



Virginia Beach, VA, is the site of our 95th Convention & Annual Reunion *Holiday Inn & Suites, North Beach, October 10 - 13, 2013*

Your Convention Committee has been working hard again this year to bring you another outstanding National Convention that will be held this time in the beautiful Tidewater area of Virginia. The Holiday Inn and Suites, North Beach will be the home to the 29th Division Association for our 95th annual reunion.

The hotel, located at 3900 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, is just a short distance off Interstate Route 264 and

has a large ample free parking garage immediately across the street. The Vista Del Mare dining room where our banquet will be held on Saturday, October 12th is on the 6th floor of the hotel with floor to ceiling windows offering breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean. The very comfortable guest-

rooms each include a refrigerator, microwave, flat screen TV, complimentary wireless internet and privacy balcony. Both King size and Queen size beds will be available.

Since many of our guests will not be arriving until Thursday afternoon, we have decided to forego the normally scheduled trips for that day. Instead, the hospitality room will be open with various snacks and beverages beginning at 4:00 p.m. and remaining open until 11:00 p.m. Dinner on Thursday evening will be on your own in one of the many great eating facilities both within and outside the hotel.

On Friday morning at 9:45 a.m., our motor coach will leave the hotel and travel roughly 25 miles to the Nauticus Museum in Norfolk where we will board the Victory Rover tour boat for

an interesting 2-hour narrated cruise of the world's largest naval base. This tour allows the opportunity to see many ships of the Atlantic Fleet while hearing fascinating and entertaining commentary as we cruise the smooth waters of the Elizabeth River and Hampton Harbor. On board we will enjoy comfortable seating, clean restrooms, a snack bar and gift shop. Following this event, we will again board our coach for a short ride to the Freemason Abbey Restaurant for a lunch.

The restaurant is located in a 140 year-old renovated church and has been a favorite of the locals for 26 years.

On Friday evening we look forward to sharing an evening among friends with a meal in the hotel. We have again made minor changes by offering a sit-down

plated dinner and deleting the standard buffet. We feel this will help accommodate some of our many members using canes and walkers. The meal will begin at 6:00 p.m. with open seating and the location to be announced.

Following breakfast on Saturday at a restaurant of your choice, the annual business meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. For those not attending the business meeting, there are numerous shopping venues nearby. The hotel restaurant is open for lunch with a great menu at reasonable prices. We will again join in the ballroom that evening for the annual banquet beginning at 6:30 p.m. where our newly elected officers will be inducted. The entire reunion will wrap up Sunday

(Continued on page 36)



Message from our National Commander — Joseph H. Zang

This is my first opportunity to address the entire organization and I consider it a distinct honor to do so as your National Commander. I realized from the moment I took the oath of office, what a tremendous job that lay ahead of me. That task was underscored by the fantastic work of your Past National Commander, Ivan V. Dooley and his very capable and dependable staff. Many of whom are working with me during my term of office. We should all feel a debt of thanks and gratitude for their work in the past as well as in the present.

Since my term began I have been extremely busy attending meetings, ceremonies, celebrations and special events, representing the Association. The events were not only for this organization but, for the active Guard units as well. In addition, studies are under way, with the Futures Committee, to bring to light some recommended changes in the organization and the way we do business. This should be a topic of discussion at the National Executive Committee meeting on June 20, 2013. Why not do a little prior planning and attend this meeting? All are welcome.

My plans include a visit to the Medal of Honor Grove at Valley Forge. The grove has a monument for each state. It is my understanding the Maryland monument includes a pavilion and park benches suitably engraved. Although former Post 92 contributed

time and financing to maintain the Grove, it has fallen into a state of disrepair. Recently, a new organization was formed to maintain the Grove. They are known as the "Friends of the Medal of Honor Grove". My visit will investigate how the 29th Division Association may help in the maintenance of the Grove, keeping with our Constitution and By-Laws preamble. Anyone interested in joining me on my visit is welcome and invited to do so. Although I have not set a date, I will provide ample notice to those interested. The visit will be in the mid April time frame.

One of the more challenging tasks is to provide a Reunion agenda that is as satisfying as our past reunion in Annapolis, Maryland. Rest assured, your committee has worked hard at that challenge. The Reunion Hotel, Holiday Inn & Suites, North Beach, Virginia Beach, is a high quality facility that promises to fulfill our needs. The Hotel staff has been most agreeable to satisfying our plans and goals there at the hotel. I urge each of you to plan to attend the reunion and take advantage of the time to renew old friendships and "keep alive that spirit that never knew defeat". Details and sign up instructions can be found on page 38. Read the information carefully and respond early. Your early response will help the planning committee with their task in scheduling events and make this reunion a success.

"29 Let's Go!"

THE TWENTY-NINER

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Attention

Veterans who served in France 1944

Veterans who helped liberate France could receive medal

— U.S. veterans who helped in the liberation of France during World War II could be eligible to receive the French Legion of Honor Medal in the future. This medal was previously only issued to WWI vets. Those applying must have written documentation, which is normally a copy of his/her military separation order, DD-214, and other official orders, which verifies their military history during combat. Members of the Army, Army Air Corps, Navy and Coast Guard who participated in one of the four major campaigns in the liberation of France (Normandy, Southern France, Northern France and the Ardennes) are eligible for this French award. Any previous military awards such as the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, etc., would indicate meritorious actions during combat operations. Copies of these documents should be forwarded with the request for consideration for the French Legion of Honor to the Defense Attaché, Embassy of France, 4101 Reservoir Road NW, Washington, DC 20007. These French medals must be approved by the Legion of Honor Committee in Paris, France, after appropriate review. Approximately 100 French Legion of Honor Medals will be awarded each year in the U.S. at the home of each veteran or at public ceremony during a patriotic holiday. These arrangements will be made after the awardees have been notified. To find out more, contact the French Defense Attaché at 202-944-6502 or by fax at 202-944-6538.

Contributions to the Twenty-Niner Sustaining Fund

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our membership for their generosity in contributing to the *Twenty-Niner* Sustaining Fund for this Spring issue. From October 15, 2012 through February 15, 2013, these donations totaled \$2,780.00. **Note our cut-off time. If your contributions did not reach our National Executive Director by February 15, 2013 then it will not be listed until the next issue.** We thank you all and bless you.

Adcox, Wallace O., Jr. Post 64 - A-227th FA Vinton, VA
Adler, Eric, Post 94 - Son - Whappinger Falls, NY
Alberti, Louis, Post 94 - HQ-1-115th Inf. Frederick, MD
Alberti, Louis, Post 94 - HQ-1-115th Inf. Frederick, MD
Atkinson, Charles M., Post 116 - H-116th Inf. Saginaw, MI
Auld, Charles, Post 94 - Assoc. - Nashville, IL
Baumbach, Jeffrey, Post 94 - Son - Brick, NJ
Beach, Joyce, - Gibsonia, PA

In Memory of LTC Sidney Smith

Bourdeau, Mary Ellen, Post 94 - Daughter - Glen Falls, NY

In Memory of Oscar Donohue (Father)

Bradfield, Jean, St. Louis, MO
Brodkey, David, Post 94 - Assoc. - Portland, OR
Burke, Edward, Post 94 - A-821st TD Cincinnati, OH
Burkert, Perry, Post 94 - Son - Sinking Spring, PA
Butterbaugh, Janice, Post 94 - Daughter Chambersburg, PA
Cogan, Gene, Post 2 - B-115th Inf. Avilla, IN
Connor, Dolores, Post 94 - Assoc. - Charleston, WV
Craig, Randall L., Post 64 - 29th ID (L) New Market, VA
Cundiff, Lester B., Post 64 - Band, Oriskany, VA
DeHays, Antonin, Post 94 - Assoc. - College Park, MD
Fetrow, Ward W., Jr., Post 1 - HVMTR/115th Inf. Tamasse, SC
Fowler, John, Post 94 - B-104th Med Lebanon, MO
Gerhardt, Charles Jr., Post 94 - Son - Lebanon, OH
Gritton, Raymond, Post 94 - 81st Chem. Mrt. Burtonsville, MD
Golding, Gordon, Post 94 - Son - Paris, France
Haffaker, James R., Post 64
Harper, David, Post 94 - Assoc. - Bountiful, UT
Hayden, Grant, Post 1 - HQ-29th Inf. Div. Kingsville, MD
Heeter, Eugene, Post 94 - HQ-1-175th Inf. Rolling Meadows, IL
Hoffman, David R., Post 64 - Son - Harrisburg, PA

In Memory of Maj. Albert Hoffman-Div. Asst G-3 WW II and Col. Robert Minor, Div. Asst. G-2 WW II.

Hopkins, Martha J. D., Darlington, MD

In Memory of Maj. Carroll F. Hopkins - 110th FA

Kelley, Kevin, Post 94 - HQ-29th Div. (L) Alexandria, VA
Kruhm, Fred, Post 94 - C-121st Eng. Burtonsville, Md
Lane, Dale, Post 94 - Son - Indianapolis, IN
Lemon, Robert H., Post 64 - SVC-116th Inf. Salem, VA
Lockard, PNC Charles W., Post 78 - A-1-115th Inf. Middletown, MD
Long, Janet, Post 94 - 729th FSB (L) Boston, VA
Martin, Don, Post 78 - L-175th Inf. Slator, MO
McCumsey, Sylvester, Jr., Post 64 - C-116th Inf. (L) Keswick, VA
Miles, Earl E., Post 2 - A-1-115th Inf. Dinuba CA

Musick, Georgette, Post 94 - Assoc. - Spanaway, WA
Neighbors, Charles, Post 64 - E-116th Inf. Roanoke, VA
O'Donald, Dan, Post 64 - 116th Inf. (L) Harrisonburg, VA
O'Neil, John B., Post 72 - D-175th Inf. Westminster, MD
Pearson, Roberta Post 94 - Daughter - Barnes, WI
Piper, Samuel M., Post 94 HQ-1-115th Inf. (L) Falls Church, VA
Piper, Samuel M., Post 94 HQ-1-115th Inf. (L) Falls Church, VA
Piper, Samuel M., Post 94 HQ-1-115th Inf. (L) Falls Church, VA
Piper, Samuel M., Post 94 HQ-1-115th Inf. (L) Falls Church, VA
Praski, Ben, Post 94 - Assoc. - Grapevine, TX
Price, Thomas, Post 88 - HQ-2-115th Inf. (L) Hedgesville, WV
Quigley, Richard H., Post 2 - K-115th Inf. Sarasota, FL
Robertson, Don, Post 94 - M-175th inf. Crystal River, FL
Ross, John, Post 94 - Assoc. - Washington, DC
Schildt, Rev. John W., Post 78 - A-1-115th Inf. Sharpsburg, MD

In Memory of Wilbur Knox

Shanley, William, Post 94 - B-82nd Eng. Cedarburg, WI
Shriver, John, Post 94 - K-116th Inf. Pittsburgh, PA
Simons, John, Post 94 - I-175th Inf. Lubbock, TX
Simmons, Welford C., Post 64 - C & M-116th Inf. Harrisonburg, VA
Simmons, Welford C., Post 64 - C & M-116th Inf. Harrisonburg, VA
Sink, Karolyn, Post 64 - Daughter - Roanoke, VA
Smith, Gregory, Post 94 - Assoc. - Fairport, NY
Sylvester, Ben, Post 94 - Assoc. - Guildford, CT
Touschner, Sandra, Cleveland, OH

In Memory of Edward Fatula

Werthan, Jeffrey M., Post 1 - Son - Bethesda, MD

In Memory of his Father Fred Werthan - B-116th Inf. WW II

Williams, Dave, Post 64 - HQ-1-116th Inf. (L) Verona, VA
Wills, Hugh, Post 64 - HQ-116th Inf. McKinny, TX
Windler, Ralph P., Post 1 - B-115th Inf. So. Milwaukee, WI
Wright, Robert, Post 64 - C-116th Inf. McGaheysville, VA
Zenk, Herman, Post 94 - L-115th Inf. Berlin, MD

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:

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

Please submit this information to the address listed below:

William S. Mund, Jr.
441 Chalfonte Drive
Baltimore, MD 21228
wmundjr@yahoo.com

Taps

The following list shows names of known 29ers and their ladies or family members who died and their deaths reported from October 15, 2012 through February 15, 2013. 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

Alexander, Anthony, Post 88, Band/175, Cambridge Md, 12/1/12
 Baker, Gerald K, Post 72, A/175, Quincy Il, 6/27/12
 Barra, Caesar J, Post 94, E/116, Deer Park NY, 3/14/11
 Bianco, Nick S, Post 85, E/115, Patterson NJ, 3/2012
 Boggess, Ralph C, Post 64, A/116, Bedford Va, 4/17/07
 Buch, Pierre P, Post 64, Associate, Moneta Va, 4/3/12
 Carlson, Harry N, Post 93, A/115, Peterborough NH, 10/31/12
 Cornell, Hartwood, Post 78, A/115, Woodsboro Md, 11/1/12
 Davis, Howard S. III, Post 78, Associate, Frederick Md, 10/29/12
 Davis, Robert L, Post 110, A/110FA, Anamosa Il, 12/30/13
 Dettmer, Gilbert S. Jr, Svc/110FA, Reisterstown Md, 2/3/13
 Harper, Tawes P, Post 88, K/116, Cambridge Md, 9/26/12
 Heinlein, Charles H, Post 72, D/116, Baltimore Md, 11/3/12
 Howes, G. Kenneth, Post 94, Svc/115, Clarksburg Md, 1/29/11
 Jones, Elza L, Post 110, B/116, Nashville Tn, 5/2/12
 Krauss, Samuel R, Post 1, A/116, Baltimore, Md, 2/20/13
 Layton, Robert L, Post 88, K/115, Delmar Md, 4/12/12
 Lynch, James E, Post 94, 554AAA, Berlin Md, 2/20/11
 Mazzotta, Raymond, Post 78, D/115, Mantua Oh, Dt Unk.
 McQuaid, John E, Post 93, A/116, Ware Ma, 12/23/12
 Montgomery, Lester P, Post 64, Assoc, Roanoke Va, Dt. Unk.
 Newell, Arthur R, Post 2, L/116, Bonnie Il, 12/9/12
 Nider, Bernard W, Post 94, E/116, Lincoln Ne, 12/15/10
 Riedel, Kenneth B. Post 5, C/1-111FA, Virginia Bch. Va, 10/10/12
 Roach, Dennis L, Post 110, K/175, Woodstock Md, 10/26/12
 Rockwood, Everett A, Post 93, D/115, Walpole Ma, 1/5/13
 Schultz, Frank J, A/2-175, Danville Va, 7/23/12
 Simpkins, Lewis A, Post 2, C/116, Owosso Mi, 1/7/13
 Sites, John, Post 64, Assoc, Bedford Va, 1/24/11
 Smith, Frederick, Post 729, 729MT, Smithburg Md, 11/26/12
 Smith, James L, Post 94, 92ChemMtr, Tucker Al, 2/28/11
 Snodgrass, Harry, Post 64, D/116, Mt. Juliet Tn, 4/11/12
 Stefanelli, Harry, Post 110, B/121Eng, Washington DC, Dt. Unk.
 Tebbetts, Charles D. Jr, Post 93, A/115, Foxboro Ma, 10/13/12
 Weaver, Ronald J, Post 48, A/2-110FA, Westminster Md, 10/18/12
 Womack, Clarence E, Post 64, Assoc, Lynchburg Va, 11/25/12

LADIES

Buckingham, Ethel M, Aux 48, Sykesville Md, 12/23/12
 Farinholt, Agnes V, Aux 48, Finksburg Md, 1/23/13
 McCleaf, Dorothy N, Widow, Fairfield Pa, Dt Unk
 Reeves, Gladys C, Widow, Ocala Fl, 6/15/12
 Townsend, Katherine, Aux 48, Westminster Md, 4/2012

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 35 comrades and 5 ladies who have died and whose death was reported to us since our last publication. This includes 2 comrades who were not members of our association but were members of our 29th family. This is how it should be. 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.

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 P.O. Box 145, Sharpsburg Md. 21782-0145
 Telephone 301-432-0087

John E. Wilcox Jr., National Executive Director
 7045 Basswood Ct. Frederick Md. 21703-7137
 Telephone 301-695-9558

Robert W. Moscati, Asst. to the Nat. Exec. Dir.
 1910 Calais Ct., Baltimore Md. 21244-1707
 Telephone 410-944-1639
 E-Mail: rmoscati@msn.com

Recipients French Legion of Honor

The Editorial Staff of the "Twenty-Niner" and the entire membership of the 29th Division Association congratulate the following veterans who have been awarded the French Legion of Honor. We commend the government of the Republic of France for their noble effort to honor these United States veterans for the courage and sacrifice that these men displayed during these most perilous years in the history of mankind.

Berch, Isadore

B Co., 115th Inf.
 Buena Park, California
 Post #2

Britt, Hillar L.

L Co., 115th Inf.
 Satellite Beach, Florida
 Post #94

Griffin, Kenneth

G Co., 115th Inf.
 Frankfort, New York
 Post #94

Panno, Joseph

M Co., 115th Inf.
 Streator, Illinois
 Post #94

Walker, Malvin E.

L Co., 115th Inf.
 Estes Park, Colorado
 Post #64

World War II — My Story

By John Simons, Jr., I/175th Infantry

(This story concludes the account of John Simons, Jr., of I Company, 175th Infantry Regiment.

We are grateful to Mr. Simons for sharing his account with our readers.

Mr. Simons resides in Lubbock, Texas and is a member of Post 94)

COMBAT

Having successfully completed rifle grenade training I returned to the Company area and was assigned to the 3rd Squad of the 3rd Platoon. Since I was already a buck sergeant I was appointed Assistant Squad Leader under our Squad Leader Staff Sergeant Gueverra.

On September 14, 1944, the I Company Commander fell the entire company in and informed us we had been ordered to relieve the Regiment's 2nd Battalion on the front line and could expect machine gun, sniper, mortar, and rifle fire from the German defenders. He informed us we would have to take two hedgerows before we got to our objective of Brest, France and that our unit would enter the city in the Recubrance subdivision.

After a C Ration lunch we were issued two bandoliers of ammunition and two hand grenades. A bandolier is a sling that holds several clips filled with bullets for the M-1 rifle. We were also required to carry a bayonet, trench shovel, first aid pouch, butt pack with a poncho, blanket, and an extra canteen of water. In addition to my M-1 rifle I was ordered to carry a bag of rifle grenades. With all preparation complete our Company Commander gave us the order to move out: "Fall in, 29, Let's Go!"

As we approached the front line we saw the wounded and those who had paid the supreme sacrifice still lying where they fell. Seeing our fallen comrades certainly made an impression on me as I knew I would soon be facing the same enemy who had inflicted those wounds. In spite of the anxiety many of us felt we continued to advance about 15 feet apart to the first hedgerow led by Sgt. Gueverra. As I approached the corner of the hedgerow the Germans threw three potato masher hand grenades right in front of me. I hit the ground like a pancake and the shrapnel of the grenades went right over me without hitting me. After that we followed Sgt. Gueverra around the corner of the hedgerow and deployed to face the Germans on the other side.

Suddenly all hell broke loose. The Germans were firing machine guns, mortars, and rifles at us but the hedgerow protected us from being hit. I pinched myself to be sure I wasn't having a nightmare. The German machine guns fired rapidly, like brrrrrrrt, brrrrrrrt, brrrrrrrt, which had a very negative psychological effect on us. Fortunately for us though the pattern of the bullets fired by their machine guns was not as accurate as our American machine guns that fired at a slower rate like dot-dot-dot-dot. One thing for sure, if you ever got hit by a German machine gun you would get hit by three or four rounds.



A German soldier suddenly jumped out of what looked like a foxhole and threw a hand grenade that almost hit me. Thank the lord it was a dud and didn't explode. We cautiously approached the foxhole and found out it was an opening to an underground tunnel that led to a bunker fortified with four to five feet of concrete and a steel door. A member of our squad ran to the bunker's porthole and poked his M-1 rifle through the opening to discourage the Germans from firing on us as we approached the steel door of the entrance. Our communications sergeant, who spoke fluent German, loudly called out in German for the occupants to come out or we would blow it up. To our surprise a platoon of forty German soldiers opened the door and surrendered to us. Just as we got them to the surface a German mortar round landed nearby that wounded several of the Germans and two or three of our troops. We handed over the German POWs to a relief team, reorganized, and continued our attack.

