, and French. She told Irv she had a sister in Paris. When Irv and I received passes to go to Paris for several weeks in June of 1945, we took



an envelope to the woman's sister. Her name was Micheline Dervillers and she lived at 25 Rue Villiers de la Isle, Adam Paris, 20 France. It was an apartment building not far from the Arch de Triumph. The lobby was very nice with a private locked elevator. We had to use the intercom in the lobby to call up to her apartment and request her to unlock the elevator so we could come up to see her. Upon arriving in her apartment, we were quite surprised. It was expensively furnished with a beautiful view overlooking Paris, the Arch of Triumph, and the Seine River. She was about 35 years old, an attractive woman, well fed, and nicely dressed. She invited us to sit and served us coffee and questioned Irv in French to some length as to the welfare and location of her sister. Needless to say hearing from her sister after years was a great joy for her. She seemed to have firsthand knowledge of what her sister had been doing and where she had been located in Berlin. We were cordial and gave her the envelope which she did not open in our presence and we proceeded to leave thanking her for her kindness. I came away from the meeting with a suspicion of possible Nazi ties between her and the sister, during the Nazi occupation of Paris. We suspected that there was a possibility that later on she would be arrested by French and American authorities as a collaborator with the German Military in order to keep her sister safe. This meeting provided Irv and me a little intrigue on our trip to Paris. We stayed in a very nice hotel off the Place de la Concorde. We went sightseeing to the famous Pig Alley and enjoyed the sights of Paris. It was a welcome relief from the war.

Upon our return to Bremerhaven, we settled down to a summer of occupation duty. Both Irv and I should have been promoted to sergeants, but Capt. Osborne was peeved at me because I would never salute him. So he took his personal feelings about me out on Irv also, which really set me on fire. I then made it a point to never salute him. I thought Capt. Osborne had the brains of a rock and the personality to go with it. I did like Lt. Tebbetts and Major Wolfe.

I received word that I was being sent to Switzerland on leave for two weeks in August of 1945. There was only one rail line opened from Bremen to Hanover and then on to Frankfurt and Basel (Switzerland), so it was slow going. All of these cities were in bad shape; everything had been bombed and burned. The rail line moved through the large rail yard at Frankfurt. The large rail station had its glass roof blown off. The train arrived in Basel, which in contrast with all the German cities, was completely unscratched which attested to the accuracy of our bombers during the war. I somehow missed my train in the morning for Lucerne, Switzerland and had to take the next train.

When I boarded the train, I located a nice empty private compartment and settled down for the ride to Lucerne. Just before the train left the station, I was joined by a very distinguished looking Swiss National man. The train pulled out and we exchanged greetings as he spoke good English. He was very interested in learning about my experiences in the war. After about thirty minutes a conductor came to the door of the compartment. He knocked first and then slid the door open and excused himself to the Swiss gentleman. He then turned to me and informed me that I was riding in first class, in this gentleman's private compartment. I was told I had a third class ticket and would have to go to

the third class compartment. The Swiss gentleman intervened and said I was his guest and was riding to Lucerne with him to give a lecture at the University of Lucerne. The conductor politely apologized and left the compartment. I thanked the man who then told me he was a Professor from a school in Basel. We had a very nice discussion on our trip for the next several hours. Upon arriving in Lucerne, I thanked him for his kindness and proceeded from the train station across the bridge at the end of Lake Lucerne to the Hotel Switzerland.

I arrived in the middle of the afternoon, at the hotel and was greeted by the hotel service Concierge who took me to the grand dining room with its crystal chandeliers. I was the only one in this beautiful dining room and had two waiters attending to me. I had a wonderful lunch with dessert. The Concierge treated me like I was his son and after lunch he took me to my room on the 2nd floor which had a beautiful view of Lake Lucerne. He told me where everything of interest was and how to get there.

The next morning, I left by train to Vive, Switzerland, and arrived in the afternoon. I was taken to the Hotel DuRoc St. LeGier in Vive. The hotel was run by Gaby and Madeline Beudenbacher, who treated me like I was family. During my stay I was well fed and went to visit Charlie Chaplin's home which was close by. He had been living with his family in Switzerland since before the war due to a dispute in the USA. I also took a train trip down along Lake Geneva to the City of Geneva and went to see the League of Nations Building. I'll never forget the GM dealership I saw with new Buicks for sale. The cars were all 1941 models.

On my return train trip, we had a few hours to wait at the Frankfurt, Germany train station. The station was full of displaced persons, trying to get into a few passenger cars attached to our train. The people who were unable to get inside a passenger car would crawl up on the top of the roofs of the cars. Most of these people would die when they would be swept off the roof by heavy wires hanging down before the train entered a tunnel.

We invited two German women to ride with us in our compartment. Three hours after the train pulled out of the station and just before we arrived in Hanover the Military Police came through the car and made the women leave our car and try to get on the other two rain cars for German citizens. All in all, I had a great time in Switzerland.

In September of 1945, we were notified of a point system set up to determine when soldiers would go home. The longer you were in combat in Europe the more points you had. I was eligible to leave for the United States in November. When my time came to go home I was loaded with other soldiers into 40' X 8' rail box cars and taken to Marseilles, France. What a way to exit Europe via a rail box car and we did not receive any coverage from the press on this trip. We arrived at a large camp outside of Marseilles. The surrounding hills and fields were filled with all types of army equipment, trucks, tanks, halftracks, and field artillery. We were told this and all other equipment would be left in France at no cost to the French.

We all received back pay and they gave us a one-day pass to go into Marseilles. We stayed in groups of three or four men for protection. While in town we were sitting in a bar near the Port of Marseilles, in a tough section of the town. We all decided to go to a gift shop several doors from the bar, however a sergeant re-

mained behind to finish his drink and talk to a woman at the bar. We told him we would be back in a short time to get him, but when we came back he was gone. The woman and bartender said he had left to join us a few minutes before we got back to the bar. We went out and searched the entire area for him to no avail. The next day he had not returned to the camp. The following day he was found by the military police; he had been dragged into an alley and beaten up. He was taken to a hospital in bad condition. We later heard that the wall where he was sitting opened up and rotated into a back room where four or five thugs were waiting. They jumped him and beat him up and took his money, watch, ring, and shoes.

Going Home

The ship that we took to the United States was a former Italian liner and the trip took about a week to cross the Atlantic Ocean. A crap game started in the men's lavatory on one of the decks. It went on for four days and ended up with one guy winning just about all the money on board. They had to lock him in the ship jail to keep him and his money safe. He had received threats that he would be tossed overboard for cheating. They said he won over \$4,000.00. The ship arrived in New York City, and we were

sent to Camp Shanks. The men from the Midwest went by rail to Camp Atterbury in Indiana, for discharge the first week of December 1945.

I was elated about our victory over Axis Germany, Japan, and Italy, but also felt sad over all the death and destruction it had caused to so many people. I wondered after all this killing, if I could fit back into society and have a productive future. I had been trained for three years to put through calls to have either artillery rain down death and destruction or pass on plans for our troop assaults on enemy positions, which caused much death and wounding. I had the summer and all of 1945, to think about it all and adjust before coming home. When I arrived back in Flint, Michigan, by train, I took a cab from the train station and told the driver to take me home. **"It was all over."**

This concludes Paul Kramer's account of his World War II experiences. Sadly, Mr. Kramer passed away on 2 July 2018, in Bradenton, Florida.

Mr. Kramer recently received the Legion of Honor from the French government.

Mr. Kramer was a member of Post 2 in Sarasota, Florida.

Ferris selected as new 29th Infantry Division command sergeant major

(Continued from page 1)

ginia National Guard has worked to maintain readiness for both our federal and state missions in the challenging environment we now face," Williams said. "He will now put his decades of experience leading Soldiers in field and garrison environments, as well as in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait, to work in helping the 29th Infantry Division meet and exceed its readiness goals."