Our leaders decided that we would hold our position before crossing the next hedgerow because it was getting dark. Sgt. Gueverra and I dug a foxhole in front of the hedgerow as an observation post while the rest of our unit remained sheltered behind it. We took cover in the foxhole just as the Germans opened fire on the troops occupying the hedgerow behind us.

Most of the fire went over us and the units behind us took numerous casualties. It was terrifying but we were probably safer in our forward observation post than the troops behind us. When the firing finally subsided Sgt. Gueverra and I were amazed how peaceful and quiet the night became. We settled in for the night and took turns on watch to alert our forces if the Germans began to advance. The cooks had prepared hamburgers in the rear but we decided it would be taking a huge chance of being shot by friendly fire if we went back to get a burger so we fasted. I had some Life Savers in my field jacket and they were a life saver that night and the best I have ever eaten.

The next morning, September 15, 1944, we advanced through the second hedgerow toward our objective the Recubrance Subdivision of Brest, France. We were briefed that when we entered the city to expect Germans to have the streets zeroed in with their mortars and expect to receive machine gun and rifle fire as well. A large mound built to block vehicles from entering one of the city streets had to be crossed before we entered Brest. Since we were exposing ourselves to enemy fire we had to double time. As I was running across the mound I stumbled and fell flat on my face. I looked back at the soldier behind me and his eyes were as big as silver dollars. He thought I had been hit and his

face had the most frightful expression I had ever seen.

Most of us made it over the mound and took cover in a building. We had orders to hold our position and we took turns stepping out in the street to observe ahead before continuing the attack. When it was my turn to observe I stepped out of the building into the street and immediately felt like I was being stared at. Just as I flinched I was hit by a rifle bullet in the calf of my right leg. It felt like someone came up behind me and hit me behind my knees. The impact doubled me up and flipped me over on my back. I looked up and saw a smoke ring floating skyward. I laughed to myself and thought, "I'm glad that wasn't a halo for me." I was a casualty in my first battle.

MEDICAL EVACUATION

The medics spotted me laying there and rushed over to provide first aid. They applied a tourniquet, bandaged the wound, and told me, if I was able, to move back one block for additional medical aid. I wanted to continue on with my unit but the medics insisted that I move back to the aid station. I limped back to the aid station and was shocked at the number of troops that had been wounded and were receiving treatment. I found a door step and sat down on it with three other wounded GIs. The medics

He removed the bandage and I could see that it was a penetrating bullet wound that had entered in one side of my right calf just below the knee and exited through the other side.

were carrying the wounded out of the area on stretchers under the Red Cross Flag to identify them as non-combatants. They told us to follow them if we could walk. We joined in behind them and after approximately one mile arrived at another aid station located in a building. I don't think I could have walked another step. One of the medics asked me how I was doing and I told him my bandage was so tight it was cutting off the circulation causing my leg to hurt. He removed the bandage and I could see that it was a penetrating bullet wound that had entered in one side of my right calf just below the knee and exited through the other side. After my wound was re-bandaged I was loaded in the shotgun position of a jeep that held two stretchers on the hood, two stretchers on each side, and two wounded GIs in the back seat. As we were driving out of the combat area I recalled an article I read in the Army's *Stars and Stripes* newspaper written by famous war correspondent Ernie Pyle. In the article Pyle quoted a wounded soldier who said, "They will have a hell of a time ever getting me back into a position like this." That's exactly the way I felt as we drove away from the front lines.

We arrived at a MASH unit field hospital and were placed in a tent full of wounded GIs on stretchers supported by two saw horses. The doctor came to check my wound and after tapping my toes to determine if any bones were broken had me transferred to the surgical unit. The doctors and nurses in the surgical unit were terrific and tried to calm my nerves by asking where I was from. When I told them New Mexico, The Land of Enchantment, one told me that they hadn't treated many soldiers from

New Mexico but they would take good care of me and that the first thing they would do is put me to sleep. They gave me a shot and told me to start counting. I don't remember anything past 5 or 6 until I woke up in another tent stretched out on a cot without my combat boots. I hadn't stretched out like that on a cot for months and I ended up sleeping until I was awakened by the nurses at noon the next day to see if I wanted something to eat. I said, "I sure did!"

After lunch the doctor came to check my leg. When he removed the bandage I was shocked to see that there was a hole in my leg that I could have put my fist in. I looked at the doctor and asked, "What in the world did you do to me?" The doctor explained that they had opened up the skin where the bullet went through which left the skin flopped open and that they were going to fly me to a hospital in England.

Several of my wounded comrades and I were transported to a nearby airstrip and placed on stretchers inside tents to await air transportation to England. Unfortunately Operation Market Garden was taking place at the same time. Approximately 35,000 paratroopers from the United States, Great Britain, and Poland had jumped into Holland with an objective of securing eight bridges on the Rhine River so our forces could cross in the advance to Germany. All available aircraft were being used to support this operation which turned out to be a disaster with over 10,000 casualties sustained by allied paratroopers. There were no aircraft available to fly us to England.

While the seriously wounded GIs were transported to hospitals, those of us with non-life threatening wounds waited at the airstrip for ten days with nothing more than K-Rations and water brought to us by Moroccan soldiers. There were no doctors, nurses, or medical care provided to us the entire time. Finally, we were loaded on large assault boats along with several wounded German prisoners to cross the English Channel to England. I was placed on the deck at the feet of two wounded Germans who were occupying jump seats attached to the deck. A Life Magazine was being passed around among the wounded GIs which contained a story on the Battle of Saint Lo. After I had finished my turn reading the magazine the Germans indicated to me that they wanted to see it. I didn't see any harm in letting them see it, and after looking at the pictures and talking back and forth with each other in Dutch they threw the magazine down, shouting, "bah, propaganda." Their leaders had convinced them that the war was going their way and they didn't believe the pictures in the magazine were accurate. Later on, they communicated to me that they wanted to know where they were being taken. When a crewman told them South Hampton, the Germans shouted, "No, no, no, South Hampton is kaput." I said, "Okay, we'll see," and sure enough, we soon docked at South Hampton Harbor with no problem. The Germans quickly realized that what they had heard about the war and South Hampton was nothing more than German propaganda.

After the boat docked at South Hampton we were transferred to a field hospital nearby. The hospital had real beds with real sheets and pillows that felt great after lying on a stretcher for so long. We were told that the exhausted doctors and nurses were going to take a two hour break and then come back and tend to

our wounds. After returning they examined our wounds, apologized for taking a break, and said they would have begun treatment immediately if they had realized how bad of shape we were in. My bandage was as black as the ace of spades and my wound was badly infected. I was transferred by ambulance to a general hospital where they immediately started treating me with penicillin shots to fight the infection in my leg. It seemed like every time I rolled over they were there to give me another shot of penicillin. My gaping wound was left open so it could heal.

The infection started to clear-up and after a week the doctors decided it was okay to sew up the wound. To do so they had to stretch the skin, muscles, and tendons in my leg which raised my heel to a position like I was walking on my tiptoes. After seventeen stitches were in place I was moved to another hospital ward to continue my recovery. The doctor told me not to get out of bed for any reason and soon I got acquainted with my wounded comrades in the ward. We talked about home, families, and civilian activities, not the battles we had all experienced in France. One day I decided I was well enough to get out of bed and go to the bathroom. I borrowed crutches from the GI in the next bed and made my way to the latrine. Unfortunately when I went to wash my hands one of the crutches slipped on a wet spot on the floor and down I went. I managed to get back up and make it back to my bed and when the doctor examined me the next day he asked me if I had been on my leg. I denied it but the doctor said, "Yes, you have," because four of the seventeen stitches were busted. He said he would throw the book at me if I got out of bed again before he cleared it. I followed his orders and in about three days he came back and cleared me to get out of bed with crutches even though I still couldn't get my heel down flat on the ground.

Those of us who were able were encouraged not to just stay in bed and we were able to take advantage of bus trips to see newly released movies from the U.S. and enjoy British cuisine meals of fish and chips. The British allowed smoking in their theaters and the smoke was so thick you could barely see the screen, but these trips were much enjoyed and appreciated. When the bus returned us to the hospital cookies and sodas were waiting for us in the lounge before we returned to our hospital ward.

After my stitches were removed physical therapy of stretching, walking, and whirlpool baths began and lasted over three months until my skin, muscles, and ligaments had stretched enough for my heel to return to its normal position. During this time I was able to take a site-seeing trip to London and see Buckingham Palace, Big Bend, Westminster Abbey, Tower Bridge, and St. Paul's Cathedral. It was a blessing that the physical therapy took place in the winter during the Battle of the Bulge. Those of us who were hospitalized with warm beds, hot food, and pretty nurses knew our comrades were engaged in a major battle with the Germans in very harsh winter weather. When wounded GIs engaged in that battle were brought to the hospital we assisted the medical team moving them from the ambulances to the wards. I was surprised that they were in good spirits after enduring the cold and being wounded in battle. They were totally convinced that the war would soon be over and

that the German Army was soundly defeated and in retreat.

With my rehabilitation complete, I was handed my shipping orders to return to my unit and rejoin the battle.

BACK TO THE 29TH

It was January of 1945 when those of us who had recovered from our wounds were condensed into small groups according to our assigned regiments to be returned to our units. As a buck sergeant I was placed in charge of about six GIs who were members of the 29th Division's 175th Regiment. I was given each man's personnel records and ordered to get the men to the Disbursement Center in Birmingham, England. We traveled by train to the Disbursement Center, were given physical exams, outfitted with battle gear and weapons, and soon transported by troop train, along with many other returning GIs, to a seaport on the coast of the English Channel.

We crossed the channel on a liberty ship and docked in La Harve, France. The officers ordered us to load our rifles before getting off the ship because German sympathizers in the area had been taking pot shots at troops returning to their units. Fortunately, no shots were fired and we headed for the Reception Center in France on that very cold, icy January day. The two mile hike up hill to the center was very slippery and it seemed we would take one step forward and slip back two. After

We loaded on twenty "40 & 8" box cars that were used in WWI. They would hold 8 horses or forty men. Forty men were stuffed into each box car that evening

reaching the tents set up at the center and being served a hearty meal we were ordered to pick up our back packs and head down hill to the railroad tracks. We loaded on twenty "40 & 8" box cars that were used in WWI. They would hold 8 horses or forty men. Forty men were stuffed into each box car that evening for the ride inland.

Everyone lay down on the floor of the box car to get some sleep. I decided the best place for me would be by the entrance so I could get some fresh air and see some of the French country side. Unfortunately there was no bath room and when someone had to relieve themselves they used the door. Every time I got comfortable and dozed off another GI would step over me to relieve himself out the door. I think a few of them had drunk too much P-38 beer before they got on the train. It was a miserable night. At daybreak the train continued to move very slow and stopped in every little whistle stop except Paris. The engineer pulled back the throttle and went as fast as possible through Paris. I think they were afraid some GIs might jump off to sight see. Outside Paris the train slowed down again and we arrived at our destination of Liege, Belgium late that evening. We were greeted there by troops assigned to the reception station who directed us to an abandoned four story university building to spend the night. I was assigned to stay the night along with four other GIs in a small room on the third floor. The room had no heat and was cold but it was much better than being outdoors in a fox hole.

The next morning all of us were assembled and called out by divisions. When those of us from the 29th Division were called, we were loaded on trucks and transported back to our units. I reported to an officer at the 175th Regimental Headquarters who welcomed me back and warned me to walk only on cleared tracks and trails to avoid mines that the Germans had scattered in the area. He told me that Company I, along with other units of the 9th Army, was in a defensive position and directed me to a



John standing on a downed German bomber.

cleared trail that led me to the company located on the west bank of the Roer River. I found my way back to my squad which was pulling guard duty right on the riverbank overlooking Julich, Germany. The date was February 1, 1945.

The Roer River is much larger than the Pecos River back home in New Mexico. It is about 100 yards across and at that time had high banks with tunnels cut through them.

We would enter the tunnels at ground level and follow the tunnel to large archways built on the steep banks overlooking the river to stand guard. Our company headquarters was located in one of many compartments behind one of the archways. The tunnel had been flooded so we walked through the mud and water while on guard duty. A break area had been set up in the tunnel that had a platform built with scrap lumber so we could rest in a dry spot when our twelve hour shift ended. Our company would stand guard in the archways overlooking the river for five or six days and then be relieved by another company of the regiment. After relief arrived we would go back to the rest area in a community called Bourheim for hot meals and some well deserved rest.

On February 22, 1945, while our company was in the Bourheim rest area, I was notified by the Red Cross that my brother David had made arrangements for us to meet in Maastricht, Holland. My company commander gave me permission to leave, but ordered me to return that night because the company would lead the attack to cross the Roer River the next day. I proceeded back to the 29th Division Headquarters in Heerlein to catch a ride to Maastricht, Holland, successfully hitch hiked a ride, and had a good visit with David. David had a camera and convinced a Dutchman to snap a picture of us standing in one of the streets of Maastricht.

As the day was winding down David and I flagged down one of the Red Ball Express GI trucks and asked the driver if he was going to Heerlein, Germany. He replied that he was and told us

to jump in the back of the truck. David decided to ride back to the 29th Division Headquarters with me and off we went. After traveling several miles I noticed that the route did not look like the same way I had come so I pounded on the top of the cab and asked the driver if he was sure he was going to Heerlein. He replied that he was going to Geelein, Germany not Heerlein and he didn't have time to take us back to the Heerlein intersection a couple of miles back. David and I walked back to the intersection and flagged down another truck that took us to Heerlein.

After having a coke at the division snack bar and saying our goodbyes, David returned to his unit and I caught a ride on a jeep back up to the Company I field kitchen. I reported to the mess sergeant that I had been ordered to be back to my unit by that night and I needed a ride up to the front. He told me he had been ordered not to let anyone go forward because they were about to kick-off the attack across the Roer River to Julich. In a panic to get back I went around to some of the other company field kitchens and was told the same thing. Frustrated that I couldn't get back to my squad, I returned to the Company I kitchen and was told by the mess sergeant to climb in a bunk and get some sleep while I could. He promised to swear that I made every attempt to go forward if I got in trouble.

The next morning the crossing took place and I was on the first truck that moved forward. We crossed the river on a pontoon bridge and I located my unit, reported to my platoon leader, and explained why I had missed the movement and apologized. Unbelievably, he told me that I had not even missed me and the matter was dropped. I was very relieved and happy to be back with my squad.

There was little resistance and very few casualties during the river crossing or while passing through the city of Julich on the other side. We took up tactical positions that evening and learned that we would be continuing the attack to München-Gladbach, Germany, the largest city west of the Rhine River. We moved into the attack position along with several other armored and infantry units. When the order to attack was given we moved across flat plains that reminded me of New Mexico. There were American troops on our left and right for as far as we could see. We moved forward with our rifles on our hips firing every ten steps or so and were supported by tanks. Resistance was light and when we entered the city we encountered mostly civilians who had made signs stating that the German's had fled. Much of the city's business district had been bombed and the Germans had been hiding in the basement of these buildings. We had to enter and clear these basements to insure no German stragglers were left behind.

Late in the day we found a wine cellar in the basement of one of the buildings we were clearing. I had never seen so much wine in one place in my life and we figured the area above must have been a store that sold wine and liquor. After stopping for the night my squad members and I went back to the wine cellar and found whole shelves of champagne that dated back as far as the 1700s. Each of us took one bottle and settled in for the night in the wine cellar. The bottles were sealed in wax which we removed to get to the cork. I removed the cork of my bottle and took a sip. Unlike other champagne I had tasted it was smooth,

mild, and mellow. We all drank an entire bottle of champagne and passed out on the hard concrete floor. The next morning we were all groggy but had to pack up and continue the attack. It was rough going but by afternoon our heads cleared and we felt better.

We proceeded through München-Gladbach with no resistance and liberated the city with only light casualties. I saw lots of road signs that survived the bombing including one on a bridge that read, "Adolph Hitler – Long live Adolph Hitler," and several Coca-Cola signs just like in the good ol' U.S.A. Our unit moved into the mostly undamaged residential area and my squad was assigned quarters in a residential home that had been abandoned by its German occupants. We were notified that we would be held in München-Gladbach for a few days and that we would have time for some rest and additional training. While I was there my brother David located me and we were able to visit again. It was unbelievable that we were able to meet up in France, Holland, and now Germany. That was the last time we saw each other until we returned home to Artesia, New Mexico after the war was over.

As the German Army retreated eastward thousands of foreign slave laborers from German factories and farms, and allied prisoners of war from France, Holland, Russia, and England suddenly became free and were clogging the roads and disrupting military traffic as they fled in all directions back to their homes. On April 12, 1945, the 3rd platoon of I Company received orders to secure these displaced persons in camps until they could be evacuated in an orderly manner back to their homelands. As one of the sergeants of the guard I was responsible for posting guards at the twelve guard stations we had been assigned at the displaced persons camp. If a displaced person tried to escape, we were ordered to detain them and send them back to the camp. I would return to the Company Command Post after the guards were posted and check on them every two hours. One night while we were on guard duty an out of breath Belgium soldier rushed into the command post to give us the shocking news that President Roosevelt had died. We all were saddened by the news but knew that Vice President Truman would be sworn in as president as provided by the U.S. Constitution and that our government would continue to function. On April 17, 1945, we were relieved of the responsibility of guarding displaced persons and ordered to advance to the Elbe River.

DRIVE TO THE ELBE RIVER

My Battalion was relieved of guard duty at München-Gladbach and began the drive from the west to the Elbe River to meet the Russian Army who was advancing from the east. We crossed the well-secured Rhine River and proceeded by motor convoy northeast toward the famous Duisburg/Berlin Autobahn. We passed through a town along the way that was declared an "Open City," which meant it was open to provide medical care for German soldiers and civilians and that it was not to be fired upon by advancing U.S. troops. The convoy proceeded with caution because when American forces had entered the open city of Kassel, Germany, they had been fired upon by the Germans. Fortunately, the German civilians and soldiers we encountered in the

open city just waved at us as we passed through.

After our convoy entered the autobahn we only slowed down in a couple of wooded areas that needed to be cleared of German soldiers. When we dismounted and moved through the forest, we encountered only light resistance but took several German soldiers as prisoners. I think the Germans felt that putting up a fight at this stage of the war would be a futile effort. When the forest areas were cleared we loaded back up on the trucks and proceeded at a high rate of speed down the autobahn toward the Elbe, arriving on the west bank several days before the Russians arrived on the east bank.

We took up positions along the river bank which were about six feet high. The river and the surrounding area was a very peaceful sight. It was spring time, the trees were all in bloom, and the cattle were grazing along the banks of the river. There were little signs of war in the area and we felt we could settle in and get some rest while waiting on the Russians. One morning we spotted a row boat coming across the river with four German civilians on board. We went down to meet them and found that one elderly man spoke fluent English. He told us that he had played in a band for American troops during World War I while they occupied his city. He asked us if we could cross the river and occupy their city instead of the Russians. They were very afraid of the Russians and we told them we had orders not to cross the river but could take any military personnel in uniform prisoner if they fled from the Russians across the river. The next morning there were thousands of individuals in military uniform from several nations crossing the river that we apprehended as POWs. The Germans preferred to surrender to the American Army rather than the Russian Army. A V2 Rocket division surrendered to the 29th Division, which was the largest number of prisoners the division had taken since the battle of Brest, France. The V2 Division's commanding officer was dressed in full dress uniform and hesitated to surrender at first when he saw the 29th Division commander in full battle gear. The German officer didn't think the American commander met the formal dress code for an official surrender.

The only combat action the 29th Division encountered on the Elbe River was when two German patrols crossed the river. The first patrol attacked an American outpost, killing one guard and seriously wounding another. The second patrol launched a rocket into a building occupied by our troops, seriously wounding three American soldiers. After a brief skirmish both patrols surrendered to the 29th and were taken as prisoners of war.

The official meeting with the Russians occurred on May 2, 1945. My squad was just about ten feet away when our assistant division commander, Brigadier General William H. Sands, met the Russian commander at the Elbe. After the official greetings we were dismissed and had the opportunity to visit with several of the Russian enlisted men. We couldn't understand each other,

My squad was just about ten feet away when our assistant division commander, Brigadier General William H. Sands, met the Russian commander at the Elbe.

but it was a very interesting military experience to witness the official meeting and interact with the Russian soldiers. Even though the War in Europe didn't officially end until May 8, 1945, as far as my buddies and I that witnessed the meeting were concerned the war ended that day, May 2, 1945.

"29 LET'S GO HOME!"

Shortly after the historic meeting with Russians at the Elbe River, our division was ordered to pull back near the city of Bremen, Germany. My company was assigned to a rural area near the small town of Warpswede. Our company headquarters was in a creamery and we occupied the employee housing there until



**John and friend in
Copenhagen, Denmark.**

we were moved into deserted German Army barracks. We lived in these barracks until we were sent home to the U.S.A.

Warpswede is very picturesque with trees, canals, farm lands, and dairy cows spread out over the countryside. It was not unusual for us to see dairy maids carrying two large pails of milk suspended on a pole across their shoulders crossing the

fields. This was a very nice, peaceful area to spend our final days in Europe. Our squad was sent out on patrol occasionally and ordered to report anything suspicious to our company commander.

I also got to visit the city of Bremen where our Division Headquarters were located. Bremen had been practically destroyed by allied bombing and the only two buildings not damaged were the Cathedral and the post office. While Warpswede was very peaceful, Bremen still had active units of Hitler youth groups that were hard to deal with.

What we were all looking forward to was going home. The 29th Division motto during the war was "29, Let's Go." After the war we changed it to "29, Let's Go Home!" The military devised a point system to determine the order in which each soldier would be sent home. Those with the highest points were sent home first and I closely followed the point level to determine how long it would be before it was my time to be sent home.

During the wait our leaders arranged lots of activities to occupy our time and keep us happy football, basketball, baseball, and soccer games along with furloughs to visit neighboring countries. Most of the games were played in a stadium in Bremen that was constructed when the summer Olympics were held in Germany. We re-named the stadium Ike Stadium after General

Eisenhower. I was fortunate to be picked to go with a group from our division on a tour to Denmark as a substitute for another soldier who had received his orders to go home. I got the word from company headquarters only thirty minutes before the scheduled departure time so I had to get my gear together in a very short period of time. We were transported by truck convoy through Hamburg, Germany, and the trucks were loaded on a ferry boat to cross the North Sea to Denmark. We docked in the city of Arhu, Denmark, where we were met by hundreds of Danish people welcoming us and wishing us a good time during our visit. We were served Danish cookies, candy, and cakes and felt like heroes. The Danish people were thankful that the U.S. had developed the atomic bomb instead of the Germans. At this time the U.S.A. had the respect of the entire world.

After spending the night in Arhus, we journeyed on through the beautiful Danish countryside to Copenhagen, the capitol of Denmark. It was very pleasant to see a country that was not war torn like we had witnessed in Holland, France, Belgium and Germany. The Danes put up very little resistance to their German occupiers with the reward being the preservation of the many of the finest structures in the world. Thousands of the Danish people turned out to greet us when we arrived and served us with more Danish pastries. We certainly appreciated the welcome we received in Copenhagen.

The Red Cross had moved bunk beds into buildings for us to stay in during our visit so we would have a comfortable place to sleep, and the military had made arrangements for us to eat our meals in one of the most luxurious hotels in the city. When we arrived for our first meal in a large dining room a table was full of hors d'oeuvres for us to eat as much as we wanted. We thought that was our meal and were surprised when the waitresses brought us a menu to order dinner. Those meals were excellent and we enjoyed visiting with the gorgeous Danish waitresses.

I was fascinated that, although there were automobiles in Denmark, the primary mode of transportation seemed to be bicycles. While walking down the streets you might see two or three hundred bicycles stopped at a traffic light. The Danish people would visit with us and wanted to know where we had come from. When we told them we had come from Warpswede, Germany they informed us how lucky we were to be stationed there because it was an artist colony. We probably could have swapped some candy bars for some really fine art work in Warpswede if we had any knowledge of fine art.

The United States and Great Britain were setting up a display of military equipment for the Danes while we were in the country. I didn't get to go to the display area, but while walking down the street one day I observed a B-29 flying low over Copenhagen to land at the airport to be on display. It was the largest airplane I had ever seen and was the type of aircraft that dropped the atomic bombs on Japan.

On the last night of our four nights stay in Denmark a party was held in the hotel ballroom where we ate our meals. After all the dancing had ended the band played the national anthem of Denmark. France, Belgium, Holland and, of course, the United States. Citizens present from each country proudly sang their national anthem as it was played in celebration of their recent



John, (left), on the deck of the USS Stevens on the way home from Europe.

liberation from Nazi Germany. Those of us from the U.S.A. were honored when the Star Spangled Banner was played and sang along at the top of our voices.

The next morning we traveled by ferry boat to Hamburg and then were transported by truck back to our headquarters in Warpswede. A few days later I was notified I had enough points to return to the United States and it didn't take me long to pack up and be ready for the trip home. We were loaded on trucks and, after stopping in Frankfort for the night, reached our destination, the inland seaport of Antwerp, Belgium. In Antwerp we were administered flu and several other shots which made us ill with a fever that we had to sleep off. The next morning we boarded the Liberty Ship, the USS *Stevens*. There were very few commissioned officers on the ship so those of us who were non-commissioned officers were assigned bunks in the ship's officer's quarters. There were four non-commissioned officers to each unit, which had four bunks. We were lucky to have those bunks instead of hammocks to sleep in every night during the Atlantic crossing.

We cruised past Great Britain and then entered the open sea for the journey to the good ol' U.S.A. After about a week at sea we approached the United States eastern seaboard and passed by the Statue of Liberty, which was barely visible due to heavy rain. We sailed up the Hudson River & could clearly see the New York City skyline and the Empire State Building covered in scaffolding while being repaired from a small plane crashing into it.

After docking we disembarked the USS *Stevens* and were taken to Fort Dix, New Jersey. That night the Army entertained us in a large auditorium with a burlesque show, which encouraged everyone to stay on post instead of seeking entertainment elsewhere. After the show we were ordered to go to our barracks to spend the night.

The next evening those of us heading west boarded a train for Fort Worth, Texas and had first class treatment sitting in Pullman

coaches and enjoying excellent meals served in the dining car all the way. After arriving in Fort Worth we had a five-hour layover which gave us time to get a haircut and a meal in town. When we returned to the railroad station our Pullman coach was hooked to a freight train bound for El Paso, Texas. We weren't happy about losing our fancy dining car but boarded up, wrapped up in our Army blankets, and went to sleep. When I woke up the next morning, I pulled up the blind in the Pullman coach and saw the mesquites, yucca cactus, and sagebrush that cover the desert between Pecos and El Paso, Texas. The sight was the prettiest one my eyes had seen in a long time!

We arrived at the El Paso train station and were transported in Army trucks to Fort Bliss to begin out-processing from the Army. The most exciting thing about getting to Fort Bliss was that my wife LuJuana was there to meet me. I had called her on the telephone from Fort Worth and, after learning when I would arrive at Fort Bliss, she made hotel reservations for us and set out on the 200-mile drive from Artesia to El Paso. We had a great time that evening and even met up with another couple from Artesia awaiting discharge, Bill and Eunice Schumpert.

The next morning I had to return to Fort Bliss for my discharge physical and out-processing. The date was October 30, 1945. I was discharged from the Army three years from the day of my induction.

LuJuana had driven her father's pickup truck to El Paso, so as soon as I was released she picked me up and we headed back to our hometown of Artesia, New Mexico. We arrived at my parent's home in Artesia a few hours later and had a joyous reunion with my parents, my brother David, and his wife Mary. David returned home a few weeks before me. Mother prepared pot roast with all the trimmings for dinner and everything seemed perfect except for the absence of my brother Donald, who was killed during the invasion of Saipan.

It was wonderful to be home and I was grateful that I had survived the war and that LuJuana and I could begin our civilian lives together. We were blessed with four children, Janet, Ken, Mark and Emily, and worked together in our insurance business for over fifty years. We were also blessed to be able to be active in our community of Artesia and the First Baptist Church there. I was blessed to find love again with my wife Rita after LuJuana's passing. Rita and I are blessed to live together in a fine assisted living home like Elmbrook Estates.



John and David at the World War II Memorial, July 4, 2005

It was by God's grace, the courage of our nation's leaders, the sacrifice of millions of civilians, & the service of the brave men and women who served in the military that we were victorious in World War II. The world should never forget the 400 thousand military personnel that paid the supreme sacrifice during the war & the thousands who were permanently disabled. The freedom we enjoy in the United States is not free, but came at a great price paid by WWII veterans & veterans of other wars that have fought to preserve our freedom before and since.

The words of the Doxology are a fitting close to my story of World War II:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all you creatures here below.

Praise God our heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen

EPILOGUE

During the sixty-five years that have passed since the end of World War II, many opportunities have presented themselves to me and my family to serve on active duty in the military and in veteran's organizations. After my discharge from the Army, I became an active member of the American Legion and The Donald S. Simons Chapter of the DAV (Disabled American Veterans). It meant a great deal to my family when the local DAV chapter in Artesia was named in honor of my brother Donald. I served as New Mexico State Commander of the DAV and remained an officer in the local American Legion and DAV chapters until moving to Lubbock, Texas, in 2004.

In addition to my father, John T. Simons, who served in the Army's Yankee Division in Europe during World War I, and my brothers and I, who served during World War II, both of my sons, Ken and Mark, served on active duty as officers in the

U.S. Army. My grandson, Robb Rowley, served as an Air Force officer and was in the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, when the building was struck by an American Airlines Jet after it had been hijacked by terrorists. My grandson, Andy Simons, currently serves as an Army officer and is a veteran of the war in Afghanistan.

I also became active in the 29th Infantry Division Association. In 1994 my daughter Janet and I had the honor of traveling to France with other members of the association to attend the 50th anniversary celebration of the D-Day invasion. I was humbled to once again stand on the sand of Omaha Beach and visit the American cemetery, located just above the beach, where thousands of American soldiers who lost their lives during the invasion of France are buried. President Bill Clinton spoke at the ceremonies on June 6, 1994, which meant a great deal to me and the hundreds of other Normandy veterans who were honored during the anniversary celebration.

My grandsons, John and Robb Rowley, organized a trip for my brother David and I to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., on July 4, 2005, one year after it had been dedicated by President George W. Bush. David and I are grateful that we had the opportunity to visit the beautiful memorial honoring all World War II veterans. We were treated as heroes by many of the younger generation we met there and we enjoyed the time sightseeing in Washington, D.C., with several members of our family.

It is my prayer today that the young men and women who serve in today's military will be treated as heroes by the citizens they are protecting and that the sacrificial service of all military veterans will never be forgotten.

Thanks and Best Wishes,
John Simons, Jr.

Samuel R. Krauss, Past National Commander

The National Headquarters of the 29th Division Association, regrettably announces the death of Past National Commander, Samuel R. Krauss. PNC Krauss passed away during the evening of Wednesday, February 20, 2013, at Charlestown Retirement Community in Catonsville, MD. He was 96 years old.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland on 18 June 1916, PNC Krauss entered the U.S. Army on 12 January 1943 and was assigned to the 76th Infantry Division at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, where he participated in the Winter Maneuvers at Lake Michigan in February of 1944. PNC Krauss was later transferred to the 29th Infantry Division.

Private Krauss was in the second wave to land on Omaha Beach and was one of the first replacements to join A Company, 116th Infantry Regiment on



Omaha Beach. Eleven days later he was seriously wounded in the vicinity of St. Lo, France and was returned to the United States where he spent the rest of the war rehabilitating at the Woodrow

Wilson General Hospital in Staunton, Virginia.

During the post-War years, PNC Krauss worked in sales until his retirement. He was active in Veteran organizations and served in various leadership positions in the VFW & American Legion.

He led the 29th Division Association as National Commander (1962-63). He also served as Maryland Department Commander and, at the time of his death was Commander of Post #1 in Catonsville, MD.

A 29th Division Association ritual and memorial service was held on Sunday, February 24th. National Chaplain Reverend John W. Schildt conducted the funeral service the following day. PNC Krauss is survived by his son, Michael Krauss, of North Carolina, a retired Vietnam veteran of the US Air Force.

Regimental Muster for 116th Infantry held in Staunton, VA

STAUNTON, Va. — Soldiers, friends and family of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team past and present gathered Nov. 10 at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel in Staunton to reconnect and to celebrate the 45th Annual Muster of the 116th Infantry Regiment. Each year, Soldiers and veterans come together to honor the unit's long legacy.

"The Muster is a great opportunity to see old friends and learn more about America's 'Stonewall Brigade,' past, present and future," said retired Brig. Gen. Theodore G. Shuey Jr., the honorary colonel of the 116th Infantry Regiment.

The theme of this year's Muster centered on the new Stonewall Brigade Museum in Verona which opened its doors Saturday, Nov. 10.

"This is the 270th anniversary of the founding of the Augusta militia, which became America's Stonewall Brigade," said Shuey. "It's a great history and we're honored to be able to capture it for all those who have gone before, and in many cases made the supreme sacrifice for our freedom."

Originally, the museum was located in the Thomas Howie Memorial Armory in Staunton, but after the events of 9/11, new security measures closed off the museum from public access. Shuey, along with the rest of the museum's organizers, hope the easier access will encourage members of the community to visit.

During the muster ceremony, Col. John Epperly, commander

of the 116th IBCT, gave a "State of the Brigade Address," adding the unit's recent accomplishments to its already prestigious history.



Photo by Sgt. David A. Begley

Colonel John Epperly, commander of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

The brigade deployed several troops in support of Hurricane Sandy, as well as operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Task Force 183, led by the Portsmouth-based 2nd Squadron, 183rd Cavalry Regiment, was the largest deployment of a single unit since World War II. This year marks the first time in nine years that all elements of the brigade have been home.

"We honor the service of members past and present," said Epperly. "Especially World War II vets. Your legacy is secure."

Highlights of the evening included guest speakers Glen-

wood Hankins, a D-Day vet, and Bernard Marie, who was only five years old on D-Day when the men of the 116th stormed Omaha beach to liberate him and his family.

Marie concluded his speech by voicing the sentiments so many Americans feel today.

"I cannot forget what they did."

Following the dinner, the Soldiers held a candlelight ceremony in memory of their departed comrades. Roll call, a moment of silence, and the playing of "Taps" paid tribute to the regiment's fallen warriors.

By Staff Sgt. Rebecca Petrie

Lt. Col. Erik Gordon takes command of 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Brigade Combat Team

WINCHESTER, Va. – Lt. Col. Erik Gordon took command of the Virginia Army National Guard's Winchester-based 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Brigade Combat Team from Lt. Col. Paul Gilman in a change of command ceremony that occurred on Dec. 1, 2012, at 10 a.m. at the Cherry-Beasley Readiness Center.

Gordon began his military career in October 1990 as an infantry Soldier in the Virginia Army National Guard, and he earned his commission in 1993 through the Virginia Guard Officer Candidate School. He served as a rifle platoon leader, scout platoon leader, company executive officer and company commander in 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment. Gordon has deployed overseas on federal active duty three times.

In September 2001, he deployed to Bosnia as a member of the Joint Military Commission section, Stabilization Force 10. From 2006 to 2007, he deployed with the 29th Infantry Division as a member of the Kosovo Force 8, and most recently served

with the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team as member of Combined Task Force Zabul, in Zabul, Afghanistan.

In 2003, he transitioned from traditional drilling status to the Active Guard Reserve program with a duty assignment at the National Guard Bureau in Arlington and most recently served as the construction branch chief for the Installations Division at NGB prior to taking command of the 3rd Battalion.

Since September 11, 2001, nearly 15,000 Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have mobilized for federal active duty for homeland security missions and overseas duty in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn. Soldiers from 3rd Battalion last mobilized for federal active duty in Iraq and Kuwait from September 2007 to April 2008. Over the last 24 months, almost 200 Soldiers from the battalion have mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

By Mr. Cotton Puryear

Headquarters officers welcome National officers to Fort Belvoir for meeting



Left to right: Colonel William Coffin, PNC/NED John Wilcox, SGM Michael Stockhausen, National Commander Joseph Zang, Major Colin Noyes, Major Kim Gage and PNC Robert Moscati, at ESGR Certificate presentation.

On Thursday, 29 November 2012, National Commander, Joe Zang, National Executive Director, John Wilcox and the Assistant to the National Executive, Bob Moscati, made a trip to the 29th Division Headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. They met with the Chief of Staff, Colonel William Coffin, the 29th Division Deputy G-3, Major Colin Noyes, the Secretary to the General Staff, Major Kim Gage and G-5 Sergeant Major Michael Stockhausen.

The purpose of the visit was to update the status of Post 84 and to discuss the action required to improve the Posts' membership and activity in the Association. A lively and productive discussion was held with the enthusiastic participation by all the attendees. Bob Moscati provided the attendees with the latest copy of the *Twenty-Niner* and a copy of the recruiting tri-fold now being successfully used in Maryland. The areas discussed included: administrative procedures for the conduct of Post business and the responsibilities of the National Headquarters in the conduct of that business, the establishment of a dues structure, the handling of finances, the conduct of Post meetings, and keeping the Post involved in the unit's current and future activi-

ties. The Annual Reunion scheduled for October 10th through the 13th at Virginia Beach was part of the agenda.

Lending to the effort was the emphasis provided by a phone call from the Division Commander, Major General Charles Whittington expressing his desire to have an active post representing the Division Headquarters. Major General Whittington is an active member of the Field Artillery Post 110. Brigadier General William O'Neill, Assistant Division Commander is also an active member of Post 110.

Other aspects of the discussions included the trip to Normandy recognizing the 70th Anniversary of the invasion, recognition of the Division Soldier and NCO of the year and the National Headquarters providing representation at specific Post activities.

The meeting concluded with the presentation of a Certificate recognizing the Division support of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) program. We came away with the commitment that a new and updated Post 84 will soon be on our roster.

This report filed by National Commander, Joe Zang

**Remember To Visit us
At Our National Website
www.29thdivisionassociation.com**

NED Reports: What is a National Executive Director??

I am sure that to many folks in the 29th Division Association, the title National Executive Director (NED) is just another person on the headquarters staff. While our National Executive Committee does consist of many people, most of these officers have a specific job and/or function that makes their job unique to them alone.

I have now held the position of National Executive Director since June of 2002 following a 7 year commitment by Past National Commander Joe Moscati. While this is probably not a record number of years for being in this position, I think I have the unique honor of being one of the very few

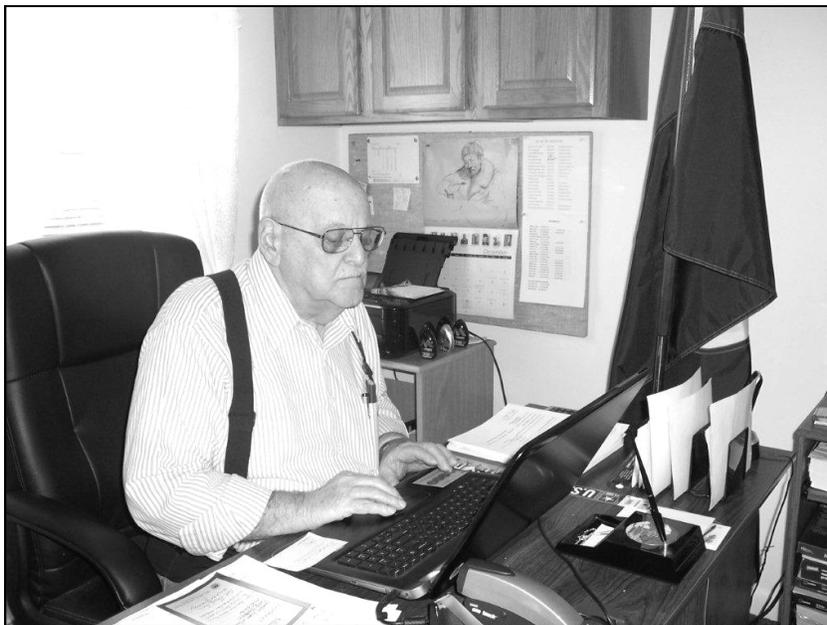
who during that period was also National Commander of the 29th Division Association.