Prior to serving as the SEL, Ferris served as the command sergeant major for the Winchester-based 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. He recently retired as a police lieutenant in the City of Covington Police Department.

Ferris served as the command sergeant major for 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry during the unit's deployment to Iraq from June 2007 to June 2008. From June 2004 to August 2005 he served in Afghanistan as the CSM mentor and senior enlisted advisor for the Afghan National Army's 205th Corps as part of the Regional Command Assistance Group-Kandahar, Afghanistan.



He also deployed with 76th Infantry Brigade from the Indiana National Guard to Afghanistan.

Ferris enlisted in the Virginia National Guard in February 1981 as an infantry Soldier and spent the early years of his career as a rifleman, machine gunner, team leader, squad leader and platoon sergeant in Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment.

In 1997, he became the first sergeant of Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 116th Infantry and then served as the first sergeant for the Headquarters Company of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

From 2003 to 2005, he served as an operations noncommissioned officer for 1st Battalion and the 116th IBCT. He was promoted to sergeant major in October 2006 and began serving as the 3rd Battalion command sergeant major.

Ferris is a graduate of the U. S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, the U.S. Army War College Executive Leaders Course and the Keystone Course from the National Defense University as well as Air Assault and Rappel Master Schools.

He has an Associates Degree in Business Management and Criminal Justice from Dabney S. Lancaster Community College and a Bachelors Degree from Liberty University in Interdisciplinary Studies.

His military awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and Air Assault Badge.

Article by Mr. Cotton Puryear

**Be sure to check out our
new and improved website at:
www.29thdivisionassociation.com**

Post Commander's Workshop at the 100th Convention

The 5th Annual Post Commander's Workshop was held at the Roanoke Convention, corresponding to our 100th Reunion.

As always, the purpose of the Workshop (which has no set agenda or presentation) is for the posts to compare notes on their challenges, to recognize posts that held special events, and for general "brainstorming" between the various posts to come up with solutions to common problems and challenges. Subjects that always come up are recruiting, meeting attendance, and event ideas.

Two of the main goals of the Workshop was to provide a forum by which the Posts could brainstorm (since that does not fall under the guise of the NEC) and as an incentive for the Posts to send more representatives to the National Convention in order to attend the Workshop.

As usual, it was held on the Saturday afternoon, between the conclusion of the Annual Business Meeting and the Saturday night banquet. It was attended by representatives of the following posts: 1/72, 5, 58, 64, 85, 94, 110, 116 and 729 - 9 of the 15 active posts. National Commander Grant Hayden and incoming National Commander David Leighton.

Recruiting ideas came up frequently. One of the best ideas was suggested by now PNC Grant Hayden on the subject of license plate holders. Originally, the subject was on plates for the Virginia members of the Association, similar to the plate the Maryland members can get. Grant suggested that license plate holders take care of the entire challenge – a holder can be used by a member in any state, and we could customize them around the 29th Division, or the regiment the member or their family may have been associated with. We are going to work with the National Executive Director and the Property Officer to get some samples and pricing ideas.

Someone pointed out that perceived obligations may be an obstacle to a person joining the Association. Because of their limits (or interest) in being a regular attendee of meetings or events, they may be leery to actually join the Association. This is a great point. We are going to change our website to provide some clarity that we have all types of member – many of which never can attend a meeting because of their busy work schedule, proximity to an active post, etc. We will also spell out the benefits

of being a member, and what we do with our members dues in terms of donations, events, etc.

With the challenge of finding quality people who are interested in the 3-year commitment to become National Commander (Junior Vice then Senior Vice then NC), Dick Snyder suggested we consider making the National Commander a two-year term. This started a very fascinating debate with many people on both sides of the divide. It certainly merits more study and conversation, but it is really a subject to be brought up at the next NEC meeting and not just within the Post Commander's Workshop.

Vehicle clubs, especially historical vehicle clubs, seem to be a good source of recruitment among the members. Many are attended by veterans and the idea of the license plate holder would be free advertising to the attendees who may not even know the Association exists.

Post 1/72 Commander Lee Hoffman is also a restaurant owner. He said a lot of local businesses like to set up small desktop displays with a flyer of their establishment or product. As a business owner, he would like to be able to display the tri-fold for the Association and membership applications. This is a great idea everyone endorsed. He is going to look up the dimensions of most of the displays he currently has and look to ordering them for the Association, and then distributing them among the posts. These displays could display a miniature

version of the Armory Recruiting Poster we will be distributing to all the armories in Maryland and Virginia.

The DVD as a recruiting tool came up several times. An idea that everyone endorsed was to set up the DVD in the lobby of the hotel we are staying at for the Convention and play it on endless loop so other hotel customers can learn about the 29th Division. It was also suggested we play the DVD at least once during each Convention for those that haven't seen it or want to see it again.

Finally, we are looking for content to keep our Facebook page (followed by nearly 1000 people on a regular basis) fresh. We are asking all the posts to send in photos and quick writeups on events they run or attend.

*PNC David Ginsburg
Chairman – Futures Committee*



Display Poster

I. John Vaccarino

Past National Commander

2014 - 2015

Past National Commander, I. John Vaccarino passed away on 9 July 2018 of vascular dementia at Gilchrist Hospice of Howard County, MD. John was 83.

The devoted husband of Mary E. Vaccarino "Betty" (nee Garner); beloved father of Joseph and wife Cathy, John and wife Jo Ann, Mark, Patricia and husband Jay, and Barbara; loving brother of Philippa Owen and the late Sally Clocker; He is also survived by 9 Grandchildren and 8 Great Grandchildren.

Brigadier General (MD) Isadore "John" Vaccarino was born in Baltimore on January 2, 1935.

He was the son of Joseph Vaccarino, a grocer in Little Italy who founded Sun of Italy food products, and his wife, Lauretta.

He was educated in Baltimore Catholic Schools, St. Michael the Archangel and Mount Saint Joseph High School.

John retired with over thirty-four years



of service in the Army Reserve and the Maryland Army National Guard.

His military career began upon his graduation from the ROTC program at Loyola College (University) of Baltimore in June 1956.

While his major was Business Admin-

istration, his lifetime was spent largely working as an officer of the Maryland Army National Guard at the Fifth Regiment Armory in Baltimore, MD.

PNC Vaccarino's military decorations included the Meritorious Service medal, the Army Commendation medal, the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Army Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon, the Maryland Distinguished Service Cross, the Maryland Meritorious Service Medal, and the State of Maryland Service Ribbon with one silver botonee and one bronze botonee.

John was a Director and Past President & Past Museum Director of the Maryland Military Historical Society.

He was a past Commander of the Veteran Corps, Fifth Regiment Infantry; Past Commander of the Maryland Region and Past National Commander of the 29th Division Association Inc.

Important Notice

We have now decided to offer the *Twenty-Niner* in electronic format.

This effort will start with the Spring 2019 edition.

If you would like to receive a 'pdf' of the *Twenty-Niner* in the Spring, please send an email to:

Bill Held, @ 29erNewsletter@Gmail.com.

Please include your name with your request.

He will begin to create an emailing list for this purpose.

This will not affect those of you who wish to keep receiving the printed copy.

William S. Mund, Jr.
National Executive Director
Editor, the *Twenty-Niner*

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Not just from the battlefield

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD has affected humans since the beginning of mankind. The term PTSD came to prominence after the Vietnam War, as the VA and the military treated and studied those affected on the battlefields in Southeast Asia. Previously, the disorder was known by names such as Soldier's Heart and Battle Fatigue. PTSD is usually thought of as a battlefield problem. In combat, fearing death, witnessing violent acts, or inflicting violence on others can trigger or precipitate the condition. Our Comrades in the 29th Division Associations can be affected in this way by their combat experiences.

Civilians are not immune to PTSD. This condition can be seen in all sub-populations and is caused by a multitude of stressors. Our families, friends, coworkers and neighbors can be affected by serious stress and traumas in their lives. Loss of a love one or friend, chronic illness, abusive relationships, violence in the community or witnessing a traffic accident can have long term negative effects. Some PTSD develops on the job. Health care workers, policemen, firemen and home caregivers are examples.

When the brain is exposed to a traumatic experience, the body reacts in a "flight, fight or freeze" pattern to the stress. If the individual cannot run from the danger, they will either instinctively fight or remain motionless, hoping not be noticed or not to be recognized as vulnerable.

Prior experiences can either produce a resiliency to a sudden stressor or aggravation by the new danger. Not all people who experience trauma develop PTSD. There are many factors that determine vulnerability to this condition. Some of these include training, prior life skills development, and support at the time of the event.

In combat readiness, we are taught to provide "three hots and a cot". That is remove the soldier from the situation and provide nourishment and rest. This approach is more applicable to the battlefields of Iraq or Afghanistan than those of World War II or Korea.



*By the National Surgeon
Dr. Howard H. Bond MD, FS
Post #85*

As fear and painful stimuli negative affect the brain, the individual develops a chronic response. It is important for individuals, their families and health care providers be open to recognize three typical responses to PTSD. When these are recognized, the individual can receive appropriate care or support.

First, the individual learns avoidance of situations that recall the painful event. This is a hypervigilance state that affects all the body's senses. Loud noises are heard as explosions. A person in uniform can be seen as an enemy soldier. Riding in a car or train could bring back memories of an accident scene. How a person avoids is an individualized response. But as we are exposed to thousands of situations a day it is impossible to avoid all triggers.

Second, triggers can cause flashbacks to combat or prior traumatic events. The response to such memories can be severe and paralyzing, and at the time, the individual may not recognize PTSD as the cause of fear, anger or aggression.

Finally, flashbacks or this reliving of stressors is followed by hyperarousal states such as anger, aggression, irritability and sleep disturbance.

These reactions place roadblocks to success at work, school, and interpersonal relations. So when we see troubling changes in our personal interactions or those of family, coworkers, friends or clients, it is imperative to seek assistance for ourselves or others that might be affected by PTSD. There is effective treatment for PTSD; however, it must be customized for the nuances of this very specific diagnosis.

1944 2019

NORMANDY HEROES 75TH ANNIVERSARY D-DAY

29 May until June 11, 2019
Come Discover the Beauty and History of Normandy
As We Honor the Events of 1944.

**Visits to Omaha Beach, American Cemetery at Coleville, Isigny,
Saint Lo, Viro, Saint Clair sur Elle, St Jean de Savigny.
Sightsee to Bayeaux and Mont St Michel and more!**

Join Us!

**\$3600 for 12 nights includes all hotel and
transportation within France and most meals.**
Space is Limited.

Contact: Frances Sherr-Davino
fsd104@icloud.com
774.266.3472

To perpetuate the friendships we cherish, to keep alive the spirit that never knew defeat,
to glorify our dead, and further, to keep before our Country the record of the 29th Division in the World Wars.

A Thirty Year Journey

1989 - 1993

This is the second installment of a THIRTY YEAR JOURNEY. Much of it dwells on personal accounts from the WWII veterans and places associated with the division. There are so many stories, and we write with trepidation in fear of omitting some accounts of those from the "Greatest Generation." Their stories could fill a book. Hopefully, the accounts are representative of the men who stormed the beaches of Normandy. Hopefully the commentary will evoke memories of our honored WWII veterans and their families and make those of us who served after WWII even prouder of having the honor and the privilege of wearing the "Blue and Gray."

John W. Schildt
July 2018

On June 4, 1989, a Memorial Day Service was held in Roanoke, There I made contact with Rev. Charles Reed, Chaplain of the First Battalion 116th. Father David Silva also shared in the service. Both men were wounded in the early action at Omaha.

Reed may have been the first chaplain ashore. As far as we know, he was the first 29'er chaplain. Thus it seems important to share some of his memories. Reed had entered the military from the state of Kentucky. Like Chaplain Metcalf of the 115th, he immediately began ministering to those he had known and had become close friends.

In the darkness of the early hours of June 6, Chaplain Reed spoke to the troops prior to entering the landing craft. His message was "Things That Cannot Be Shaken."

On Omaha Beach, Reed's first task was to minister to his assistant, PFC Wilson McDiarmid, who was Reed's organist. Wilson had a Master's degree in music, but his military mos was a bazooka man. Reed with a voice full of emotion tried to comfort his young organist. But McDiarmid expired in the arms of the chaplain. He was the first of many to breathe their last in the arms of Chaplain Reed.

A few moments later, Reed, while in two feet of water, was badly wounded. However, that did not deter him. He limped across the sand, pulling wounded men to safety from the rising water. He even swam with his wounded leg out into the heavy sea, to rescue a wounded man who was in danger of being carried out with the tide. For these acts of bravery on D Day, the United Methodist Chaplain from Ohio was awarded the Silver Star, and of course, the Purple Heart.

After a period of hospitalization, Reed returned to the 116th and was with the regiment in Vire. A shell burst in the midst of a group of men. Most of those around him were killed. Reed was wounded again and was temporarily blinded by the explosion.

In his farewell remarks, he noted that many of the men he had known and respected had made the supreme sacrifice. "Many now lie buried in the Military Cemeteries, while others with serious wounds incurred on the battlefield have been returned to the

States." He considered the division his second home, and his comrades his "second family."

After the war, Chaplain Reed continued to serve in the Ohio National Guard, as well as a pastorate. He and his wife then

retired to Florida. Death came to the chaplain of Omaha in 1996.

Reed received a citation signed by General Gerhardt:

For gallantry in action against the enemy in Normandy, France. At approximately 0715 hours, 6 June 1944, Chaplain Reed landed on the beach...with the first group of headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 116th Infantry. Shortly after landing Ch Reed was wounded in the leg....

During this time, the landing craft were discharging troops "some distance from shore." One soldier was caught by the undertow and in serious danger of drowning. Returning to the citation:

Ch Reed despite the fact that he had received no medical treatment

swam to the aid of the drowning man and brought him safety to shore.

On January 3, 1991, Robert Miller and 29'ers from the Maryland region gathered in Frederick for a very important task. Colonel Miller issued a new charter for Post 78 or Cresap's Rifles, named for a prominent frontiersman. The Rifles had been part of the famous "Bee Line" march from northern Virginia and western Maryland to become a part of Washington's army in 1775. They covered over 500 miles in three weeks. Along with Cresap's Rifles at that time was Morgan's Rifles from the Shepherdstown, Virginia (now West Virginia) area. There is a monument in Shepherdstown to this event. While Cresap's Rifles became a part of the First Maryland, Morgan's Rifles in later years became a part of the Second Virginia under the command of Thomas J. Jackson.

Ernie Snyder, who had gone from a Pvt to a Colonel in the Maryland ANG was named commander with John Wilcox as adjutant. Thus began John's long and distinguished career in the Association.





Chaplain Charles Reed, possibly the first chaplain ashore on D-Day, 6 June 1944.

In the ensuing years, three members of Post 78 became National Commanders. Boyd Cook followed in the steps of MG Milton Reckord as a general office becoming NC. Now of course is the third general, Grant Hayden. Boyd Cook also became the first post war 29'er to become commander. He was followed by Charles "Buck" Lockard and John Wilcox. John was also NED for many years. John was instrumental in getting US 15 named the 115th Infantry Memorial Highway.