I must admit that even before my initial appointment, the job always seemed to intrigue me. It has now grown to be pretty much the high point in my life and consumes a great deal of my daily being. Because of that, I take the position very seriously and have tried to do the best job I can.

There are many factors to the position of National Executive Director. The National Constitution of the Association states *"The Director, although subject to annual reappointment to this office, shall in effect be the sole permanent officer of this Association."* The position of the NED is responsible for conducting all routine business between executive sessions. The individual is also responsible for initiating and responding to all correspondence concerning the Association..

Another major responsibility is the receipt and recording of all funds including per capita dues, all receipts from the sale of supplies, all donations to the "Twenty-Niner" sustaining fund and all other monies that pertain to the National Headquarters of the Association. All funds are deposited with documentation being provided to the National Finance Officer as to

their source. I have been especially fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with a person who displays not only the credentials of a Certified Public Account-



ant, but a great "can-do" attitude as well. Col. (Ret) J. Brian Becker has become an excellent friend and confidant who has been a daily associate and supporter for more than 7 of the years I have worked in my job.

Donations to the 29er Sustaining Fund are a major portion of the income we receive. These donations and the per capita dues paid by each post for their members are the financial life-line for our Association. While the cost for printing and mailing the 29er has grown over the years, the Sustaining Fund has always helped with this effort. However, being in the position to receive these funds, I have learned that as our World War II members dwindle, so do our major contributions. We are now asking our friends to consider remembering us in their final wishes as a way to help *"Keep Alive the Spirit that Never Knew Defeat."*

There are still other responsibilities including working closely with the Assistant to the National Executive Director notifying him of reported deaths, changes of address and any other changes he receives that affects the mailing list. Both parties assist the posts with membership and other administrative issues.

The NED prepares the agendas and

schedules all dates and locations for the National Executive Committee meetings. He notifies all committee members of those dates and locations. The NED is also responsible for attending all Executive Committee meetings or designating a fully informed substitute. At the option of the National Commander, the NED may be requested to chair or attend other committee meetings. There are many other areas of concern relegated to the NED that I will attempt to mention in future columns.

It's pretty easy to see that I spend a lot of time either on the road between meetings, ceremonies and other functions or at my computer when

I'm home. However, the period of the year I look forward to the most is our annual trip to Sarasota, Florida to attend the special luncheon of Florida West Post 2. This all began in 2005 when I served the Association as National Commander. I was asked to come to the Post 2 Reunion as a guest speaker that year. My wife Chris and I made so many good friends and had such a great time that we have continued making the trip each year. At that time, Post 2 conducted their own 3-day reunion each year, usually with 100 or more people in attendance. Unfortunately, in the following few years, the attendance became much smaller until it was not possible to hold the 3-day event. Since that time, Post 2 Commander Taylor Thomas has held a "special luncheon" each year when he still invites headquarters personnel to attend.

I hope you will join me in the next issue of the 29er when I will cover some more of the daily activities of the National Executive Director and perhaps introduce you to my family. Until then, I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and that we can all enjoy a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

PNC/NED John E. Wilcox, Jr.

My Father and I

By Robert J. Harding, Jr., July 31, 2012, New York City

My father's death in Normandy August 6, 1944 changed my life forever and not a day passes that I do not think about him and his life and legacy. He went to war in November 1942. He did not have to go then. He was a patriot who volunteered and left his wife, then pregnant, and myself and my sister at home on East 123rd Street in East Harlem, Manhattan, New York. I was four at the time, my sister was two. My mother was thirty years old and pregnant with my brother and my father was thirty one. She had to sign a release for him with the draft board.

The war enveloped our lives and ultimately swallowed him like many others in the carnage and changed everything. He came home three times after November 1942, once after basic training and just before going to Infantry OCS at Fort Benning. He came home after OCS graduation as an Infantry Lieutenant in the summer of 1943, and then for the last time in January of 1944 before he shipped out to England to join the 115th Infantry of the 29th Division in Cornwall preparing for the D-Day Invasion. Each visit was no longer than a few days and the last was just an overnight.

He landed on D-Day June 6th at 10:30 in the morning from LCI 554 on Omaha Beach with Headquarters Company as Communications Officer and then later on June 14th he went over to D Company to take over the machine-gun platoon. Fighting in the hedgerows was bloody and merciless and the foe was determined. He was with the 1st Battalion 115th Infantry spearhead into Saint-Lô. By then he was Executive officer of D Company and he had been awarded a Bronze Star for valor for his work as machine-gun platoon leader. Then on August 5th while in the attack on St. Martin de Tallevende near Vire he was hit by an artillery round and mortally wounded. He died the next day, August 6. He was thirty three; he left three children including one who never knew him.

Now late in my life I have come to speak with the soldier who was also hit by the same shell that killed my father. His name is Everett Rockwood from Walpole Mass. I also talk with and have met E.J. Hamill who was also with my father when he was mortally wounded. In 1988 I visited France to see Saint-Lô, Omaha

Beach and also St. Martin de Tallevende. In 2000, I went over to Saint-Lô and installed, with the help of Jean Mignon, one of my sculptures as a memorial for my Father and his comrades at the Madeleine Memorial in Saint-Lô.

My father was born in Brooklyn on May 28th, 1911. His ancestors were Irish immigrants. He worked in the Federal Reserve Bank of New York before the war and was a young rising banker. I never really knew him but heard stories about him and had a few personal memories. I cannot describe his inner thoughts or motivations. I know that he loved his children and his wife and was a loyal American and an anti-fascist. I also knew that by all reports he was a good officer and he was good to his men. He was against tyranny and he was willing to sacrifice his life so that, he believed, his war would be the last and his sons would not have to go into the Army or war.



In the world as we know it since then, peace has not happened. I spent two years as a draftee private in the artillery over in Germany at the beginning of the sixties. I got out before they sent line units to Vietnam. Each day I see my father's photo on my desk and I offer up a prayer for him and I also speak with him in my heart much as I did when I was a boy and I felt alone. His bravery in the face of daily horror has given me strength to face many things. He was not a man of war. He was a man who loved life. He did what he felt was his duty. Americans now and then and always ought to be grateful for the sacrifice that he and others gave in the name of the preservation of human dignity and freedom and spirituality. I love my father for who he was and who he is for me now as I am also a man of my own time with my family and my children. My father's story is not about glory or armies or ideology or war making. It is about one human being and his son and family and about love that never dies and that in the end is the only real and lasting spiritual reality, God-given in each of our hearts.

*Originally published in "Amitié", Fall 2012,
the newsletter of Normandy Allies.*

Thank you for your donations to the Twenty-Niner Sustaining Fund. They are greatly appreciated and help keep the magazine coming. Please continue to support our upcoming issues.

Donations can be sent to:

PNC NED John E. Wilcox, Jr., P.O. Box 1546, Frederick, MD 21702-0546

Without our generous readers, we could not exist. Thanks again!

MG Frank Batts, former 29th Division Commander, praised during retirement dinner at Fort Lee, Virginia

FORT LEE, Va. — More than 100 Soldiers of the Virginia Army National Guard and friends of Maj. Gen. Frank E. Batts, the former commander of the historic 29th Infantry Division, celebrated his career with a retirement ceremony Feb. 10, 2013, at Fort Lee.

"I wouldn't have made it this far without you," said Batts to the assembled crowd. "I know the sacrifices you make – time away from your family – and I want to personally thank you for everything. This dinner is not for me, but for all of you."

Batts began his military career in 1976 as an officer through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. He deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan in May 2004-2005 as the Mobile Liaison Team Chief with the 54th Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters. As the 29th ID commander, he directed the deployment of two general officer-level commands to Afghanistan from November 2010 until July 2012. In that role, Batts helped grow and develop the Afghan National Security Forces.

Batts served in both the West Virginia and Tennessee Army National Guard before joining the Virginia Guard in 1985, and has held command positions from battery through division level. In his last assignment prior to taking command of the 29th Infantry Division in 2010, Batts served as the deputy commander of the 29th Infantry Division for two years.

"I'm just a simple guy who grew up just outside of Rocky Mount, N.C., working on tobacco farms," said Batts. "When I was a platoon leader back in '77, I never thought I'd end up commanding a division."



Batts, a Bronze Star Medal recipient, previously commanded the Norfolk-based 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery Regiment and the Virginia Beach-based 54th Field Artillery Brigade.

Col. Tim Williams spoke of his time working as a battalion commander under then-Col. Batts.

"I paid close attention to how General Batts conducted himself and the character he displayed," Williams said. "I quickly realized that he not only was a technical expert but a great leader. I was fortunate enough to follow him into command of the 1st battalion as he moved up to take command of the 54th. I learned firsthand what a tremendous boss he was."

Williams said Batts was "a great coach, teacher and certainly mentor" who gave his commanders great latitude and supported us at every turn.

"At one point, I got a bit concerned that I hadn't heard from the boss in quite a while so, during a training event I asked him directly if I was meeting his expectations," Williams said. "He assured me I would know immediately if he had issues and not to worry

... saying continue to push and do what you think is right."

In his civilian career, Batts works as an electronics engineer at the NASA Langley Research Facility in Hampton.

Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, the Adjutant General of Virginia, presented Batts with the Legion of Merit.

The new commander of the 29th, Maj. Gen. Charles Whittington, was present as well to honor his close friend and colleague.

"I am honored to have worked with him and to have him as a mentor," Whittington said.

By LTC Tim Donnellan, 29th ID Public Affairs

29th Division Association

Wreath Laying Ceremony, Arlington National Cemetery

Tomb of The Unknowns

Sunday, 19 May 2013

1315 EDT (1:15 PM)

Buffet Lunch @ \$20 per person to follow at the Spates Community Club

Minibus transportation from Baltimore has been coordinated @ \$10 per person.

For bus reservations and more info contact Bus Captain PNC Bob Recker @ 410-672-7106

POST HAPPENINGS

Post 72, Veteran Corps & Ladies donate to Operation Second Chance

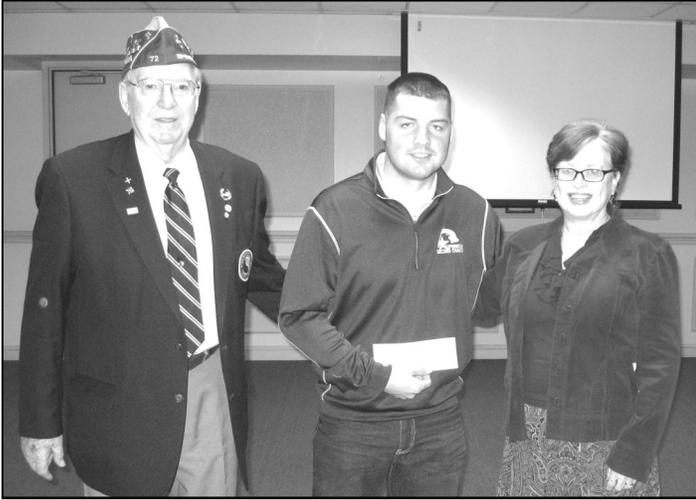


Photo by William Mund

Left to right: Past Post 72 Commander, Bob Bryant, Adam Kisielewski and Jean Insley.

At the monthly Post 72 meeting held on 29 November 2012, Bob Bryant and Jean Insley presented a \$600 donation to Adam Kisielewski, Vice President of Operation Second Chance, a non-profit serving wounded veterans.

This is the second year that our Convention Hospitality Hostesses, Barbie Bryant and Jean Insley, have donated their tips to this worthy cause. Post 72 and the Veteran Corps also added matching contributions.

Adam is an active family man, an avid motorcyclist and a new sport pilot. His sacrifice, spirit, and accomplishments, as a wounded Marine veteran, are an inspiration to a very thankful nation.

Adam was featured as our guest speaker at our 93rd Annual Reunion and Convention held in Martinsburg, WV in October of 2011.

Post 78 hosts Maryland Region meeting in Frederick, MD

On 12 November 2012, the Region Executive Committee traveled to Frederick, MD to be the guests of Post 78 for the region's monthly meeting. In addition to the Region officers, this meeting was also attended by many Post 78 members. The meeting was held at the Frederick Armory.

Other guests included John W. Frank, president of the Howard County Living Farm Heritage Museum who spoke about the Wounded Warriors program that his organization is supporting. The Maryland Region donated \$500 to this effort. Post #78 Commander Ron Pitts introduced Jean M. Hulet and John G. Hulet, of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR).

The purpose of the ESGR is to insure that deployed soldiers of the Guard and Reserve are protected under the uniform services reemployment rights act. Each Post representative in attendance was acknowledged/presented with a certificate for their support of the ESGR.

Post 110 offered to host a Region meeting on Wednesday, 13 February 2013 at the Pikesville Military Reservation. This offer was readily accepted by the members present.



Photo by William Mund

Left to right: Jean M. Hulet, of the ESGR; Post 48 Commander, Frank Rauschenberg and Post 78 Commander Ron Pitts at the region meeting in Frederick on 12 November 2012.

Post 110 welcomes MD Region to Pikesville Military Reservation

The monthly meeting of the MD Region was held at Pikesville Military Reservation on 13 February 2013.

Post 110 Commander David Ginsburg, along with other Post members welcomed everyone to the meeting that was held in the NCO Club.

Some of the topics discussed at this meeting were: a call for a motion to approve the expenditure of \$2,000 to support the Region-sponsored bus to the 2013 Convention in Virginia Beach; a discussion and vote on the venue for the May meeting of the Region; the Commander's appointment of a chairman of the Nominating Committee; the plans in place for the next Wreath-laying at Arlington, to include purchases of durable wreaths; and planning under way for the next Memorial Day ceremonies being hosted by Posts 1 and 72, along with the Veteran Corps.

At the conclusion of the meeting a lunch of Maryland crab soup and sandwiches was offered by Post 110.

POST HAPPENINGS

Post 64 represented at the 45th Annual Stonewall Brigade Muster

Post 64 enjoyed a wonderful excursion on the way to the Stonewall Brigade's 45th Annual Muster, of which was held at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel, in Staunton, Virginia on Saturday November 10, 2012.

First on the agenda of that day was being the grand marshal of the Veterans Day parade through the streets of downtown Staunton, Virginia.

Those in attendance were Bill and Juanita King, Frank and Nancy Dillon, Arden and Shirley Earl, Chuck Neighbor, John Kessler and Glenwood Hankins all riding on the back of a military flat bed truck.

After enjoying fellowship and much laughter over lunch we all went to the Stonewall Brigade Museum, The Spoils of War, in Verona, Virginia. Upon arrival we were greeted by news station 29, where Chuck Neighbor, John Kessler, Glenwood Hankins and Arden Earl were interviewed about their experience in the



Photo by Jay Kincannon, Post 64

Back Row: Frank Dillon and Bill King; Third Row: Bruce Langford; Barry Hensley; Terry Oliver; LTC Allan Carter; Freddie Oliver; Roger Tolmage; Morris Bennet; Robert Key; Dick Raymond; Bernard Marie; Tammy Anderson; Melvin Ferguson; Second Row: Crowell "Smity" Smith; Chuck Neighbor; Hubert Hobbs; Earl Worley; John Kessler; First Row: Jay Kincannon; Chase Dent; and Gavin Dent.



Post 64 members riding in the back of a truck in the Veterans Day parade in downtown Staunton, VA.

military. Everyone especially enjoyed the meet and greet with two re-enactors portraying Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. It was like they had leapt out of the history book in period dress and all.

Then it was off to the Stonewall Jackson Hotel for the banquet. Hubert and Mary Hobbs were able to join us after their attendance in the Roanoke, Virginia Veterans Day parade.

Before the evening was over Arden Earl was recognized as the soldier that traveled the furthest for muster and Glenwood Hankins and John Kessler were awarded Honorary Colonels of the 1-116th Infantry Regiment.

All in all, the camaraderie and fellowship made for a very fun and pleasant weekend adventure.

In other news: Post 64 held their annual Christmas dinner at the Lake Land Masonic Lodge Roanoke, Virginia, Saturday-December 8, 2012.

Our guest speaker of the day was LTC Allan Carter. He spoke

on the status of the 1-116th in reference to previous missions and up coming missions. On completion of his speech we presented him with an Association polo shirt and a 29th division belt buckle.

Then, anticipation was had by one and all, of who the lucky winner of the belt buckle raffle would be.

In conclusion of the day, before everyone could part ways, a group photo was and is always a must have. We all "Thank You" Jay Kincannon for the group photo.

A good time was had by one and all, young and young at heart.

On this day, besides giving thanks for the friendships and camaraderie we have with each other, we also collect toys, canned goods and personal items for our Roanoke Military Support Unit.



Belt Buckle Raffle

POST HAPPENINGS

Post 88 Crab Feed & Family Picnic held on 6 October, 2012

The Officers and Ladies of Post 88 want to express their thanks to all who came and supported the Crab Feed and Family Picnic on 6 October. The food was excellent and everyone shared the friendship and camaraderie of the day. There were 70 folks in attendance. Thanks go to Gilbert Hart & Lola Jones for donating their 50/50 raffle winnings to the Post Welfare Fund for gifts and other items for the shut-in veterans & widows.

Officers of Post 88 are pleased to announce that Tina Smith, wife of Vice Commander SFC Roger Smith, has taken charge of the duties carried out by the Ladies of the Post. She is also responsible for the new newsletter that is now being produced.

In other Post 88 news: Welfare Officer Ken Wheatley and Ladies of the Post Leader Tina Smith reported that the Post 88 "Socks Drive" in December 2012 was a great success for the Ladies of Eastern Shore Post 88 and the Holiday Season was a little brighter for our shut-in Veterans on the Eastern Shore.

Post 88 completed its 20th consecutive "Socks Drive" through presenting gifts and "thanks" to over 178 Eastern Shore Veterans. This was done through two hosted luncheons, 5 nursing home visits, and over 29 visits to individual homes. Post 88 hosted one luncheon in Crisfield at the Crisfield American Legion on December 6, with 35 veterans and veteran's families and another in Salisbury at VFW Post 194 on December 12, with 42 veterans and families. Visits were made by members of Post 88 to two nursing homes in Cambridge (23 veterans), two homes in Denton (26 veterans), and one in Easton (15 veterans). And lastly, Post 88 members visited 30 individual shut-in veterans in their homes.

Luncheon participants and home visit shut-ins received a poinsettia plant, fruit basket, and fleece lap blanket. Nursing



Austin Cox of Crisfield, a 29th Division WWII D-Day veteran offers a toast at the holiday luncheon held in Crisfield, MD on 6 December 2012.

home veterans received a poinsettia plant, lap blanket, and new pair of socks. All participants are thanked for their service to our Country. The Salisbury luncheon was added this year and was suggested by Post 88 Trustee Dick Bowen. Based on its success it will be repeated next year. All of the other activities and visits have been done by Post 88 every year. Post members who helped to carry out this year's "Socks Drive" were Wayne and Mary Ellen Simmons, Jeanne Webster, Ed Lloyd, Elmer Willey, Tina and Roger Smith, Ken and Janet Wheatley, Bernie Liswell, and Bob Jones.

Submitted by Bob Jones, Post 88 Commander

The Order of Saint Barbara, the patron saint of Artillerymen

Order of Saint Barbara is a military honor society of the US for both the US Army and the US Marine Corps Artillery, including field artillery and Air Defense Artillery.

The award is named for Saint Barbara, the patron saint of artillerymen. Saint Barbara day falls on December 4 and is traditionally recognized by a formal Dining-In or military ball, often involving presentations of the Order of Saint Barbara.