In February 1991, fifty years had passed, and on Sunday, February 3, 1991, hundreds gathered at the Pikesville armory for a dinner and proper ceremonies. Years had passed, but memories of the marches, bivouacs, combat, loss of friends remained. I was presented with a book of the Ken Burns, Civil War History series signed by many of the WWII veterans. It remains a cherished possession.

In late spring 1991, Bob Miller, the man who drove the efforts to place a monument on Omaha Beach *ANSWERED THE LAST ROLL CALL*. Ernie Snyder, serving not only with the MDANG, but a minister in the church of the Brethren, and this writer conducted the memorial service. Naturally there were a lot of officers and those of the "rank and file" present for the service. Bob was buried in his military uniform. The homily for Bob was "A Soldier's Faith."

MG Bruce Jacobs of the National Guard Bureau noted that Bob treated everybody equally and was respected by all. He was like a father figure to many junior officers and non-coms.

Being interested in the 29th, Major Howie and D Day since boyhood, I began to do research on the 116th. Many 29'ers came to my aid as I tried to write *THE LONG LINE OF SPLENDOR*, the story of the Stonewall Brigade from 1742 to 1992. It was the first at the time. Later far surpassed by General Ted Shuey's great book. Bob Slaughter graciously supplied, what at the time was his unpublished manuscript.

John Robert, "Big John" enlisted in the Virginia National Guard in 1940. Among his motives were to be with friends, serve his country and make "a few extra bucks." Bob said, that on D Day in addition to enemy fire, sea sickness, was also his height. At 6'5" he made a big target. Bob was seriously wounded in the fighting at Vire on August 6. Pages could be written about Bob and many other 29'ers.

Paul Winters later NC 1992-1993 shared stories of Normandy and beyond as a combat medic. There was also Ralph Coffman. Ralph had enlisted in the Virginia National Guard on October 1, 1940. On June 6, 1944, Sgt Ralph Coffman led a squad of L Company Soldiers onto the beach. They were pinned down by German machine gun fire. Ralph gathered a handful of men and "fearlessly led an assault of enemy machine gun positions, destroying the same." These words come from his citation as he received the DSC. In the next month in Europe, Ralph was wounded three times. After the war he returned to Virginia and became postmaster. Ralph and others were among the heroes who landed on Omaha Beach.

In 1991, the reunion returned to Hagerstown. Once again, Bethel Church hosted the Memorial Service. Whereas the 1987 reunion was held on a wet Sunday, the 1991 Sunday more than made up for the one four years previous. This time there was bright blue skies and comfortable temperature. Prior to the service, I had the honor of meeting Virginia Hallman and her son, Sherwood Jr. They were the widow and son of Sherwood Hallman who was awarded the Medal of Honor at Brest. They shared the story of the 175th Medal of Honor recipient. More about that later.

As a part of the service, Richard Herklotz had members of the Maryland National Guard to give a brief history of the division with members dressed in attire from the Colonial period to the time of the 29th Division Light.

During the Memorial Service, I related the story of Dr. Tom Dooley, A Catholic Missionary doctor in Laos. He died of cancer at a young age. Given the option of returning to the US or remaining in Laos, Dr. Tom chose to remain in Laos. When the Catholic priest came to give him the last rites, he said, "Go home, Tom. Go home to meet your God."

After the service a gentleman came up to me and said, "I knew Dr. Dooley." The man was Colonel Sidney Bingham one of the WWII commanders of the 116th and recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross. Colonel Bingham had met the physician on one of his many tours of duty after WWII.

The afternoon tour was a trip to Fort Frederick approximately fifteen miles west of Hagerstown, overlooking the Potomac River. The fort ranks next to Fort Ticonderoga as being from the 1750's era. It was constructed by the colony of Maryland to protect settlers on the western frontier during the French and Indian War.

My seat mate was General Sherman. His father "Abe" had been one of the legends of WWI with the 175th.

On Labor Day, Colonel Bingham rode his bike to Sharpsburg to visit the battlefield that ranks in the annals of history with Hastings, Waterloo, Saratoga and D Day. He spoke of the passing of time, noting that in 1940, the West Point Class of 1890 held their 50th reunion. The young cadets made comments about the "old geezers." The Colonel then said that he had returned to the Academy for his 50th in 1940.

I was unable to attend the 1992 reunion as I was in Roanoke due to the passing of my mother. Colonel Bingham sent me a note of sympathy. It meant so very much.

When I published *THE LONG LINE OF SPLENDOR*, two copies were mailed immediately. One to Colonel Bingham, and one to Major Howie's daughter Sally. The Colonel was to attend the 1993 reunion in Massachusetts but died suddenly just a few weeks prior to our gathering.

One of the veterans attending the 1991 reunion was Frank of Clearfield, PA. We will read more of Frank later. He wrote a profound statement, "wounded soldiers, so much pain, just yesterday their bodies so strong and sound, now they lay torn by the enemy's guns, for now another battle now begins, the wounds of war, a fight to live, and a fight to heal."

Several months after the 1991 reunion, I received a phone call. It was Frank. He was in the area clearing right of ways for power lines and would I like to spend the day with him. Rearranging my schedule, I said, "sure." He wanted to tour Antietam. Then I went on a tour with him. He took me to where his crews were working. At one place he told one of the workers to bring a load of firewood to the parsonage. It was a big load. We used the firewood for several years. Frank and his wife Stella were wonderful people, and Frank was a unsung 29'er hero. I shall be forever grateful for the day I spent with him.

In 1993, we travelled to Braintree area. I rode with Ernie and Martha Snyder. On Friday, we toured the historic "Freedom Trail" visiting Faneuil Hall, Paul Revere's house, etc.

Saturday morning, I was in the registration area. A tall, trim gentleman walked in. He was asked his name. The reply was "Puntenney." I immediately asked if he was the officer who was with Major Howie. The answer was "yes." That began a wonderful relationship with Bill and Bonnie Puntenney that lasted a lifetime.

Bill, a native of Arizona, had graduated from the university there and received a commission from the ROTC program. His first assignment was Fort Hood, Texas and duty with the famed Seventh Cavalry of Custer legend. Each troop had their own brand of horses.

Growing up on a ranch, Bill caught the attention of a West Point graduate and polo player. The commanding officer of the Seventh was none other than Charles Hunter Gerhardt. Bill was tapped for staff duty. He thought perhaps his horsemanship had impressed the colonel. Puntenney took part in the famed Carolina maneuvers. One era was fading, another dawning. Bill said, "I was one of the last of the horse soldiers, and one of the first of the mechanized cavalry."

The WWII vets knew General Gerhardt was "something else."



John Robert "Bob" Slaughter

An excellent horseman, he played polo for the army. Some said that he was so much like George S. Patton that he was a Patton in miniature. For a long time, he insisted on the troops being clean shaven, and in Normandy, chin straps had to be hooked. He also had a fetish about cigarette butts.

When "Uncle Charlie" was sent to Oregon, he took Puntenney with him. Likewise, when he was called to Pentagon to receive special orders and assigned to the 29th, he took his junior aide with him and entrusted him to be the courier of top secret orders.

While the 29th was being trained for "Operation Overlord," Puntenney was in the Plymouth area of the U.K. Lord Astor was the Mayor of the city. Bill and other officers thus met Lord and Lady Astor. U.S. politicians also visited the troops. Among them Henry Cabot Lodge from Massachusetts and A.B. "Happy" Chandler, later Commissioner of Baseball, from Kentucky. He also met Ginger Rogers.

Placed in command of the 19th's Recon Unit, Bill just prior to the invasion, had visitors, none other than General Eisenhower and General Bradley. Ike climbed on a half-track and checked out the machine gun, prompting a famous photo. Months later, Bill received a copy signed by Ike.