Saint Barbara, the daughter of a wealthy aristocrat, was tortured and executed after her father discovered she had converted to Christianity. Legend



has it that after her father executed her, he was struck down by lightning in divine retribution. Because of this, she soon was regarded as the patron saint in time of danger from thunderstorms, fires and sudden death. She became the patron saint of artillerymen from early on in the development of artillery pieces as early cannons were unreliable, and at times would explode wounding and killing their crews. Saint Barbara was invoked by these early cannoners in the hope she would protect them from this fate.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Greatest Year

by Joseph Balkoski

Post 72 member Joe Balkoski is now writing his fifth and final volume in the history of the 29th Infantry Division during World War II. What follows is Joe's Chapter One from that book, entitled "They Who Have Borne the Battle: The 29th Infantry Division Victorious." It begins on New Year's Day 1945, with our boys from the 29th Division entrenched on the banks of the Roer River in Germany, across from the city of Jülich, preparing to launch a major offensive toward the Rhine and beyond, an attack General Eisenhower hoped would finally bring victory to the Allied armies in Europe.

Joe's previous book (Volume IV in the series), "Our Tortured Souls: The 29th Infantry Division in the Rhineland," has just been published. It covers the period from November 16, 1944 to December 31, 1944, when the 29th participated in a major Ninth Army offensive to the Roer. If you wish to obtain a copy of "Our Tortured Souls" direct from Joe or provide comments, suggestions, or corrections for his newest effort, please contact him at 6509 Old Orchard Rd., Baltimore MD 21239, or 29division@gmail.com (e-mail) or 443-564-4279. Thanks, and... 29, Let's Go!

The GIs had to admit that this down-on-his-luck Jerry had guts.

True, he was just one in a seemingly endless stream of shuffling former Supermen brought before their interrogators in late autumn 1944, sullenly handing over their *Soldbücher*—identification books—while mumbling disjointed responses to pressing questions posed by American intelligence officers. Nazi Germany at this stage of the war was obviously careening like a runaway train toward a calamitous fate, and since the Normandy breakout zealous Allied generals had been searching futilely for clues that the German Army was finally ready to crack. Would that glorious event occur soon? The latest batch of German prisoners might provide hints that the long-awaited crackup was imminent; the sooner the Americans could interrogate them, the better the chance German tongues would loosen thanks to the usual stupefaction brought on by recent combat and capture.

This curious German prisoner brought before a Ninth U.S. Army intelligence team most assuredly spoke with a loose tongue, but displayed neither disjointedness nor stupefaction. Rather than attempting to ingratiate himself with his interrogators, an approach to which terrified German prisoners commonly resorted, he gamely spoke his mind on the current military situation in Europe. "I am thoroughly convinced Germany is going to win the war," he declared unhesitatingly to his astonished captors. The Americans naturally wanted to know precisely how he thought Hitler could snatch victory from the jaws of defeat: would success come from the rumored series of *wunderwaffen*—wonder weapons—under development, they asked? With a shrug the German replied, "Perhaps that is going to come one day...[but] what I need as an infantryman, I have." The issue was, at least to him, as simple as that. As he was dismissed for transportation to a prisoner-of-war camp, he growled to his enemies: "*Nicht alle soldaten sind mutlos*"—"Not all [German] soldiers are despondent."

Indeed, when on December 16, 1944, Hitler launched his bold offensive in the Ardennes, an assault carried out on such a grand scale that Eisenhower greatly understated the case when he confessed the Allies were "surprised by the strength of his attack," for a fleeting interval the number of despondent German *soldaten* diminished by a considerable factor. But less than two weeks later, during one of his notorious harangues directed at the General Staff at a December 28 conference at the *Adlerhorst* command complex in Hesse, even Hitler had to admit, "The offensive didn't succeed... Unfortunately it didn't lead to the decisive success we might have expected." However, he emphasized: "I want to add right away, gentlemen, that when I say this, don't conclude that I've had even the slightest thought of losing this war. I never in my life learned the meaning of the term 'capitulation,' and I'm one of those men who has worked himself up from nothing."

And back to nothing the Allies were resolved he soon would return, despite his confidence that Nazi Germany would retain the initiative in

the new year, 1945: "Offensive operations alone can turn the war in the West in a successful direction," he insisted. On December 31, he strove to prove that point by launching another major assault, *Unternehmen Nordwind*—Operation North Wind—against the Seventh U.S. Army's thinly held lines in Alsace. "I am already preparing a third strike," he boasted. In the air, on New Year's Day the Luftwaffe undertook one of its largest raids of the war by hurling more than 1,000 aircraft against Allied airfields in Belgium and Holland, an aerial assault known in Germany as *Unternehmen Bodenplatte*—Operation Baseplate—but later christened the "Hangover Raid" by the Americans. None of those Nazi initiatives accomplished anything more than killing and wounding thousands on both sides, capturing limited amounts of inconsequential real estate, and postponing Nazi Germany's inevitable demise by a few weeks at most. Indeed, the aged Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, commander-in-chief of German forces in the West, described the failed Ardennes Offensive as "Stalingrad Number Two"; the legendary Luftwaffe flier, General Adolf Galland, noted that *Unternehmen Bodenplatte* was the German Air Force's "death blow."

Still, from Hitler down to the youngest *gefreiter*, it was true, as the anonymous infantryman brought before Ninth Army interrogators had insisted, that not all German soldiers were despondent. On one point Hitler was wholly correct: "There is no doubt that the brief offensives we've already made have led to an immediate easing up of the situation along the whole front," he pronounced. "The enemy has had to give up all his offensive plans. He's been forced to reorganize completely. He has had to redeploy units that were worn out. His operational intentions have been totally thrown out... The psychological moment is against him."

Even Ike would have concurred; the Ardennes struggle had changed everything. On New Year's Day, the Western Front stretched for 530 miles from the North Sea to the Swiss border. Viewed on a map, the front line was anything but tidy, zigging and zagging across Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, and Germany, looking more like a stock exchange graph than an orderly line drawn by a staff officer's grease pencil on a troop-disposition map. Of those many zigs and zags, the most prominent by far were in the Western Front's central zone, the notorious Ardennes, the sector now portrayed daily on stateside newspapers' front-page maps and universally labeled "The Bulge."

As the Bulge contracted perceptibly in the first week of 1945, even a military neophyte could discern that the Germans' best chance for turning the war around had evaporated. Would the Allies now resume their efforts to bring down Nazi Germany from the moment the enemy's Ardennes offensive had interrupted them? Or would Eisenhower's armies—as Hitler had claimed—"reorganize completely" and rethink their "operational intentions?"

Whatever it was Ike decided to do, he must set out to do it in the face

of oppressive time pressure. Judged by the target date to end the European war put forth by Eisenhower's boss, U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. George C. Marshall, who in an October 23 cable had directed Ike to "conduct operations with the objective of completing the defeat of Germany by January 1," the Allies were already far behind schedule. The Allies' November and December 1944 offensives on Germany's western frontier had utterly failed to meet Marshall's goal, encountering not only indomitable enemy resistance but also gloomy weather that had triggered thousands of debilitating cases of trench foot, much to the shock of Allied generals and medical men alike. Little more German territory was under Allied occupation in early January 1945 than ten weeks in the past. Further, the weather in January was not surprisingly shaping up as far more severe than in late autumn; as for the enemy's defiance, the ongoing Ardennes offensive established beyond doubt that Germany was far from defeated. Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Propaganda Minister, had spoken for most Germans when he declared in the autumn: "Germany will go on fighting because there is nothing else to do."

The outlook on the Western Front for the Allies had become so dire that Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley, commander of the U.S. 12th Army Group and Ike's closest confidant, had blurted to a fellow general just days before the enemy came surging out of the Ardennes forest, "It is entirely possible for the Germans to fight bitter delaying actions until January 1, 1946." Such a pessimistic prognostication on New Year's Day 1945 seemed almost inconceivable: fighting "bitter" battles for another year would not only sap the spirit out of front-line GIs, but also strain the resolution of housewives, war workers, politicians, and desk generals on the home front. As General Marshall would later remark: "You cannot have such a protracted struggle in a democracy in the face of mounting casualties... Speed was essential."

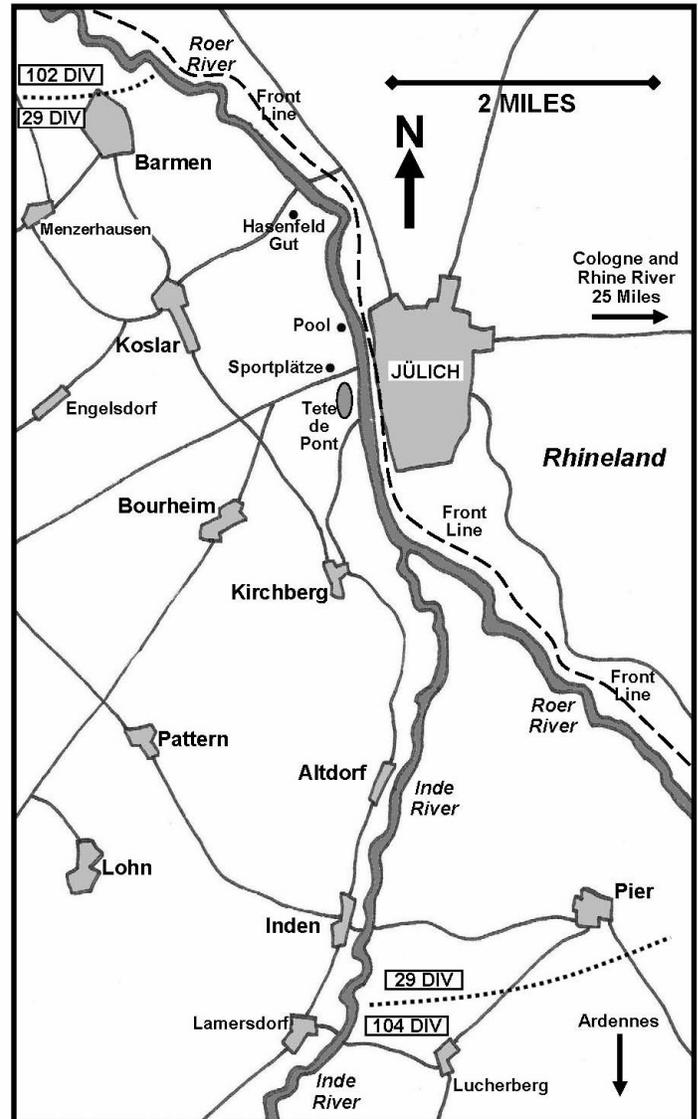
In the early days of the new year, a distressed Marshall looked in vain for exhibitions of speedy military operations on the part of Ike's generals. Further, Marshall also had to manage an even more distant war, the one in the Pacific; unless the Allies could soon fulfill the "Germany First" strategy that four years in the past President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had resolved would be the rock-solid foundation of Allied military operations in World War II, the Pacific war could develop into an island-by-island bloodbath with accompanying casualty lists longer than anyone in the Pentagon dared to imagine. Could the American people take it? Even the irrepressibly upbeat Roosevelt allowed a rare admission of negativity to creep into his January 6 State of the Union report when he notified Americans: "The year ended with a setback for our arms."

Perhaps this was merely the proverbial darkest hour before the dawn of the day... Final victory over Hitler was close, so tantalizingly close, a theme touched on by Roosevelt in his report: "In Europe, we shall resume the attack and—despite temporary setbacks here or there—we shall continue the attack relentlessly until Germany is completely defeated... Further desperate attempts may well be made to break our lines, to slow our progress. We must never make the mistake of assuming that the Germans are beaten until the last Nazi has surrendered."

Concluded the President: "The new year of 1945 can be the greatest year of achievement in human history... We Americans of today, together with our allies, are making history—and I hope it will be better history than ever has been made before."

GRATEFUL JOES

The members of the 29th Infantry Division had ringside seats on New Year's Day for a spectacular aerial show they had never seen before. Since landing on the sands of Omaha Beach in the opening minutes of the D-Day invasion, the most they had glimpsed of the German Air Force at any given time was a smattering of aircraft, usually just one or



29th Infantry Division Front, January 1, 1945

two—generally heading for home. Allied dominance of the air was so complete that the 29ers had gotten thoroughly used to making the assumption that any group of warplanes flying over the front lines had to be their own. But on January 1, 1945, the 29th Division held the line directly underneath the flight path of the "Hangover Raid," the Luftwaffe's last-ditch effort to challenge Allied control of the skies in western Europe. More than 1,000 German aircraft, mostly fighters piloted by officers fresh from New Year's Eve fêtes and still attired in unspoiled formal dress uniforms with white gloves and gleaming shoes, took to the air at dawn and headed for sixteen Allied airfields close behind the front, endeavoring to splatter their bombs across runways and—with luck—catch as many parked Thunderbolts, Typhoons, Spitfires, and Mustangs as possible. If the raid worked as well as it looked on paper, Allied tactical air power on the Western Front could be crippled for weeks.

It did not work. The Luftwaffe top brass timed the raid to exploit their opponents' presumed lack of vigilance following a night of New Year's Eve revelry. The alert 29ers, however, were hardly fooled; nor were any Allied troops occupying front-line positions athwart the enemy's flight lines, for what passed for revels in spartan, bombed-out command posts anywhere near the front could only barely be categorized as distractions. One 29er who spent the night several miles behind the front

noted in a V-mail letter to his wife: "I celebrated New Year's Eve last night by drinking the last of the second Coke you sent me."

Luckily for the past two months the 29th Division had the services of an attached outfit, the 554th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Lawrence Linderer, whose job was to shoot down German planes. The 554th had trained for years on 40-millimeter guns, built by Chrysler, and half-track-mounted quadruple .50 caliber machine guns, but never before in combat had its men fired their weapons with the abandon they displayed on New Year's Day.

The 554th perceived that the wily enemy was up to no good just a few minutes after midnight, when a couple of German twin-engine night fighters flew low over American lines, dropping flares and a few bombs behind the front—for what object the GIs had yet to discern. Eventually the men correctly surmised that these were pathfinders, the heralds of a rapidly approaching storm. That storm arrived at 9 AM; Linderer reported that "all planes entered the area from the east at tree-top level, thereby rendering ineffective the local radar air-warning units. No early warning was possible until the flights had actually entered territory visible from local OPs [observation posts] and gun pits."

To the 29ers it seemed as if the irresolute German pilots "just flew around aimlessly...seemingly without any grouping or coordination." Many of them simply roared over 29th Division lines and disappeared, but occasionally, Messerschmitts and Focke-Wulfs streaked in at remarkably low altitudes to strafe or bomb supposed targets in and around the checkerboard Rhineland villages behind the 29th's lines. Flying that low over highly trained American antiaircraft gunners, however, guaranteed that the Germans would get hurt. The amazed GIs had never seen such enticing targets, and every weapon—quad .50s, 40-millimeter Bofors, and even M1 rifles and BARs—blazed away amid a cacophony that could be heard for miles. It was the type of cacophony—like a rapid-fire jackhammer—that antiaircraft men loved to hear, and when the last of the enemy planes vanished an hour later, six of them remained behind as flaming wrecks on the flat Rhineland farmland. The 116th Infantry's operations officer, Maj. Fred McManaway, reported to the 29th Division war room that one of them was "a Focke-Wulf 190 down at 975585 [a map coordinate, near Dürboslar]. I am sending graves registration people up there with a basket—the pilot is sort of smashed up."

One observer, himself a pilot in the ten-plane "29th Division Air Force," wrote to his wife: "This morning I saw three Jerry planes shot down by our ack-ack boys all within ten minutes—it was quite thrilling—and it was funny how the tracers of .50 calibers kept going up even after the Kraut pilots were drifting down in their chutes. I guess our gunners have been reading reports of the atrocities the Germans committed down south of us [in the Ardennes]. Those dirty bastards!"

Most of those pilots who managed to pass cleanly over American lines found their targets and inflicted serious damage on American and British airfields, destroying nearly 200 warplanes, mostly parked—one of them Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery's personal C-47. But the enemy paid a high price, losing over 200 hard-to-replace pilots killed and captured. "Again, the Luftwaffe had demonstrated its versatility and aggressiveness," the U.S. Army Air Forces official history noted. "[But] the evidence indicated in fact that January 1, 1945, was one of the worst single days for human and aircraft losses that the Luftwaffe ever experienced, and the military effect on the Allies, save for some embarrassment, was truly negligible."

The American top brass had mercifully spared the 29th Division from deployment to the Ardennes during the enemy's ravaging offensive, and now the 29ers held a lengthy and comparatively tranquil nine-mile front along the Roer River opposite Jülich, Germany, forty miles north of the northern shoulder of "The Bulge." Just a week before the Ardennes fighting erupted, however, the Roer front was anything but tranquil. On

December 9, Ninth Army had shut down a 29th Division offensive that had endured for twenty-four grueling days at a cost of 2,600 combat and another 1,100 non-combat casualties—well over one-quarter of the division's personnel as of its November 16 start date. Those staggering losses had bought a paltry terrain gain of little more than six miles, a distance a fit soldier could jog in an hour. Put another way, the 29th Division had lost a man every nine minutes, gaining on average three yards for each man's loss.

With the bulk of the U.S. Army's infantry replacements heading into the Ardennes to rejuvenate the battered units fighting in that sector, as of New Year's Day the 29th Division still had a long way to go to regain its lost combat power. Of even greater concern, however, was the spiritual impact of 19,117 battle casualties in the seven-month interval since the 29th had landed in the first wave at Omaha Beach, a staggering figure for an outfit that at full strength amounted to 14,000 men. Virtually no American military unit of comparable size had ever lost men at that lethal rate in such a brief period, an unfortunate distinction that the 29ers tried their best to forget. Nevertheless, a piece of scuttlebutt spread by cynics had taken hold and would be repeated thousands of times before V-E Day. The 29th Division was in truth not a division, they said, but a three-division corps: it had a division in the field, a division in the hospital, and a division in the cemetery.

No one could deny that on January 1 the 29th Division was a pretty badly beat-up outfit. But if that classification had spared it deployment to the Ardennes, then all 29ers agreed there was a silver lining to that dark cloud. Actually, the 29th had been much more severely beaten up in the past—it had lost 9,100 men in forty-six days in Normandy plus another 3,000 in twenty-six days in Brittany—but amazingly had always come back a week or so later ready to absorb more punishment and accomplish the sometimes illogical goals of its leaders. That, according to the generals, was the beauty of the American military system: a timely infusion of supposedly well-trained replacements could rejuvenate a battered division in just a few days. How many times, however, could the 29th Division be rejuvenated and still fight on? Army doctrine claimed the number was limitless; veteran infantrymen knew it was not—it took much more than fresh bodies to make a first-class fighting unit. So far, the number of times the 29th had bounced back and continued to fight with impressive tenacity had given U.S. Army generals the accurate impression that it was indeed a first-class outfit. The downside of that reputation, of course, was that whenever the division completed its rejuvenation, it was certain to be in the thick of the fight again, in all likelihood in the decisive sector of the front where Ike and Bradley always wanted their best units to be. As the Allies were not even across the Rhine yet, and Berlin was a long way beyond that, the 29ers dreaded when their inevitable reentry into combat would come.

One 29er, division commander Maj. Gen. Charles Hunter Gerhardt, Jr., assuredly did not dread that moment, as he was convinced that the fastest way the GIs could get home was to pummel the enemy into



Maj. Gen. Charles H. Gerhardt, Jr.
Commanding General
29th Infantry Division

extinction—and if pummeling was required, the 29th Division would be one of the best units to do it. Many 29ers were convinced that “Uncle Charlie” Gerhardt had infused the 29th with the high spirit it needed to bear the many traumas of modern warfare; probably a greater number believed that that spirit merely covered up a casualty list of inconceivable length, and even worse obscured the appalling detail that many of those casualties were suffered in battles that should not have taken place at all. Indeed, as a consequence of those high losses and some unrelated shenanigans beyond the battlefield, Gerhardt’s former commanding officer in XIX Corps,

“This division is in no mood to release any ground it has gained. The situation here is well in hand... The division is building up its strength; this is a fortunate situation for us.”

diamond, apparently could bail out a troubled West Pointer long after he removed his cadet gray uniform.