On D Day, Bill went ashore with the 3rd Battalion of the 116th and was assigned as XO serving under Major Howie. When Howie was killed, Puntenney was given command of the 3rd Battalion. The 116th was shocked when it saw the scene of desolation as it marched through St. Lo on July 28. Puntenney was promoted to major.

Prior to departing Normandy, the 3rd Bn received a new XO. The new officer was Captain Archibald Sproul, the son of a prom-



Paul Winters

inent Virginia family, VMI graduate. Sproul commanded headquarters Company 3rd Bn of D Day and was wounded the next day. He was awarded the DSC for his heroism on D Day. In the post war years, Sproul commanded the 116th 1952-1959 and later the division.

General Gerhardt asked Bill to describe the action and the capture of Julich to none other than Sir Bernard Montgomery or "Monty" as he was known. The British General was impressed with the account. There was an ulterior motive for Monty's request. Shortly thereafter, Montgomery took Sir Winston Churchill on the same tour.

General Gerhardt appeared at the Battalion command post. He awarded Puntenney a Silver Star for "gallantry in the action in the vicinity of St. Lo, France on July 17-18, 1944." Following Howie's death, he assumed command while the battalion was heavily engaged and fended off an enemy counter attack. "Capt Puntenney moved among the forward elements of his command, continually exposing himself to heavy enemy fire without regard to his own safety." The citation also noted, that "his fearless leadership was an inspiration to the officers and men of his command, and contributed ...to the success of the operations."

The New England Post with Don McCarthy, Fran Scherr and others had a lot of surprises for us. We marched into the Banquet room to the music of "the Longest Day." Our speaker was the renowned military historian Carlo De'Este. He had authored a book on Normandy and was pleased and honored to mingle with the men of the original cast who had stormed Omaha Beach, fought through the hedgerows, captured St. Lo, Vire, Brest, Julich, etc. Following his address, there was music and dancing. The melodies were supplied by the 215th Massachusetts ANG band.

"One if by land, two if by sea," the story of the midnight ride of Paul Revere. We had a police escort to the historic "Old North Church" and another meaningful memorial service.

Chaplain Oberle introduced Russell Stover, I/116 as a "patriot,

soldier, writer, historian, devout Christian, Country philosopher, devoted 29'er. In the early years of the 29'er Russ was a frequent contributor. His memorial address was profound. "Reflecting and Pondering the Larger Scene." Russ shared Bible verses that helped him survive in Normandy. Of course the favorite was Psalm 23. He used this verse often while under artillery fire. He quoted from the third stanza of our National Anthem. Most people are unfamiliar with the stanza because we rarely sing it. This writer has often used it in addresses to the Association.

O thus be it ever when free men shall stand between their lov'd homes and war's desolation. Bleset with victory and peace may the heaven rescued land, Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.

Following the service, we went outside and dedicated a memorial, on the north side of the church to Lt. Anthony V. DiSimone of the 115th. Comrade Donald Van Roosen gave a tribute to the young officer who made the supreme sacrifice in Normandy.

Naturally, the main topic of discussion at the 1993 Reunion was the observance of the 50th anniversary of D Day and the return of the 29'er to Normandy. Don McKee and the trip committee released a tentative schedule. This had been devised after consultation with government agencies involved in the overall planning.

May 31: Leave the U.S. airports for overnight flights.

June 1: Arrival in Paris and bus trip to St. Lo, Vire and other places where our delegation would be staying.

June 2: Bus trip to U.S. Military Cemetery at St. James in Brittany. There would be a second ceremony at St. James to honor MOH recipient Sherwood Hallman. After lunch, departure to Mount St. Michel situated on the coast.

Friday, June 3: A visit to our American Military Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer, our Omaha Beach Memorial, Pte du Hoc, and a dedication of the National Guard memorial to Frank Peregrory, MOH at Grandcamp.

Saturday, June 4: All day in St. Lo, a parade, dedication of a square in memory of General Gerhardt, ceremonies at the Major Howie Memorial, and a gala evening with the French in their Civic Center.

Sunday, June 5: Ecumenical Service at Eglise Notre Dame, Trip to Le Carrefour for dedication of a memorial to 2Bn 115th, and ceremonies at Omaha Beach Memorial arranged by the National Guard Association and town of Vierville.

Monday, June 6: Awaiting information by the Anniversary Committee

Tuesday, June 7: All day in Vire.

Wednesday, June 8: Visits to the little towns along the Elbe River, villages located between the beach and St. Lo, namely, Ste. Clair, Ste. Marguerite, St. Jean de Savigny, Couvains, with ceremonies and meals.

Thursday, June 9: Visit to the Normandy Museum in Caen. Journey to Paris.

Friday, June 10: Free day in Paris.

Saturday, June 11: Return to the States.

Now we await the 1994 trip to Normandy!

To be continued in the next edition.

Robert W. "Bob" Jones, National Finance Officer

The 29th Division Association Inc. regrets to announce the passing of National Finance Officer Robert "Bob" Warren Jones of Stevensville, MD on 12 July 2018. Bob had suffered a heart attack.

Born November 9, 1948 in New Orleans, Louisiana, Robert was the son of the late Kenneth and Gloria Jones.

Bob graduated from Salisbury State College in 1970. He was the former vice president of manufacturing of Baltimore Aircoil Company.

Bob was a 21-year retiree of the Army National Guard. He served in the guard in Illinois and California with the majority of his service in Maryland.

Bob was the current 29th Division Association National Finance Officer. He was a Past Maryland Region Commander, and a Past Post Commander of Eastern Shore Post 88.

Bob loved crabbing, fishing, hunting, gardening and above all spending time with his family.

He is survived by his wife, Helena Moore Jones; son Christopher Jones (Samantha) of Warroad, Minnesota; daughter Bobbie Combs (John) of Stevensville, Maryland; grandchildren Casey Mae and Jack Jones, and Shannon and Emily Combs. In addition to his parents, Robert is preceded in death by brother Richard K. Jones.

A visitation was held on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 from 6 to 8 PM at Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home, P.A. in Chester, MD.

A funeral mass was conducted on Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 11:00 AM at St. Christopher's Catholic Church in Chester, MD. Burial was in Woodlawn Memorial Park in Easton, MD.



Message from the National Executive Director / Editor

The 29th Division Association Inc. suffered a severe loss this past July with the death of National Finance Officer, Robert "Bob" Jones. (See above).

Bob was in his first year as National Finance Officer. He had taken over for J. Brian Becker who had spent about 14 years in that position. We were very fortunate that Bob stepped up to replace Brian.

Equally, when we learned of Bob's death, we were very fortunate that Brian, without a moment's hesitation, volunteered to come back and get us through the convention until someone could be duly elected to fill the position of National Finance Officer.

I will be eternally grateful to Brian for his selfless attitude and dedication to the cause that all of us hold so dear.

We have elected Tom Knight of Post 58 to fill the position of National Finance Officer. He has been working with Brian and I for the past few months. Please read his brief biographical summary at the top of page 3 in this issue of the *Twenty-Niner*.

We just concluded our 100th Convention

and Reunion in Roanoke, VA. last month. Fortunately, the event came off with no big surprises and everyone seemed to have a good time.

I must recognize the great effort by the ladies of Post 64 for their kind hospitality and diligence in setting up and running a great hospitality room.

The hospitality room always ends up being the main event at our conventions. This is where old friendships are renewed and new ones made.

When PNC Grant Hayden, Brian Becker and I arrived at the hotel there was some consternation about how things were going to proceed.

The hotel had been in a renovation process and some of the renovations were still a work in progress and incomplete.

In spite of this, the contractors and the hotel staff were able to get things together and we were able to have a great convention.

If you haven't already, please read the wonderful account written by Assistant Editor Frank Armiger beginning on page 1 of this edition about our convention.

We are grateful to Bernard Marie, LTC

Arthur Moore, Steve Melnikoff, SGT Austin Cook and SGT Jake Moyer for their participation in this our 100th Convention.

Our membership rolls have increased with the success of the "Facebook and Legacy campaigns". This was the result of the efforts of the "Futures Committee".

PNC David Ginsburg of Post 110 and Neil Ungerleider of Post 93 were instrumental in the coordination and execution of this effort.

All this was accomplished with the leadership and resolve of PNC Grant Hayden who fully supported the efforts of the "Futures Committee".

To help reduce costs and expenses, we have decided to offer the *Twenty-Niner* in electronic format. To participate in this initiative please see the important notice on page 27 of this issue.

I would like to thank Bill Held, Jr., Vice Commander of Post 1-72 for stepping up and taking the responsibility of insuring

(Continued on page 34)

Normandy Allies International Experience: July 14-27, 2019

Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Normandy Campaign.

See you in Saint-Lô!

Registration period: October 1, 2018 – March 5, 2019

Space is limited and subject to availability.

Phase I: British and Canadian Sectors

We explore the World War II British and Canadian sectors. Our visits include: Caen Peace Memorial, Juno Beach, Abbaye d'Ardenne, Pegasus Bridge and glider landing area, Arromanches Circular Theater and Mulberry Museum, Longues s/mer German Battery, Bayeux British Cemetery, and more...

Phase II: American Sector

Our journey takes us from Omaha Beach and Utah Beach through the hedgerow country to Saint-Lô where we will be part of the commemorations on July 18th.

Historians and Normans who lived through the landings and the liberation share their experiences with us.

Our visits include: Omaha Beach and the Normandy American Military Cemetery at Colleville s/mer, Brittany American Cemetery at St. James, Pointe du Hoc, Utah Beach and Museum, Graignes, La Fièvre, Sainte-Mère-Eglise and the Airborne Museum, Saint-Lô and bocage areas, Lebec Cider Farm, LaCambe Cemetery, Chateau Colombières and the marshes, rue Captain Carter, Wall of Remembrance, Trevières... and more....

Throughout our time in Normandy, we lodge in the charming town of Bayeux at the Hotel Churchill

Immersing ourselves in French heritage— visits to the Bayeux Tapestry and Cathedral, Mont St. Michel...

....evenings open to enjoy the culture and cuisine...

Participants under 19 years old must be accompanied by parent, guardian, or school staff.

Students and Teachers: Travel Grants are available.

For program details and rates: request Land Package Information Packet

Contact Marsha Smith, Program Director

normandyallies@verizon.net

PO Box 1332 Pittsford NY 14534

585-748-2357

Or visit our website: <https://normandyallies.org/our-next-trip/>
to download registration form.

Executive Director & Editor's Message

(Continued from page 33)

that the *Twenty-Niner* will get emailed out electronically.

This initiative will commence with the Spring 2019 edition of the *Twenty-Niner*. Please sign up to receive the *Twenty-Niner* electronically.

Those of you who wish to keep receiving the printed copy will not be affected by this new initiative.

I would like to comment on something that is affecting all of our posts, which is our inability to get members to step up and to become active in the running and administration of the posts.

We need younger members to step forward to insure that our association marches on into the next several decades and does not just "fade away" like all our good soldiers do in the end.

The problem is that the younger members are still gainfully employed and do not have the time to commit to the association as our older retired members do.

I would assume that many organizations such as ours are experiencing the same problems?

But, what are we to do? How are we to prepare for the future without the individuals of the future becoming actively involved?

This is but one challenge that we face as we move forward into the next decade.

WILLIAM S. MUND, JR.
National Executive Director/Editor

Thank You!

The editor of the *Twenty-Niner* is always grateful for the donations that are received to help fund the *Twenty-Niner* and he encourages everyone to do so.

Checks must be made payable to the 29th Division Association and mailed to:

**National Headquarters
29th Division Association
P.O. Box 47634
Windsor Mill, MD 21244-0634**

Twenty summers in Normandy: absolutely life-changing

Normandy Allies marked a significant milestone in 2018—our twentieth summer of educational programs in Normandy. Much has changed since the inaugural study trip in 1999, and yet the core has remained the same. Normandy Allies continues to offer a combination of close interaction with local French organizations, colleagues, and friends along with a detailed history of the landings and the aftermath up to Saint-Lô, from a military perspective.

We have evolved from a three-part program which began in the United States, continued on to England, and then to Normandy. We now offer the full program in Normandy—11 days to enter more deeply into this history and to savor the beauty and bounty of Normandy today.

During the 2018 program, our friends and colleagues in Normandy celebrated with us. Our friends in the Omaha Beach/Bedford VA Association also celebrated their 20th year, and hosted a delightful evening for our combined groups at the Hôtellerie La Joie Saint Benoît in Bayeux. (see photo) In Trévières, Mayor Mirelle Dufour greeted the group with champagne, offering the traditional glass of friendship before the luncheon.

We were honored with the presence of four witnesses to the landings who shared their stories, a tradition that has continued unbroken each summer. And Mayor Jean Quétier surprised with candles and flags on our apple tart dessert, making our annual luncheon even more festive.

Our group of 30 included 11 students from high schools and university in Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia as well as five teachers from New Jersey, New York, Illinois, and Virginia. A hallmark of our program has been the generational span of each group, and this year was no exception as the ages ranged from 15-79. Each person brought their own unique perspective and added to the experience in myriad ways.

The days were intense and we appreciated having good

walking shoes! The current program begins with the British and Canadian sectors, to lay the groundwork for considering the scope of the Normandy Campaign.

The dates are always structured around July 18th, so that we may participate in the annual commemoration of the liberation of Saint-Lô and witness the fidelity of the Normans to honoring all who served. Many years, we are the only American group in attendance.

One of the town leaders remarked this year that he did not believe that the commemoration would be the same without Normandy Allies' presence. Marsha Smith and Janet Spence, daughter of 29th Division veteran Russell Pickett, were asked to lay a wreath at the Major Howie monument as part of the ceremonies.

One of our teacher participants, Beth Latini of Pittsford NY, wrote in her teacher union newsletter: *"This unique experience was absolutely life-changing for me as a teacher and as an American! Having the opportunity to view this part of history through such a personal lens has changed the way I approach teaching, especially this part of my curriculum. Even though I cannot take all of my students on a field trip to Normandy, my stories & tangible items will help make history become more real & accessible to them. I am excited to share my first-hand experiences, stories, pictures, videos and other resources with my students & colleagues, not only in History, but in many different departments ranging from Foreign Language to the Library."*

We invite you to consider joining us July 14-27, 2019 as we participate in the 75th anniversary of the Normandy Campaign. As always, it will be an honor to be there, to remember and carry away with us the message of fidelity and friendship so redolent in Normandy today. (Reprinted with permission from *Amitié* Fall 2018 and *Speak Out!* September 2018)

By Marsha Smith



Be sure to check out our new and improved website at: www.29thdivisionassociation.com

The Greatest Generations Foundation

The Greatest Generations Foundation is an IRS 501(c)3 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) dedicated to honoring the sacrifices of veterans by returning them to their former battle-grounds, cemeteries, and memorials to ensure that their legacies are recorded and retold in perpetuity to future generations.



Steve Melnikoff, C Company, 175 Infantry, and a member of Post 1-72 and his friends at a recent gala event.

Steve Melnikoff, flanked by Australian actor Hugh Jackman, left, and President and founder of the Greatest Generations Foundation, Tim Davis, on the right.



Photos used with the permission of the Greatest Generations Foundation.