The general gave the 29th Division a New Year’s Eve pep talk. “We’ve come a hell of a way,” Gerhardt affirmed. “This division is in no mood to release any ground it has gained. The situation here is well in hand... The division is building up its strength; this is a fortunate situation for us. We’re learning some defensive stuff. The team is working together extremely well. In talking to individuals scattered all through the outfit—we’re doing all right... If we can get the people who are actually up front comfortable so they can get along, nobody has any squawks.”

Gerhardt himself was used to squawking, especially when he spied a 29er improperly dressed or who failed to follow military protocol to the letter. But those close to the general perceived, much to their pleasure, that he was softening. A few weeks in the past he had thankfully rescinded his notorious order, in effect since D-Day, that prohibited all 29th Division units from setting up a command post or living quarters indoors. Sometime later, members of the general’s entourage witnessed an amazing event. On an inspection circuit near the Roer, Gerhardt spotted a jeep driven by a 29er who was wearing a wool cap rather than a helmet. Normally there would have been hell to pay, but when the general began his customary tirade, the soldier interrupted and declared, “General, what do you care what kind of hat I wear, when next week we are going to cross the river and take that town [Jülich] for you?” A flabbergasted Gerhardt later noted, “There being no answer to this one, I wished him well and told him to go ahead.”

Gerhardt would need time to absorb and acclimate a vast number of replacements and, even more important, to obtain the go-ahead from his superiors to concentrate the 29th Division on a much narrower front than nine miles before he could seriously contemplate an assault across the Roer to capture Jülich and subsequently head for the Rhine. In the meantime, he would cover his sector according to his favorite “two up, one back” principle, deploying two of his three infantry regiments, 116th on the left and 175th on the right, to guard the division’s front along the Roer, while consigning his third regiment, the 115th, to divisional reserve.

Unfortunately, the very first patrol run by the 29th Division in the new year was marred by tragedy, one of those regrettable accidents for which no one was to blame, but on the deadly fringes of no-man’s-land in World War II occurred commonly. The 175th Infantry’s Company G,

commanded by 1st Lt. Hugh Brady, had been manning outposts along a one-mile stretch of the Roer southwest of Jülich for a week. By now Brady knew the sector intimately, and when he received orders to run a patrol across the river after dark on New Year’s Day, he entrusted it to 2nd Lt. St. Clair Walker and a few enlisted men and directed them to move north along the only road in his sector to a point on the Roer opposite a Jülich suburb known as Heckfeld.

A 22-year-old native of Louisville, Kentucky, Walker had joined Company G as a replacement officer on December 6 and had yet to see combat. Brady was concerned that the patrol’s route would bring it close to the line dividing his own sector and that of the adjacent unit guarding the Roer opposite Jülich, the 116th Infantry’s Company E; in the dark Walker and his men could easily be mistaken for prowling Germans. Brady therefore traveled from his command post at Linzenich Gut to warn his counterpart at Company E, Capt. Donald Meabon, that a friendly patrol would be operating in the area along the riverbank. According to a 175th Infantry report called in to the 29th Division war room shortly after midnight on January 2, “While [Brady] was there, the [Company E] outpost nearest the river apparently phoned in and told them that they saw someone coming on the road. [The outpost] was told by someone in the 116th that it was the Company G patrol coming. [Meabon] sent Sergeant Schaeffer down to the outpost to keep them from firing on the patrol. On the way over, Schaeffer shot and killed Lieutenant Walker. Sergeant Schaeffer claims he challenged Walker and that he didn’t answer. Our people said Walker shouted the password twice before he was shot.”

According to the 116th Infantry, however, “The officer in charge of Company G’s patrol was challenged by [our] sentry four times. The officer then got down on his knees and started to crawl. The sentry thought it was a Jerry and shot him through the heart.” Whatever actually happened, yet another good 29er was gone, buried like so many before him in the U.S. military cemetery at Margraten, Holland. Walker left behind a young wife, Ellen, who nineteen days later would receive a letter at her home in the Louisville suburb of Anchorage from a 175th Infantry chaplain, Capt. John McKenna. Her husband, McKenna wrote, “was killed in action January 1, 1945, in Germany and was buried with a protestant burial service in Holland. The places of burial are being made into permanent memorial cemeteries by our government and are made as beautiful as possible. The heroism displayed by the American soldier in these days continues to amaze the world and surely holds the great promise of a great future for our country. Your husband’s sacrifice is helping to build a better world for us all. I share your pride in him.”

Mercifully, McKenna said not a word about the circumstances of Walker’s death. He was so new to the 175th Infantry that the Company G clerk, catching up on his paperwork, noted Walker’s arrival (“assigned and joined...”) and his death (“from duty to killed in action”) on the same January 1 morning report, separated by just a single line. In all probability, Walker had never fired his weapon in anger.

If the 29th Division were to remain stationary for an indefinite period, then Gerhardt’s men must prepare defensive positions so strong that if the Germans tried to attack across the Roer on either side of Jülich and repeat the stunning blitzkrieg they had just carried out in the Ardennes, they would be stopped cold. The 29th Division’s top-notch intelligence team under Lt. Col. Paul Krznarich (known universally as “Murphy” because no one could pronounce his name) announced that such a possibility was remote, but no GI could forget that only three weeks ago the highest reaches of U.S. Army intelligence had also concluded that an enemy offensive in the Ardennes was highly unlikely.

Finance, civil affairs, adjutant general, judge advocate, ordnance, quartermaster, provost marshal, and other troops typically bound to desks formed emergency rifle platoons and fought mock battles against phantom German paratroopers. Military policemen established road-

blocks and asked probing questions of unfamiliar GIs on the identities of Joe Dimaggio and Veronica Lake. Camouflage netting was refined so that snooping enemy aircraft could not detect gun positions and command posts. Above all, despite the chilly weather, the 29ers broke a sweat with prolonged use of their GI shovels by digging entrenchments—and then digging some more. There was even a rumor—true, as it turned out—that Monty had ordered the British Army's 43rd Infantry Division to dig in six miles behind the 29th just in case the Germans broke through the American lines again.

Monty needn't have worried: the Germans weren't going anywhere, Gerhardt's staff insisted, and—if they did—no help was needed. The busiest men in the 29th Division throughout January were the members of the 121st Engineer Combat Battalion, the 29th's elite sapper outfit and former component of the District of Columbia National Guard, the proud holder of a Distinguished Unit Citation streamer on its colors for heroism on Omaha Beach. "The entire period was devoted to the construction of barrier belts and defensive positions along the main line of resistance and around towns which were integral parts of the division defense plan," the 121st's January action report noted. "The primary tasks consisted of erecting wire entanglements, laying minefields (both anti-tank and anti-personnel), and digging various gun emplacements... A total of 18,254 mines was laid." The 121st's commander, 28-year-old Lt. Col. Robert Ploger, pointed out to an observer how this work was done: "Each mine installation is carefully plotted on paper so that it can be easily found again. Minefields have to be set down in patterns. The mines are laid out, then the engineers go back and bury them, which in the frozen ground is quite a problem. A certain number of the mines are booby-trapped so they cannot be picked up easily."

On the seemingly endless list of challenges the U.S. Army faced in January 1945, no soldier would have placed snow removal high on the list. But that month snow fell in heavy quantities, including one day, January 8, when a nearby Canadian unit noted in its journal that the "snowfall at times attained the proportions of a good old Canadian blizzard"; and another, January 19, during which an entry in the 29th Division's war room transcript stated, "High winds and a blizzard blowing right now." Like all Allied divisions, the 29th was dependent on trucks and jeeps to move materiel from rear-area depots up to the front. If snow blocked the roads, front-line troops could quickly run short of food and, if the enemy attacked, ammunition. A jack-of-all-trades fixture in the 121st's Headquarters Company, M/Sgt. John Hickman, who possessed a Grant Wood-style American Gothic face and spoke with a farm-boy country twang, almost single-handedly "designed, constructed, and installed" jeep- and truck-mounted snow plows that kept the roads clear even in heavy snows.

The 29th Division's defensive posture was hardly passive, a detail the reviled enemy learned each time they dared to show themselves at the front. Recent events had undeniably fueled the 29ers' desire to inflict punishment on the enemy, as one soldier wrote home to his wife: "In *Yank* [magazine] we got tonight, there was a complete story of the survivors of the massacre at Malmedy, when the Germans shot 150 of the First Army men taken prisoner. [The actual number was 84, but many other American troops and Belgian civilians were murdered nearby.] The details are terrible." Aside from the normal methods the GIs ordinarily used to mercilessly harass the Germans—sniping, raids, mortar and artillery barrages—a few novel methods were employed. As related by a story in the division's popular daily newsletter, *29 Let's Go*, Company A of the 175th came up with "a new twist on the David and Goliath yarn by stretching an old inner tube between the trees and loading their improvised slingshot with fragmentation grenades instead of stones." Directed by 1st Lt. Frank Bishop, the men successfully flung several across the river, actions that no doubt startled the Germans as not a sound was audible until the grenades exploded. Nevertheless, the

chance of catching a German so close to the Roer outside of entrenchments was virtually nil. Still, it was undeniably ingenious—but the U.S. Army's ordnance people would not be mass producing it anytime soon.

Another 175th invention was labeled the "Goslin Grenade" after the 3rd Battalion's S-2, 1st Lt. Arthur Goslin. "The New Hampshire 'looney' [lieutenant] emptied a grenade of its explosive and detonating charges, soldered on improvised grappling hooks, attached 300 yards of heavy telephone cable and proceeded to fire the same [by means of a special propelling cartridge and an M1 rifle muzzle adapter] at night across the river," wrote Cpl. Jean Lowenthal of *29 Let's Go*. Goslin deduced that the German side of the Roer was so thickly covered with barbed wire that when the 29ers pulled their end of the telephone cable sharply backward, the grenade's grappling hooks were sure to catch on the wire. Plenty of noise would be generated, and in the dark the enemy would assume an American patrol was coming through. A lot of effort—and luck—would be required to fool the enemy, and even then the deception would be momentary. But the 29ers had a lot of time on their hands, and as *29 Let's Go* reported, "Lt. Goslin's chief aim with his new 'weapon' was to get the Jerries to reveal their positions, and they did most obligingly, firing everything from tracers to rockets along their outposts. All of which observers on our side plotted accurately on maps."

The German defenders of the Roer line were provided with such a paltry ammunition supply that they could not respond to American provocations in any meaningful way. "The scarcity of artillery ammunition had increased in such a way since the beginning of December that it was *unbearable* [italics in original] from the point of view of a soldier," wrote Maj. Gen. August Dettling, commander of the 363rd *Volksgrenadier* Division on the Jülich front. "There could be no question of our returning artillery fire! Nor was it often possible for us to deal with other targets in the enemy sector, such as motor vehicle columns, troop movements, concentrations, etc."

One cold winter day, an enemy soldier, no doubt frustrated at his inability to retaliate for the Americans' incessant harassing fire, unwisely attempted to mock the 29th Division's vaunted artillerists. For days, American cannoneers had been vainly striving to score a direct hit on what they assumed was a small, well-camouflaged enemy pillbox near the prominent Broicherhaus manor north of Jülich. The 29th Division's 1948 official history, *29 Let's Go!*, related, "As artillery shells fell short or wide of the pillbox, a German soldier would come out and wave a large red flag, as a 'Maggie's Drawers.' ['Maggie's Drawers' was Army slang for the distinctive banner waved downrange during target practice to signify a shooter had completely missed the target; the phrase supposedly was drawn from the bawdy song *Those Old Red Flannel Drawers That Maggie Wore*.] This clowning on the part of the enemy was not well received on the west bank, where it was considered downright impudent and not at all in accordance with the generally accepted customs of war... A self-propelled 155-millimeter gun [from the 557th Field Artillery Battalion, a XIII Corps unit on loan to the 29th Division], brought up for direct fire, pumped shells into the position [fifty-seven in number, according to one report] and destroyed it."

As of New Year's Day, the Germans defending the Roer remained blissfully unaware of a new killing mechanism their opponents were about to unleash, a gadget so confidential that U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Marshall had withheld it from ground troops for months for

"The scarcity of artillery ammunition had increased in such a way since the beginning of December that it was unbearable from the point of view of a soldier."

fear that the enemy might figure out the secret before large-scale production took place; so cunning that if it worked the way the stateside whiz kids promised, American artillery, both field and anti-aircraft varieties, would be able to hit almost any enemy target within range. Among the troops, the Army's inscrutable code name for the device—Pozit—was promptly altered to the much more comprehensible phrase, "proximity fuze," as soon as it was first used in Europe.

James Phinney Baxter, an American academic whose 1946 book *Scientists Against Time* gained the Pulitzer Prize for history, noted in that work that, aside from the Manhattan Project, the proximity fuze was

"The cannoners found that about 20 percent of the bursts were 'prematures,' that is they exploded high overhead somewhere along the trajectory and long before nearing the target."

"the most remarkable scientific achievement of the war." Unlike ordinarily field artillery and anti-aircraft shells, which detonated either by impacting a solid object or upon the expiration of a preset flight time, proximity-fuzed shells used miniaturized radio transmitters and receivers, supposedly at a cost of only \$20 per fuze, to trigger detonations of shells at consistently lethal

distances from targets. Bringing down a Luftwaffe warplane with an anti-aircraft gun or spraying deadly shell fragments over a stubborn German machine-gun nest with a howitzer would thus become infinitely easier.

If proximity fuzes worked as intended, they would make an already mighty Allied artillery arm even mightier. In autumn 1944, impressed U.S. Army cannoners had been sworn to secrecy when they witnessed Pozit demonstrations for the first time, and they waited eagerly for the chance to employ the new wonder-fuze. In the 29th Division, that moment came on January 1, 1945. *The History of the 110th Field Artillery* noted, "When the 110th first fired shells with the new fuze, Lt. Col. [John P.] Cooper [CO, 110th] demonstrated it from an attic observation post in Koslar to the 115th Infantry's entire regimental staff, including the surgeon and the chaplain." Some kinks needed to be worked out, however, as the history observed: "The cannoners found that about 20 percent of the bursts were 'prematures,' that is they exploded high overhead somewhere along the trajectory and long before nearing the target. Such bursts, while terrifically loud, were practically harmless since by the time the fragments neared the ground, they had lost velocity and were falling only with the speed of gravity. Wearing a helmet provided ample protection against the slivers." Since the Pozit's nearly instantaneous bounce-back of the radio transmission to the receiver when a shell neared a solid object triggered its detonation, the 29ers learned that tall edifices and trees, as well as passing friendly aircraft, heavy rain clouds, and even large birds could set off a "premature." Still, assuming sufficient numbers of proximity fuzes would be available once the 29th Division launched its inevitable Roer crossing, enemy resistance could be significantly diminished. Ultimately, American firms produced millions of proximity fuzes, a more than adequate supply for those units in need. As expressed in the U.S. Army Ordnance Department's official World War II history, "The triumph of American research lay in successfully designing a fuze that could be manufactured by assembly-line methods."

Now that the 29th Division was in Germany, Gerhardt's superiors expected him to strictly enforce the U.S. Army's controversial "non-fraternization" order, which specified in "absolute" terms that "unless otherwise permitted by higher authority, [U.S. troops] will not visit in German homes or associate with Germans on terms of friendly intimacy, either in public or private." At this stage of the war, however,

survival rather than fraternization dominated the 29ers' psyches. On the devastated Rhineland landscape the division had smashed through in November and December, places of human habitation were reduced to dismal heaps of rubble and pervasive dust, populated by pathetic and shoddy inhabitants who not only demonstrated no inclination to fraternize, but whose sullen demeanor hardly encouraged GIs to seek out personal contact.

The recent news of the Malmedy massacre, guaranteed to instigate feelings of hatred in the 29ers' hearts for everything German, would take a long time to dissipate, and with a war still going on and American lives still being lost every day, perhaps those feelings would not soothe until well after the war ended. American emotions were running high; even German behavior that fell far short of odious Nazi conduct was enough to trigger GI tempers. Decades after the war, Cooper of the 110th Artillery—ordinarily one of the 29th's most compassionate field grade officers—still fumed at the recollection of a small group of young German women giggling on the fringes of a crowd staring at a wrecked U.S. Army jeep and its severely injured occupants, who had just driven over and detonated a mine. "We just aren't fighting humans, I guess," an angry 29er wrote to his wife.

The overworked members of the 29th Division's Military Government staff—soon to be elevated in status as Gerhardt's G-5 section—labored to establish order behind the front line among the rudderless German population. The 26-year-old head of the Military Government staff, Lt. Col. Donovan Yeuell—a 1940 West Point graduate—and his able assistants, Majs. Robert Walker and Walter Buttner, long ago had determined that the 29th Division had nothing to fear in terms of guerrilla war or rear-area sabotage on the part of defiant German citizens. "The people left behind in this area are human beings with a will to survive," wrote an observer from Eisenhower's SHAEF headquarters. "Just because we are conquerors, and they know it, they are in certain ways easier to handle than the liberated Belgians or Frenchmen. They know they must obey our orders, and if they are allowed to survive and reconstruct their lives by self-help, they do not of themselves cause any trouble... Minor sabotage would be child's play. It has not happened because the people are not interested in the war, but looking after themselves."

A key member of Yeuell's team, Sgt. George Curtiss—born in France and resident of Hamburg, Germany, in his youth—explained Military Government's mission: "We work with the regiments and battalions, and if needed the companies, to help the line troops cope with the civilian population in combat areas," Curtiss said. "We gather the Germans together and send them to rear areas. We collect all the livestock in order to feed the population that has been herded to the rear. We take care of displaced persons: Poles, Dutch, Russians, French, Belgians, all who have been brought into Germany as slave labor. We post proclamations of the supreme commander, which lay down the law to German civilians. Any violations are handled firmly by Military Government courts under us. So far we have encountered no major violations." Curtiss himself, however, quietly ventured a personal opinion to a listener that most 29ers shared: "I still think we are too soft with the Germans. I say that because I have seen what they have done to the millions they once conquered."

If any Germans behind the front misbehaved or dared to attempt sabotage against U.S. Army installations, the 29th Division's miniscule Counter Intelligence Corps, consisting of only four officers and ten enlisted men known universally as "G-Men in Khaki," would deal with the menace. Fulfillment of the CIC's mission—"to secure our forces from espionage, sabotage, and subversion, and to destroy all enemy intelligence services"—seemingly would be a challenge for such a small unit, led by a mere lieutenant named Ellis Mayfield. Counter-intelligence manuals directed Mayfield's men to interact with local German civilians

regularly—sometimes incognito—so fluency in German was a vital skill. As a post-war CIC history noted, however, “The lack of personnel with linguistic ability and a knowledge of the countries where the campaigns were conducted was a serious handicap.”

The Army’s nearly unknown Counter Intelligence Corps, originating in 1917 as the Corps of Intelligence Police, did not act like a normal Army unit. Stateside, and even occasionally overseas, its members carried out their duties in civilian clothes. Even when they wore U.S. Army uniforms, CIC personnel habitually concealed their rank or wore no rank insignia at all, striving to look more like an Army-accredited war correspondent than a highly trained soldier. Men of the CIC even went so far as to instruct other U.S. Army personnel to address them as “agent” or sometimes “special agent” rather than revealing their rank and military status in speech.

Ordinary 29ers could discern no motive for these melodramatic cloak-and-dagger antics, for local Rhineland civilians in January 1945 turned out to be more like sheep than lions. No sabotage here; just a fervent desire among the citizenry for a decent supply of food and heat—and a quick end to the global conflagration that had thoroughly wrecked their homeland. Nevertheless, Mayfield and his little band toiled diligently to keep the 29th Division’s rear area safe against threats real and imagined. According to a January 1945 report, his CIC detachment “investigated and appointed or recommended new city officials; recommended the removal of officials who had been ardent Nazis; screened Displaced Persons who had been working in the area; [investigated] numerous instances of mistreatment of DPs by the Germans; deserters were apprehended and persons guilty of harboring them were arrested; ... road patrols were established for the purpose of checking the identification of civilians and military personnel.”