Minutes

of the Business Meeting
held on 13 October 2018 at the
Holiday Inn Roanoke, Valley View, Roanoke, VA

National Commander Grant Hayden called the meeting to order at 0901 hours. Commander Hayden led the attendees in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the opening prayer that was offered by Chaplain Reverend John Schildt. The group then recited the 29th Division Association Preamble.

Commander Hayden asked for the roll call by Adjutant Valerie Simmers. It was noted that a quorum was present.

The minutes of the previous meetings (NECIII, 28 June 2018) had been published and were distributed in the Summer 2018 edition of the *Twenty-Niner*. As there were no corrections or amendments, these minutes were approved as published.

Officer's Report

National Commander – Grant Hayden reported on the initiatives he had set as Commander and efforts of the past year. He thanked each Post he was able to visit for their hospitality.

Senior Vice Commander – David Leighton deferred to later in the agenda for his remarks.

Junior Vice Commander – Pete Hinz is looking forward to being the Senior Vice Command and working with the Commanders initiative for the next year. He is also looking forward to representing the Association at the 75th Anniversary of D-Day in Normandy. He plans on visiting Posts throughout the year and developing his initiatives for 2020.

Southern Region Commander – David Leighton spoke of the events and accomplishments of the Southern Region and Virginia. He also spoke of the issues with planning the next Convention.

Maryland Region Commander – Bill Bullock talked about the loss of National Finance Officer Bob Jones and the group that went to pay their respects. There were no other issues.

At-Large Region Commander – Edward Tolzman was not present.

Finance – J. Brian Becker discussed the Statement of Activities and Balance Sheet that were as of 1 October 2018. The greatest cost is the publishing of the *Twenty-Niner* Newsletter. Will Mund made a motion and Bill King seconded the approval of the 2019 budget. All were in favor and the motion passed.

National Executive Director – William Mund talked about the death of Bob Jones and thanked Brian Becker for taking over the position in the interim. Then he talked about his duties as NED. He then went into his duties as Membership Chairman for the last year. He went over the status of the Posts membership as of 1 October 2017. We have 41 new members since June and 19 that have passed away. We need to continue to work on new members. Many of the new members have joined from the Facebook Campaign. Next he discussed the publishing of the *Twenty-Niner*. Discussion was made on sending the *Twenty-Niner* out electronically. Bill Held volunteered to be the one to send out the electronic *Twenty-Niner*. New members currently receive the *Chin Strap* and the most recent *Twenty-Niner* electronically. The first issue to be received electronically will be the Spring issue.

Chaplain – Reverend John Schildt continues to send calls, cards & prayers to members needed. Talked about speakers at Antietam. He has been the Chaplain for over 30 years. Reunions are a glad and

sad event. Glad to see those you haven't seen in a while and sad knowing those who have called the last roll call. In 1987 reunion, there were over 500 WWII veterans and this year only 3 were present. We need to continue to pray for America. Norman Duncan made a motion to recognize Reverend Schildt. It was seconded and approved.

Service – No report.

Surgeon – Dr. Howard Bond – No report.

Welfare – Brian Becker first mentioned the 60+ that will be remembered in the Memorial Service. If you know of someone in need, please let him know. He reported on the status of John Wilcox, Bob Recker, Bob Moscati, and Ernie Snyder. Discussion made on Alzheimer Disease.

Historian – Joseph Balkoski is retiring. His ceremony is tomorrow and therefore not in attendance. He will continue to serve as Historian for the Association.

Sergeant-at-Arms – Randall Beamer had no report.

Property – Franklin Shilow has completed his 10th year. He thanked the National Commander as this is the smoothest transition he has had.

Parliamentarian – Thomas Insley complemented on the smooth meetings.

Judge Advocate – Houston Matney mentioned the issues have been dealt with at the executive level, i.e. stolen valor. He is working with Ted Shuey on insurance.

Committee Reports

2019 National Convention – Senior Vice Commander David Leighton stated the location for the next convention is planned to be held either 24-27 October 2019, or 31 October – 3 November 2019. The planned location is Virginia Beach. We are waiting on confirmation that we do not have to pay up front for the hotel and conference rooms. We submitted a waiver to avoid this requirement. We are working on a back-up plan if this does not work.

2019 Arlington Wreath laying – SRVC David Leighton stated the date of the wreath laying is 29 June 2019. A bus will be available. SRVC Leighton is working with the restaurant to work out lunch. Still working out the details. Comment made on requirement of Arlington to replace the wreath every year. PNC Ginsburg made a motion to set aside \$400 to purchase wreath. Pete Hinz seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

Futures Committee/DVD – PNC David Ginsburg mentioned ongoing actions of the Futures Committee to include a new trifold brochure, and the traveling display, Documentary DVD, website changes, a targeted Facebook campaign, the Legacy Campaign, and the Armory Campaign. PNC Bill King recommended we provide a version of the poster for civilian locations, such as a restaurant. Discussion on new membership. Recognition will be made to Posts for recruiting efforts.

Awards & Grants Committee – No current request for funds.

Changes to Constitution & By Laws – First the NEC gave the procedures for Changing the By-Laws. PNC Ginsburg, with the aid of a power point presentation, presented the proposed amendments

that the Constitution & By-Laws committee recommended. Motion to accept these amendments with some minor language changes was made by Comrade Michael Tanczyn and seconded by NFO J. Brian Becker. The motion was passed unanimously.

Note: The amended Constitution and By-Laws will be published on the website.

Nominating Committee – PNC David Ginsburg read the names of the individuals who have been recommended for appointment and nominated for the elected offices.

Old Business

75th D-Day Normandy Representation – JRVC Pete Hinz will be at Omaha Beach with Ted Shuey. Norman Duncan and Steve Melnikoff will be there, both on separate trips. The 29th Division Commander will be there also. We need to look at how many places we should recognize. This is different than the trip that Fran Sherr-Davino is involved in.

Fundraising – At the NEC in June, PNC John Wilcox mentioned a raffle, bull roast, and a calendar. All ways to make money. Discussion on other ways to raise funds. Motion from PNC Ginsburg to add Commander Hayden and Jimmy Kilbourne to a Fundraising Committee. It was seconded and approved.

Other Old Business – None.

New Business

Election of Officers – Adjutant Valerie Simmers read the ballot as follows:

National Commander – David Leighton, National Senior Vice Commander – Pete Hinz, National Junior Vice Commander – Ted Shuey, National Finance Officer – Tom Knight, National Chaplain – John Schildt, National Welfare Officer – J. Brian Becker, National Service Officer – Neil Ungerliedier, National Surgeon – Dr. Howard Bond, National Historian – Joe Balkoski, National Judge Advocate – Houston Matney, National Sargent of Arms – Randall Beamer, Futures Committee Chairperson – David Ginsburg, Southern Region Commander – Jimmy Kilbourne, Maryland Region Commander – Bill Bullock, At-Large Region Commander – Edward Tolzman. The ballot was seconded by JRVC Pete Hinz and was passed.

Installation of Officers – The Installation of Officers will occur during the banquet.

Other New Business – Norman Duncan mentioned a plan to make the Beaches of Normandy a National Monument to keep them from commercial use. He requested to make a committee memo to re-

quest Beaches made into National Monument. Norman also made mention of asking for 6 June be a National Holiday. PNC Bob Wisch recommended the Commander write letters to the legislature that in light of the 75th Anniversary of D-Day, June 6 be made a National Holiday. JRVC Pete Hinz recommended a Legislative Affairs Liaison. PNC David Ginsburg suggested a delegation to the Army Division Association (ADA) to let the big full time Army take care of the issue.

JRVC Pete Hinz said we need to look at relationship with the 29th Division Association and the museums such as the 116th Museum, D-Day Museum, and the Maryland Museum at the 5th Regiment Museum. Norman Duncan added the WWII Museum in Washington, DC run by the Smithsonian. Just a future suggestion only.

Ted Shuey asked that the conference recognize John Marsh, WWII infantryman, 29er, Secretary of Army. PNC David Ginsburg made a motion to set aside \$200 for a plaque and recognition. It was seconded by NC Grant Hayden and then passed.

Deaths, Sick & Distressed

Jay Garrison spoke with PNC Don McKee. He is doing well and will be turning 95 in 2 weeks. PNC Ginsburg mentioned that PNC Joe Moscatti has been moved to assisted living.

Good of the Association

Comrade Richard Raymond submitted a resolution for an official musical signature to be used in Pass and Reviews to be used by the 29th Division. Discussion made that there is already a 29th Division March. PNC Bob Wisch said he has a record of it. There may be a copy in the museum. Bottom line we can't dictate what the Division uses as music.

NED Mund and PNC Wisch presented PNC Hayden with outgoing awards.

Post Commander meeting scheduled for 1430.

Closing Ceremony and Adjournment

With no further business, PNC Hayden began the closing ceremonies. A final salute to the colors. The meeting was adjourned at 1400 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

VALERIE E. SIMMERS
Adjutant

Minutes

*of the NEC I Meeting
held on 14 October 2018 at the
Holiday Inn Roanoke, Valley View, Roanoke, VA*

The NEC I meeting was called to order at 1030 at the Holiday Inn Roanoke – Valley View, Roanoke, VA., following the Memorial Service by Commander David Leighton.

Commander Leighton appointed the following officers for the year 2018-2019: National Executive Director, William S. Mund, Jr.; Assistant to the National Executive Director, PNC Robert Moscatti; National Property Officer, Franklin Shilow; Editor/Publisher "The 29er", William S. Mund, Jr.; Assistant Editor/Publisher "The 29er", Frank Armiger; National Parliamentarian, Thomas Insley; National Adjutant, Valerie Simmers; and Editor "The 29er" "Emeritus", Donald McKee.

A motion was made to approve these appointments and was

seconded. Motion was passed, and all appointees were approved.

Commander Leighton then notified the NEC II meeting will be held January 24, 2019 at the Pikesville NCO Club starting at 0930 hours.

A motion to close the meeting was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1039 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

VALERIE E. SIMMERS
Adjutant

29th Division Association Supplies Available

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>POSTAGE & HANDLING</u>	<u>MAILED</u>
Book—Ever Forward 116th Inf. History (soft cover)	\$17.90	\$5.75	\$23.65
Book—29 Let's Go—29th Division History	\$29.00	FREE	\$29.00
Book—Beyond the Beachhead (Joseph Balkoski)	\$19.90	\$5.75	\$25.65
Book—115th Infantry in WWII	\$25.00	\$5.75	\$30.75
Book—Omaha Beach and Beyond (The Long March of Sgt. Slaughter)	\$25.00	\$5.75	\$30.75
Book—From Beachhead to Brittany (Joseph Balkoski)	\$28.00	\$5.75	\$33.75
Book—From Brittany to the Reich (Joseph Balkoski)	\$27.00	\$5.75	\$32.75
Book—Our Tortured Souls (Joseph Balkoski)	\$27.00	\$5.75	\$32.75
Book—The Last Roll Call (Joseph Balkoski)	\$25.00	\$5.75	\$30.75
Book—Fields of War, Battle of Normandy (Robert Mueller)	\$19.95	\$5.75	\$25.70
Book—Drawing D-Day (Ugo & Maxine Giannini) (soft cover)	\$43.00	\$5.95	\$48.95
29th Division Association Note Pads (5 1/2 x 8 1/2)	\$1.00	\$1.30	\$2.30
Crests—115th, 116th, & 175th Infantry Regiments	\$5.50	\$1.10	\$6.60
Pin—29th Patch Stick Pin	\$5.50	\$1.10	\$6.60
Decal (specify inside or outside)	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$1.00
Labels, gummed w/29th logo (sheet of 50)	\$1.00	\$0.50	\$1.50
Clear Plastic key ring w/29th Association logo	\$1.50	\$1.00	\$2.50
Lapel pin	\$3.95	\$1.10	\$5.05
Lapel pin, past post commander	\$5.00	\$1.10	\$6.10
Ladies pendant	\$7.00	\$1.10	\$8.10
Medallion (for plaques)	\$6.00	\$1.10	\$7.10
29th Division Wine Glass	\$5.00	\$1.10	\$6.10
29th Division Association pocket patch	\$6.00	\$1.10	\$7.10
Pocket patch holder	\$3.00	\$1.10	\$4.10
Shoulder patch, 29th ID	\$3.50	\$0.50	\$4.00
Jacket, coach, navy with logo in S, M, L, XL, 2XL	\$28.00	\$5.75	\$33.75
Golf Shirt, embroidered 100% cotton pullover (royal blue, white, gray—L, XL, 2XL)	\$23.00	\$5.75	\$28.75
29th Division Official Association Necktie	\$20.00	\$2.00	\$22.00
29th Association Dress Hat (state size)	\$38.00	\$5.75	\$43.75
Hat, Baseball w/29th logo (embroidered)	\$15.00	\$2.60	\$17.60
Hat, Baseball w/29th logo (embroidered/Summer mesh)	\$12.00	\$2.60	\$14.60
29th Division Cemetery flags on wooden staff 12" X 19"	\$5.00	\$3.00	\$8.00
DVD — 29 Let's Go! - A video history of the 29th Infantry Division	\$10.00	\$3.00	\$13.00

Checks should be made payable to the **29th Division Association** & mailed with orders to: **National Property Officer, 29th Division Association, 403 Caledonia Avenue Baltimore, MD 21227-4707**, Phone — 410-242-1820. You can now buy 29th merchandise using a credit card, debit card, or "PayPal". **Minimum order on credit, debit & "PayPal" is \$15.00.** Just go to the new updated website at www.29thdivisionassociation.com and click on "Merchandise" and it will walk you through how to order merchandise using electronic payment.

29th Division Association
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JOIN THE 29TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.



The Association is open to anyone who wants to keep the history and spirit of the 29th alive - soldiers who served in the 29th, currently serving soldiers, families of those who served, and anyone who wants to keep the 29th alive.

Full Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Postal Address: _____
(Number and Street) (City, State, Zip, Country)

E-Mail Address: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Did you Serve? Please indicate what unit you served in: _____

Post (optional) - please indicate if you have a preference on what Post you are assigned to: _____

I want to join the 29th Division Association and help keep the history of the 29th Division alive. The \$12 dues includes the National Membership, the monthly *Chin Strap* and the *Twenty-Niner* newsletter three times a year.

29th Division Association Membership

Applications and payments can be completed online or mailed to our National Headquarters address below. If you do not choose a post, one will be assigned for you based on your current or former unit or your home address. Dues vary from post to post but a check for \$12.00 made payable to the 29th Division Association will suffice. You may also make application and pay dues at our National web site: www.29thdivisionassociation.com.

National Headquarters, 29th Division Association, P.O. Box 47634, Windsor Mill, MD 21244-0634

MD Post 1-72	Baltimore, MD	VA Post 64	Roanoke, VA	MD Post 94	Silver Spring, MD
FL Post 2	Sarasota, FL	MD Post 78	Frederick, MD	MD Post 110	Pikesville, MD
VA Post 5	Norfolk, VA	MD Post 85	Northeastern, MD	VA Post 116	Staunton, VA
MD Post 48	Westminster, MD	MD Post 88	Eastern Shore, DE & MD	PA Post 175	Pennsylvania
MD Post 58	Dundalk, MD	NE Post 93	New England	MD Post 729	Waynesboro, PA