The longer the 29th Division maintained a static defense in the Rhineland, the less the 29ers perceived all German civilians behind American lines as Nazi thugs. Accordingly, the Army’s non-fraternization policy, which only two months in the past had seemed so sensible, slowly, almost imperceptibly, evolved into a rule that eventually many GIs would covertly strive to break. As Major Walker of the 29th’s Military Government staff noted, “Without exception, everyone interpreted [non-fraternization] as prohibiting ‘intimacy’ with German civilians who happened to be cute and friendly.” He was right: the most notorious of the Army’s non-fraternization rules was a \$65 fine for “cohabitation” with a German woman, so getting caught breaking that rule would be prohibitive for a GI on a buck private’s pay of \$60 per month.

Only time would tell if the 29th Division would strictly enforce non-fraternization. According to Walker, those who worked closely with Gerhardt understood that the general was hardly one of the policy’s greatest supporters. “Gerhardt eased the confusion somewhat when he let it be known he felt fraternization meant treating someone like a brother,” Walker wrote. “And he didn’t believe any of our troops were interested in treating any female German civilians like a brother. He added that, in addition, many of our men had German relatives whom they should be allowed to contact.” Most of Germany beyond this little corner of the Rhineland, however, still remained under Hitler’s control; most 29ers with German relatives would not make contact until much more fighting and dying took place. Therefore, at least for now Walker reported, “The concept of non-fraternization didn’t get debated very much.”

If the 29ers had to fight a war, they could hardly complain in January 1945 about how the generals had asked them to do it. Certainly the previous seven months, dating back to D-Day, had been infinitely tougher, and the countless number of good doughboys now lying deep in the soil of France and Holland proved it. In January only nine 29ers were killed in action, an agonizing loss to be sure—but compared to



Twenty-Niners in a wrecked German village.

Omaha Beach, when GIs had been felled for hours by the enemy’s merciless fire like stalks of grain swept up by a John Deere reaper, nine deaths seemed almost trifling to the calloused top brass. St. Lô and Vire and Brest and Würselen and Bourheim had simply been more of the same under different physical conditions. In early 1945, however, neither the enemy troops on the far side of the Roer nor German civilians behind the front displayed any of the aggressiveness 29ers had come to expect from Nazis. True, Rhineland weather in mid-winter was rough—one day, January 26, reportedly had sub-zero temperatures on the Fahrenheit scale—but thankfully the enemy’s passivity allowed 29th Division rifle companies to regularly rotate men from exposed and uncomfortable front-line foxholes along the Roer to the much more habitable confines of an indoor command post in a riverside village. Those smashed-up edifices could hardly match a warm barracks at Fort Meade, but at least the riflemen could thaw their chilled bodies, dry their socks, and sleep in far more comfort than in a cramped slit trench. Even better, to the delight of battalion surgeons, debilitating cases of trench foot and frostbite sharply declined from the alarming numbers of December.

Even the bitter cold could not stop the 29ers from concluding that they were more comfortable now than they had been in a long time, a sentiment that had more to do with the total absence of full-scale combat than it did with the weather. The Germans, however, made their usual feeble attempts by means of radio broadcasts and propaganda shells—directed at “the poor devils of the 29th Division”—to convince their opponents that once combat began again in earnest, as it inevitably would, the Americans’ fleeting comfort would vanish and many good men would die. “Who is going to launch out into the new battle? Statesmen, politicians, big bankers, munitions manufacturers? No, not one!” a

typical Nazi propaganda leaflet blared. "Just you: the men of the 8th, 29th, 102nd, and 104th Divisions, average young Americans with your lives ahead."

So frequently were the leaflets dropped on American lines that they were classified as "The Daily Mail." As the 175th Infantry's 1st Lt. Joe Ewing remarked, "The effect of all this propaganda on American troops was negligible... They listened and laughed." Ewing confessed, however, "Propaganda shells landing in an area were always an occasion of great excitement, and the idea was to 'get hold of some of those Jerry papers.'" Not only were the papers preposterous, but they also often featured first-class sketches of unclothed women in the arms of male civilians on the homefront—"The Girl You Left Behind... Pretty Joan Hopkins, for more than half a year she had not heard from Bob. Poor little Joan! She is still thinking of Bob, yet she is almost hoping that he'll never return."

Ewing fondly remembered listening to a German woman over the radio, a "girl propagandist who used the sweet dreamy approach and sentimental tunes. She had nothing to say about the war, except that it was so terrible. She didn't say that the Americans ought to give up... She didn't even say that Germany was going to win the war. She just kept playing records and announcing their titles with her honest, wholesome, friendly voice." She was hard to resist, and the 29ers admitted her play on homesickness was effective: "And I just know that you'll remember this. This is the song that you and your girl used to hum when you went walking together down along the river road on lovely nights in spring a couple of years ago. Can't you just smell that warm fresh air?"

A happy return to the States would have to wait, but now that the German offensive in the Ardennes had been contained, the Allies would

*Once more Gerhardt
would have to get used
to a new corps
commander, his fourth in
less than four months.*

be on the attack again, and the comfort of the warm fresh air along the riverside would come soon. "In the meantime," as the U.S. Army's *Pocket Guide to Germany* recommended, "your very presence on German soil will serve as a constant demonstration to the German people that the master race theory that sent them forth to bathe the world in blood was just so much tragic nonsense."

General Bradley had recently shifted the command to which the 29th Division had been subordinated since its September arrival in Holland, Maj. Gen. Raymond McLain's XIX Corps, southward to take over the Roer sector near Düren, just north of the notorious Bulge in the Ardennes. The 29th was promptly assigned to a new corps, the XIII, commanded by Maj. Gen. Alvan Gillem, one of the Army's eminent advocates of mechanization and a confidant of George Patton. (In 1935, however, a less open-minded Gillem was supposed to have maintained that "tanks were too slow and cumbersome to strike effective blows.") Once more Gerhardt would have to get used to a new corps commander, his fourth in less than four months, and Gillem, a 56-year-old soldier with a weather-beaten face and thirty-four years of continuous military service—he had chased Pancho Villa with Pershing in 1916 and served in Siberia during the Great War—was the third of the four who had entered the Army as a private before World War I. No one who knew Charlie Gerhardt would categorize him as a snob, but as a highly popular member of the West Point class of 1917 he was fiercely loyal to his alma mater and its alumni, and rumors abounded that he chafed at working under non-West Pointers, particularly National Guardsmen like McLain.

By all accounts, however, Gerhardt and Gillem got along famously. In

daily phone conversions Gillem invariably asked Gerhardt, "How's everything down there?" Just as predictably, Gerhardt replied, "All quiet," and provided a few trivial details on patrols and enemy activity. In the fall campaign in the Rhineland, Gerhardt had triggered McLain's ire on more than one occasion, so the affable start between Uncle Charlie and Gillem augured a smooth relationship in the days ahead. The two generals, however, had of course not yet interacted under the overwhelming pressure of full-scale combat, during which continual directives and objectives issued by army would filter down through Gillem to the 29th Division. Attempts to fulfill those sometimes irrational orders would inevitably put the jobs of countless men, from mere NCOs to Gerhardt and Gillem themselves, at risk. But that bridge would be crossed later.

The delighted 29ers soon learned that Gillem was a soldier's general, an unsurprising trait given that he himself had started out as a buck private. One 29er related, "General Gillem clearly desired to better the lot of his people in any way in his power, and his interest in individual ingenuity toward that end was a great boost to spirits." Army food impacted those spirits enormously, and according to that same 29er, "The months-long diet of canned goods and powdered eggs, plus the rule that no food could be acquired locally, had taxed the ingenuity of the cooks. Lt. Col. [John] Cooper told the general that some fresh food would be welcome. Shortly thereafter 'shell' eggs and crates of oranges were issued... As far as the cannoneers were concerned, General Gillem got the credit and the thanks."

Nothing boosted a 29er's spirit more than a substantive break from the front; the farther he distanced himself from the dismal Rhineland, the better. Paris, even on a quick 48-hour pass, could work wonders on a jaded man's soul, but in early January 1945, a few dozen supremely lucky 29ers did even better than that, so much better in fact that when they woke on the morning of January 11, they drew the joyous conclusion that they would never again hear the explosion of a German shell. Most were D-Day veterans, some even pre-war members of the Maryland or Virginia National Guard, selected by respectful peers—typically one per company or battery—in honor of their steadiness under fire, to be dispatched home that morning for three months of Stateside temporary duty as close to their families as possible. The three-month span did not include round-trip travel time, so by everyone's reckoning they could not possibly return to Europe until mid-May 1945 at the earliest—and by then every 29er expected Adolf Hitler to be in his grave.

They included such veterans as Maj. Eccles Scott, who had landed in the first seconds of the D-Day invasion on Omaha Beach in command of Company G, 116th Infantry; 1st Sgt. Paul Johnson of the 115th Infantry's Company F, a 27-year-old native of Cumberland who had enlisted in the Maryland National Guard in April 1937 and had been wounded three times since June 6; 1st Sgt. Harry Gintling, a resident of a modest east Baltimore neighborhood who had been born in that area of the Rhineland currently occupied by the 29th Division and had emigrated to the United States in his youth; and T/4 Walter Cioffi, a devoted member of the 175th's Cannon Company, a Californian whose voyage to the Presidio in San Francisco for his three months of temporary duty surely was the longest journey of all.

When the men assembled that morning to say goodbye to their comrades, maybe for the last time, a witness noted that "the whole happy crew stood proudly at attention in greeting their commanding general." In his distinctive upper-crust accent, Gerhardt pronounced, "This is one detail everyone is in full accord with. Individuals in ground combat outfits now have something to which they can look forward. The division wishes you *bon voyage*." Not a single one made it back to the Western Front before the war ended.

A much larger number of somewhat less lucky but still overjoyed 29ers received passes to Paris varying in length from forty-eight hours to one week. A GI spent the first couple of hours of his pass with his

comrades, sitting on an uncomfortable bench in the bed of a deuce-and-a-half, huddled in a woolen overcoat against the cold and bouncing uncomfortably along roads rutted by the ravages of war. The rough journey, he hoped, would be worth it. It was... but the most perceptible image of the legendary *ville de lumière* was how the war had transformed it into a city of startling contrasts, most of which involved the U.S. Army in one form or another. It was a city where perfectly uniformed MPs outside the Communications Zone headquarters on Avenue Kléber admonished passing GIs for failing to salute an officer; but not far away, according to U.S. Army historian Sgt. Forrest Pogue, "soldiers [were] lying drunk on the sidewalks in the Place Vendôme." American GIs with an interest in high culture could take in Molière's hilarious *Le Malade Imaginaire* at the renowned *Comédie-Française* or *Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame* at the historic *L'Opéra*; less than a mile away, in the Pigalle district—home of the famous Moulin Rouge cabaret—U.S. soldiers interested in culture of a different kind could track down a *fille de joie* ("woman of joy," or a prostitute) in minutes. Above all, Paris was a place where reportedly 10,000 war-weary GIs per day were trucked in from the battlefield to mix with a far greater number of U.S. Army troops who had never been within 100 miles of the front.

This was not the Paris of a pre-war Baedeker guide. Now a world-class restaurant could not achieve the culinary standards of a rifle company mess tent, serving, as one irritated GI noted, "a sort of meatloaf surrounded by potatoes" for a main course and applesauce for dessert. Not surprisingly, insufficient energy was available to illuminate Paris with its former intensity; private homes, hotels, and public places remained painfully frigid most of the winter due to a coal shortage. Still, Paris was Paris; even a dingy bistro serving concoctions of God-knows-what and a disreputable flophouse whose rooms changed hands several times per day were a welcome change from K-rations and a bombed-out building on the Roer.

"Paris was OK," wrote Maj. Albert Hoffman of the 29th Division's operations staff after a weeklong visit, "except that they were having the coldest weather in years and there was a shortage of food and fuel. All places of amusement were either closed or underheated, so the prospects of entertainment were none too good. I did take in one show, mainly to hear good French properly enunciated, but got too cold after the second act and went home to bed."

Another 29er, 1st Lt. William Kenney of the "29th Division Air Force," wrote his wife that his time in Paris was "swell," but "it was so cold going there and returning. Snow all the time—and it was cold in Paris too. This was increased by the hotels, clubs, stores, etc., not having any heat. The clubs also close down early—1100 now—because they must conserve the power used for lights." Kenney managed to take in a show at the celebrated *Folies Bergère*, and he noted: "The accent [was] on scantily clad girls. Wowie!"

The town of Heerlen, Holland, was no Paris; for thousands of 29ers out of the line, however, it would have to do. Heerlen turned out to be a delightful place, whose affable but war-ravaged citizenry displayed an unadulterated admiration for their American liberators. Every two days, a new group of 300 29ers fresh from the front rotated into town, each a happy holder of a 48-hour pass. They were trucked directly to a nondescript brick building where they passed through a portal topped by a sign proclaiming: "Through these doors pass America's finest fighting men." This was the 29th Division's Recreation Center, run by Maj. Tommy Dukehart, 1st Lt. Bruce Bise, and T/Sgt. Eddie Hauser.

For many, the Rec Center's appeal went no further than its copious supply of plushy cots, made up with clean sheets and arranged with military precision in rooms heated to a delightfully warm temperature. The head mess sergeant, S/Sgt. John Robinson, managed six cooks, who worked around the clock to provide three hot meals per day for all, and no matter what ingredients went into those repasts, real plates,

accompanied by real eating utensils, laid out on real tables around which real conversations with one's buddies could be carried on at a leisurely pace, brought back enjoyment to dining after weeks of cold mess-tin rations served within sight of enemy lines. The Rec Center also featured a spacious game room for those interested in low-key competition at table tennis, chess, checkers, darts, or perhaps a more competitive round of good old-fashioned Army poker or craps. Nearby buildings housed showers, an indoor pool, a chapel—services were held twice daily, seven days per week—dance halls, and movie theaters. Two

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Dear Mom: What do you
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Coca-Cola!"*

29ers, S/Sgt. Paul Kasinak and T/4 Michael Helenda, rotated as pub managers behind a bona fide bar emblazoned with a handsome "29, Let's Go!" sign and other impressive artwork. The bartenders served beer at a dime per glass from real taps, but even when beer ran out—as it often did—the blackboard advertised a glass of wine at "one ration ticket" and a limited supply of cold bottles of Coca-Cola, a drink most 29ers had not tasted for months, even years. As one man recalled, "It was an unbelievable luxury, to be sipped slowly and raved over... Dear Mom: What do you think we had today? Coca-Cola!"

To the GIs, grumbling was a God-given right, and few of the many inequities of Army life provoked more grumbling than the sharp contrast between the austere life of a front-line soldier and the comfort of civilians on the homefront. Happily, however, by the end of January 1945, the number of grumblers in the 29th Division had declined appreciably due to the supreme efforts of U.S. Army Special Services personnel to bring the best of their country's culture, both in low and high forms, as close to the front as possible. The latest Hollywood films had always been a sore point: why did it take so long for the Army to send them overseas? A recent *New York Times* article had explained that the Army's grumblers were dead wrong: "Denying that the Army overseas saw old movies, Brig. Gen. [Joseph] Byron [director of the Army's Special Services Division] said pictures were shown overseas before they were released to civilians. The Army gets 156 pictures a year for overseas distribution, he said." The 29ers soon acknowledged that Byron was right: among the hottest new films playing extended runs in Heerlen that January were two, *Rhapsody in Blue*, a fanciful depiction of George Gershwin's life starring Al Jolson and Oscar Levant, which did not premiere in New York until June 1945; and *Saratoga Trunk*, an adaptation of an Edna Ferber novel starring Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman, which did not open stateside until November. (A first-run film, however, did not assure quality; the *Times* would describe *Saratoga Trunk* as "gaudy junk.")

"In addition to these first-rate moves, there was more than the usual amount of "C" and "D" pictures," the 115th Infantry's official history observed, "but good or bad, the makeshift theaters were always well attended and quotas had to be allotted to each company to insure that all had an equal chance to attend." But even more appealing than the films themselves were the stars who played in them, several of whom traveled for performances close enough to the front to gain the 29ers everlasting gratitude. One of them carried an Army ID card with the name Marie M. Sieber—better known as Marlene Dietrich, the Hollywood bombshell who performed for the 29th Division in a ninety-minute show called "One Night Stand" on Tuesday, February 6, 1945, just a few miles from her native land, Germany. "Garbed in a clinging, pale rose-colored, nude chiffon gown, adorned with sparkling gold sequins that complimented her svelte figure and golden blond hair, she fairly floated

across the stage to the microphone," a spectator reported. Following her seductive trademark greeting, "Hello, boys," she was asked by the host, "What are you going to do for the boys?" Folding her arms alluringly, Dietrich replied after a moment of thought, "Whatever the boys desire"—a response the spectator noted caused the audience to "stir approvingly."

Dietrich brought down the house with a corny off-color mind-reading shtick with a randomly chosen 29er, who, it was said, "was in a cold sweat for five minutes." After a few more acts, she launched, in her incomparable resonant contralto, into her signature tune, *Lili Marlene*, which in a second caused the 29ers' boisterous whistles, cheers, and applause to vanish in favor of a reverential silence:

*Vor der Kaserne
Vor dem grossen Tor
Stand eine Laterne
Und steht sie noch davor*

*Underneath the lantern
By the barrack gate
Darling I remember
The way you used to wait...*

When it came to performances in front of large groups of young American males, it was not advisable to follow "La Dietrich" onstage, even days later. Nevertheless, PFC Mickey Rooney, the pint-sized 24-year-old Brooklynite who had starred in fourteen *Andy Hardy* films, had to try. Not only was he not nearly as nice to look at as Dietrich; he also carried a reputation as "a brash kid"—according to one Army rumor, PFC Rooney had once paid a sucker to fill in for him at menial K.P. tasks. Rooney heatedly denied the gossip—he said a malicious "Topeka typewriter-pounder" had made it up—and proceeded to persuade a 29th Division audience one witness defined as "frankly hostile" that his concern for the dogface soldiers' welfare was genuine. Nearly an hour of captivating "imitations, stories, and songs" convinced the crowd that "Rooney was a regular Joe," and he reinforced that sentiment by signing autographs and posing for photos with anyone who asked.

The Army had recently reconsidered its assumption that front-line troops would not accept high-brow entertainment. Declared a *Times* article in September 1944: "Troops overseas were beginning to demand plays rather than vaudeville." On Wednesday, January 24, the 29th Division proved that the demand was genuine when Katharine Cornell, Brian Aherne, and the cast of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* played to a Heerlen theater packed with 780 dogfaces and one general, Charlie Gerhardt. "Miss Kit" Cornell, "The First Lady of the Theater" of whom a *Time* reporter once noted, "There are those who would as soon miss their own wedding as a Katharine Cornell play," had played the starring role as the poet Elizabeth Barrett to universal acclaim off and on since 1931. *The Barretts*, however, scarcely seemed suitable fare for fighting men: for three hours actors traded lines without a single scene change, and the main character, Elizabeth, spent most of the play lying motionless on a sitting room settee.

Some of the U.S. Army brass scoffed at the very idea of such a play being presented at the front. Even Miss Kit admitted, "We were afraid of the soldiers' reactions at first," and at the opening performance in Italy in August 1943, those fears surfaced when unruly GIs snickered loudly in the first act. An actress noted, "We thought they would go on laughing, and it would never stop and *The Barretts* would go under a tidal wave of derision. But we were wrong." In 150 shows in dilapidated theaters in Italy, France, Belgium, and Holland, Miss Kit's enthralling acting converted even the most sneering cynics into

rapturous fans. Before the 29th Division's Heerlen performance, the amazed 29ers had learned that the troupe had cut short its three-week Paris run by two full weeks to bring the play up to the front. "Nothing but brass and neatly pressed uniforms [in Paris] after acting for line soldiers was a let down," declared Miss Kit. A grateful 29er observed that the cast "gave a performance as fresh as though they were playing it for the first time. There was no 'acting down' to what performers sometimes conceive as the GI level. And the Joes appreciated it." They appreciated it so much, in fact, that dozens stayed on after the play to request her autograph on their programs. The classy Miss Kit exchanged banter with them all and remarked, much to their amusement, "Our only regret is that you lads haven't left a theater standing in Germany so we could get further up."

"The rear echelon was always warm and cheerful," remarked the 29th's post-war historian, Lt. Joe Ewing, then a 35-year-old platoon leader in the 175th's Company G. "The supply sergeant was here with piles of dry socks and clean ODs [olive drab uniforms]. Here were the mess sergeant and the cooks, grinning in appreciation when the men marveled over the 'swell setup,' while hot meals cooked on the stoves. The mail clerk was here with his card files and packages from home." But all those pleasant diversions, even when a 29er got lucky and was drawn away from the front to see a play or a film, drink a Coca-Cola, take a hot shower, or even play a round of ping-pong, only fleetingly broke what Ewing referred to as "the dull, daily sameness of his Army detail." For a 29er covering the Roer front in January and early February 1945, according to Ewing, "It was a drab, monotonous life he led. In his heavy, clumsy overshoes he splattered the oozing, chocolate-colored roads that ran through an expanse of tiresomely flat snow-covered land, and through a dreary succession of hamlets and villages whose red brick houses stood ragged with the marks of battle. Every day was the same... On the line he stood guard for two hours, slept for four, and ate K-rations at noon every single day."

At least the Germans were quiet. Or were they? On the night of February 12, the startling onset of an intense German bombardment, which dropped more than fifty deafening artillery shells in just a few minutes, profoundly shocked the 29ers occupying positions in and around Aldenhoven, three miles west of the Roer. Ewing's Company G had occupied a reserve position just outside that village for more than two weeks and had grown complacent: since New Year's Day, only one company member had been wounded, Pvt. Cecil McGriff on January 9. (Another, 2nd Lt. St. Clair Walker, had been shot and killed in the highly unfortunate friendly fire incident on January 1.) True, a few miscreants had gone AWOL, and one had been arrested due to a self-inflicted wound, but overall Company G had been impacted only marginally by enemy action for nearly two months. Happily, the February 12 bombardment caused no casualties, but it did shake the 29ers' nerves. Company G's light-hearted newsletter, *The Chin Strap* ("The Only Newspaper Published on the Front Lines"), noted with alarm that the enemy shelling "seriously threatened George Company's recently opened five-hole, roof-covered streamlined latrine...the most elegant in the regiment." However, the anonymous writer commented with relief that the "modern frame crapper" remained intact "only because of the excellence of the material and workmanship... Early morning visitors at the five-holer, apprehensive as to its fate in the night's shelling, saw it standing proudly in the murky dawn—all five holes still there, ready to serve our fighting men another day."

Next time, Joe will discuss the 29th's war along the Roer River up to February 22, 1945, including many dangerous patrols and raids into enemy territory to gain intelligence on enemy troop strength and defenses in preparation for the big offensive to the Rhine. Stay tuned!

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Wall of Remembrance Plaque Honors Donald M. McKee

On July 18, 2013, Donald M. McKee will be honored at the Wall of Remembrance in Saint Jean de Savigny. At the December 10, 2012, Maryland Region Executive meeting held at the Fifth Regiment Armory, SGM Charles Frick showed Don the plaque that will be added to the Wall in his honor.

The inscription reads:

**Donald M. McKee
T/5, E/175th, 29th Division
D-Day Veteran and Combat Medic
In gratitude for his steadfast commitment
to keeping the memory alive
through the 29th Division Association,
the Norman people, and Normandy Allies.**



Left to right: SGM Charles Frick, Vice President and Treasurer of Normandy Allies; Don McKee, and 29th Division Association National Commander Joseph Zang.

Denis Lesage, and Pierre and Colette Labbé of the Wall of Remembrance Society will receive the plaque, and prepare the unveiling. The people of Normandy welcome this opportunity to honor Don.

The ceremony will be part of the Normandy Allies International Experience as the group spends the day in Saint-Lô and its environs, remembering the events that still are so fresh in Don

McKee's memory. Normandy Allies is honored to participate in this presentation. Don was instrumental in the formative years of the study program, and continues to be a member of the Board of Directors. The unveiling of the plaque will be a highlight of the July 2013 Normandy Allies journey.

Minutes

*of the 94th Annual Convention & Reunion
Business Meeting held on 15 September 2012 at
the DoubleTree Hilton in Annapolis, Maryland*

The 94th National Reunion and Convention Business Meeting was called to order by National Adjutant William Mund at 1000 hours. The Adjutant introduced National Commander Ivan V. Dooley who asked everyone to stand and pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States and recite the 29th Division Association preamble. National Chaplain John W. Schildt offered a special prayer asking our Heavenly Father to bestow His guidance on the members of the 29th Division Association and especially on the families of our recently departed comrades. Commander Dooley welcomed everyone to the convention and briefly reviewed various administrative details. A meeting was held by the Ladies Auxiliary on Friday evening, 14 September 2012.

Adjutant Mund called the "Roll of Officers" and reported that a quorum was present and a regular meeting could be conducted. The minutes of the 93rd National Reunion had been distributed previously. A motion was made by PNC John Wilcox and seconded by I. John Vaccarino to approve these minutes as published. Motion was passed.

OFFICER REPORTS

Commander's Report

Commander Dooley reported on his activity during his watch as National Commander. He thanked all his staff for their participation and stated that the year had presented some challenges, but has gone by very quickly. Dooley said that he had attended many deployment ceremonies, funerals and observances during the past year, such as the annual wreath-laying at Arlington National Cemetery and various events for our active 29th Division soldiers.

National Senior Vice Commander

National Senior Vice Commander Joe Zang stated that he had participated in many of the ceremonies and observances described above. During the winter months, he attends meetings at Florida West Post #2.

National Junior Vice Commander

National Junior Vice Commander John F. Kutcher, Sr., also attended many observances and ceremonies with the Commander and Senior Vice Commander.

Southern Region Vice Commander

PNC Bill King reporting for Southern Region Vice Commander Mickey Johnson said that Post 64 has been very busy during the last year. He, along with members of Post 64 attended various events and ceremonies in Staunton and Fort A.P. Hill. Post 64 had the honor of being honorary pall bearers for the funeral of Robert (Bob) Slaughter.

Maryland Region Vice Commander

Maryland Region Vice Commander I. John Vaccarino reported on various events and ceremonies that posts from the Maryland Region had been involved in during the past year. Currently, the monthly region meeting is held in the same location every month. It is hoped that individual posts will volunteer their facilities to host a few of the meetings during the next year.

At-Large Region Vice Commander

At-Large Region Vice Commander PNC Richard Smith said that he has attended many deployment ceremonies, funerals and observances during the past year.

Finance and Budget

National Finance Officer Brian Becker offered a professionally prepared written report covering the year's activities. This report was made available to the members present. *Copies of this report may be requested by contacting the undersigned.* He recognized Property Officer Franklin Shilow for his work in the accounting and administration of

the association's property. JRVC Kutcher gave a presentation concerning the budget for 2012-13. A motion was made by Vaccarino and seconded by Wilcox to accept the Finance Officer's report. Motion was passed.

Membership Report

National Membership Officer PNC Robert Moscati spoke about the membership report that was made available to the members present. *Copies of this report may be requested by contacting the undersigned.* PNC Bob Moscati painted a bleak picture concerning membership. He reported that several posts may have to be disbanded. Post 110 Commander David Ginsburg suggested that even though membership is a Post issue, National could help facilitate the membership issue by setting aside 2 hours at next year's convention for interested post commanders and members to meet and discuss options for increasing membership. He also recommended that the NEC hold a Saturday meeting (setting aside 2 hours with the sole purpose of increasing membership) once a year.

Welfare

Dick Jordan announced that 62 names of deceased members will be announced at the Memorial Ceremony tomorrow.

National Chaplain

National Chaplain Rev. John Schildt stated he has attended 25 reunions. He lamented the passing of the 62 members that have passed during the past year.

Historian

No report.

Service

No report.

National Judge Advocate

National Judge Advocate Ed Tolzman advised that there are 2 amendments to the Constitution & By Laws that will be discussed and voted on under "Old Business".

National Sergeant-at-Arms

National Sergeant-at-Arms Thomas Insley attended several ceremonies and observances during the past year.

Property

National Property Officer Franklin Shilow said that he has 15 star flags available for sale.

Editor – "29er"

PNC Donald McKee explained the expenditures associated to this publication. He implored all members to continue to support the "29er Sustaining Fund".

Adjutant HQ Post 29

Adjutant HQ Post 29 PNC Richard Smith had no report.

National Executive Director

National Executive Director John E. Wilcox is responsible for the daily operations of the association. He works very closely with the National Finance Officer. He has participated in many ceremonies and observances during the last year.

SPECIAL REPORTS

2013 Convention Planning

PNC/NED John Wilcox announced that Virginia Beach, VA has been chosen as the site of the 2013 Convention to be held on 10-13 October 2013. Further information will be forthcoming in the Spring and Summer 2013 issues of the "29er".

Army Divisions Association

Adjutant Mund reported on the Army Divisions Association convention that he attended in Springfield, Missouri in May 2012. The site of the 2013 convention will be Chicago, Illinois.

Finance and Audit

NFO Becker said that the accounting totals for the convention will be made available at a later date after all the expenditures have been properly processed.

Nominating

The Nominating Committee chairman, I. John Vaccarino, announced the names of the members nominated for office for the year 2012-2013. They are: National Commander, Joseph Zang; Senior Vice Commander, John F. Kutcher, Sr.; Junior Vice Commander, I. John Vaccarino; Southern Region Vice Commander, Mickey Johnson; Maryland Region Vice Commander, I. John Vaccarino; At-Large Region Vice Commander, PNC Richard Smith; Finance Officer, J. Brian Becker; Chaplain, Rev. John Schildt; Service Officer, Walter Carter; Welfare Officer, Richard Jordan; Historian, Joseph Balkoski; Surgeon, Dr. Frank Baranco, Judge Advocate, Frank Rauschenberg; and Sergeant-at-Arms, Randall Beamer. A motion was made by Duncan and seconded by Wilcox to accept the nomination recommendations offered by the Nominating Committee. Motion was passed.

Legislative

PNC Smith had no report.

Historical

Joseph Balkoski had no report.

OLD BUSINESS**Vote on Proposed Amendments to Constitution & By Laws**

Proposal #1 is to add the word "widows" to the National Constitution, Article IV – Membership – sub-paragraph B. Proposal #1 was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

Proposal #2 is to add the following sentence to the National By Laws, Article II - Duties of Officers, Section 12, National Executive Director. "The National Executive Director shall be entitled to compensation as an independent contractor at a rate determined by a committee appointed by the Commander with the approval of the National Executive Committee." Proposal #2 was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

Proposed Donation to National D-Day Memorial

A motion was made by Ginsburg and seconded by PNC King to increase the donation to the National D-Day Memorial to \$1,500. Motion was passed with 8 dissenting votes.

Trips to France 2014

JRVC Kutcher in his capacity as "Trip Treasurer" reported on his coordination efforts concerning the "Trips to France in 2014". He is working together with Trip Coordinator Fran Sherr-Davino to secure the best deals possible. He gave an update on the planned activities being considered and some of the costs involved.

Normandy Allies Teacher Grant Proposal

This motion was tabled at the NEC III meeting that occurred on 21 June 2012 in Staunton, Virginia. Historian Balkoski speaking for NSO Walter Carter gave a brief update on Normandy Allies. On behalf of NSO Carter, Historian Balkoski proposed that the tabled motion for a donation of \$2,000 be re-initiated for a teacher grant and voted on. This motion was seconded by Koehler. Motion was passed.

Morning Report Website

Ralph Windler from Post 1 spoke about his monumental effort to transfer the personnel information contained on each WWII Morning Report to a computer generated spreadsheet. So far, this project has taken over 4,000 hours of effort and between \$4,000 and \$5,000 of expenses. He will be adding the names of our deceased personnel that appear regularly in every edition of the "Twenty-Niner."

HMS Curacao

PNC/NED Wilcox reported on the unsuccessful efforts to initiate a fitting and proper tribute to the British sailors who lost their lives in the tragic accident with the Queen Mary. He said that there is a new British ambassador in Washington who seems to be interested who may be able to assist us in our quest to commemorate this tragic event.

NEW BUSINESS**Date of 2013 Wreath Laying Ceremony**

JRVC Kutcher said that the ceremony will be held on Sunday, 19 May 2013, at 1:15pm. Members should be on site and gather at 12:45pm. Buffet luncheon will follow.

Membership Tri-folds for recruiting purposes

PNC/NED Wilcox questioned what efforts have been made to disseminate the tri-folds to all the armories in Maryland and Virginia? He said there should be a more coordinated process to distribute these tri-folds.

Pagination of the "Twenty-Niner"

A motion was made by Koehler and seconded by PNC Recker to tactfully terminate the verbal agreement with Linda Conrad effective 1 January 2013. Motion was passed.

Election and Joint Installation of Officers

Commander Dooley asked if there were any other nominations from the floor for any of the positions. PNC R. Moscati made a motion to nominate PNC Bill King to be the Southern Region Vice Commander. This motion was seconded by Mund and passed. After Commander Dooley repeated this request three times for any other nominations from the floor, a motion to close the nominations was then offered by Koehler and seconded by Recker. Motion was passed. A further motion was made by Ed Koehler and seconded by PNC R. Moscati to elect the officers by acclamation. This motion was also passed. PNC Recker then conducted the joint installation of elected officers for the 29th Division Association. Members of the Ladies Auxiliary who were installed were: Juanita King, President; Diane Raymond, Vice President; Mary Hobbs, Treasurer; and Edith Paul, Chaplain. The new officers were then presented to the assembled members and recognized.

Awards Presentation

PNC R. Moscati presented PNC Dooley with his "National Commander's Plaque". On behalf of the editorial staff of the "29er", Adjutant Mund presented PNC Dooley with a "personalized" Page One of the association's newsletter, "The Twenty-Niner". In addition, PNC Dooley was presented with a gold PNC pin and welcomed to the club of Past National Commanders by PNC/NED Wilcox.

GOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION

PNC McKee presented the association with a check consisting of the surplus donations he had raised from 175th Infantry members who had contributed to the Convention Souvenir Program Book.

JRVC Vaccarino made a motion and seconded by Duncan, that the words "to be" be eliminated from the 29th Division Preamble. Motion was passed.

CLOSING

With no further business, PNC Recker made a motion seconded by PNC Dooley to adjourn the meeting. Motion was passed. National Commander Zang then began the closing procedures. The meeting was adjourned at 1451 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
WILLIAM S. MUND, JR.

Adjutant
National Executive Committee

NEC Members please note:

These minutes will no longer be distributed individually. This is your copy.

Minutes

*of the NEC I Meeting
held on 16 September 2012 at the
DoubleTree Hilton in Annapolis, Maryland*

The NEC I meeting was called to order at 1030 hours at the DoubleTree Hilton in Annapolis, Maryland, following the National Memorial Service.

Commander Zang appointed the following officers for the year: National Executive Director; PNC John Wilcox; Assistant to the National Executive Director, PNC R. Moscatti; National Property Officer, Franklin Shilow; Editor/Publisher "The 29er", PNC Donald McKee; Assistant Editor/Publisher "The 29er", William Mund; National Parliamentarian, PNC Robert Recker; and National Adjutant, William Mund.

Commander Zang asked if there was any old or new business to come before the committee at this time. With no response to this request, he stated that NEC II would be held at the Weinberg Center at Camp Fretterd on Thursday, 19 January 2013 beginning at 0830 hours.

With no further business, Commander Zang asked for a motion to close.

A motion was offered by PNC Dooley with a second by Jack Kutcher. The motion carried. After the National Chaplain offered the closing prayer, a salute to the National colors was rendered and the meeting closed at 1045 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
WILLIAM S. MUND, JR.
Adjutant
National Executive Committee

NEC Members please note:

These minutes will no longer be distributed individually.

This is your copy.

Minutes

*of the NEC II Meeting
held on 17 January 2013 at the
Weinberg Center, Camp Fretterd, Maryland*

National Commander Joseph Zang called the National Executive Committee (NEC II) Business Meeting to order at 0930 hours. Commander Zang led the attendees in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the opening prayer that was offered by National Chaplain Reverend John Schildt. The group then recited the 29th Division Association Preamble.

Commander Zang began by welcoming all to the NEC meeting and also welcomed the President of the Ladies Auxiliary, Juanita King, and the other ladies present. NC Zang then asked for the roll call by Adjutant William Mund. It was noted that a quorum was present.

Since Minutes of the last meeting (NEC III, 21 June 2012) had been published and distributed in the Summer 2012 edition of the *Twenty-Niner*, a motion was made by PNC Wilcox and seconded by PNC Smith to dispense with the reading of those minutes and approve them as offered. Motion was passed.

Officer's Report

National Commander – Joseph Zang reported on the activities that he has participated in during the past few months. He gave a brief update on the changes that have occurred concerning the preparation and publication of the *Twenty-Niner*. He is also actively participating in the Convention Committee coordination and planning processes. During the winter months Commander Zang regularly attends meetings of Post #2 in Florida.

National Senior Vice Commander – John F. Kutcher, Sr. has been heavily involved with establishing a budget for the 29th Division Association. He also has participated in many observances and activities during the past several months.

National Junior Vice Commander – I. John Vaccarino made mention of the new 29th Division Association ties that are available from the Property Officer Franklin Shilow.

Southern Region Vice Commander – Mickey Johnson was excused. PNC King gave a detailed report of Post 64 events that were held over the last several months. He has made contact with Post 116 and requests some help in getting that post functioning properly.

Maryland Region Vice Commander – I. John Vaccarino praised the efforts of PNC/NED Wilcox in procuring the new ties that are for sale. He reported on the MD Region's effort to hold region meetings in posts throughout the region. This past November, a region meeting was hosted by Post 78 in Frederick, and Post 110 will host the February 2013 meeting at Pikesville.

At Large Region Vice Commander – PNC Richard Smith had no report.

National Executive Director – PNC/NED John Wilcox reported on the meeting that he attended with Commander Zang and PNC R. Moscatti at

Fort Belvoir. The purpose of this meeting was to rejuvenate/coordinate efforts with Post 84 to get that post functioning properly. PNC/NED Wilcox is also responsible for the daily functioning of the National Headquarters working in close cooperation with the National Finance Officer.

Membership – PNC R. Moscatti explained his report that was distributed. He said that the paid members for 2012 were a little better than he had expected. Conversely, he warned that several posts are in danger of being disbanded due to the lack of personnel to fill key positions in the administration of the posts.

Finance & Budget – As Finance Officer J. Brian Becker was excused, PNC Wilcox began the report by making a few comments. He then deferred to NSVC Kutcher who gave a detailed report of the association's finances and budget. He presented "graphs and pie charts" and other data in a "Power Point" presentation. A motion was made by PNC King and seconded to PNC Recker to accept the Finance Officer's report. Motion was passed.

Chaplain – Reverend John Schildt spoke about the events, ceremonies and observances that he has been involved in over the last several months.

Welfare – Dick Jordan reported on the number of deceased members who have passed away recently.

Service – Walter Carter had no report.

Surgeon – Dr. Frank Barranco said he has contributed his latest column to the editors of the *Twenty-Niner* for publication in the Spring 2013 edition.

Historian – Joe Balkoski had no report.

Sergeant at Arms – Randall Beamer had no report.

Property – NPO Franklin Shilow announced that he has many ties and some 15-star American flags for sale. PNC/NED Wilcox praised the efforts of the Property Officer for his excellent administrative detail and timely processing of funds received. NPO Shilow was recognized for his efforts.

Editor the Twenty-Niner – PNC Donald McKee reiterated the recent changes that have occurred with the preparation and publication of the *Twenty-Niner*.

Judge Advocate – Frank Rauschenberg had no report.

Parliamentarian – PNC Robert Recker had no report.

Committee Reports

2013 National Convention – PNC/NED Wilcox gave a report on what has been decided so far concerning the event that will occur on 10-13 October 2013. The Holiday Inn, North Beach, Virginia Beach, Virginia is the site of our event. The trips and dinners will be finalized in the next few weeks and all information will be published in the Spring 2013 *Twenty-Niner*.

Nominating Committee – PNC King said that he has been working on the nominations and will announce their names at the NEC III in June 2013.

Special Reports

Normandy Allies – NSO Walter Carter presented a detailed update on the activities being anticipated for Normandy Allies in 2013. He noted the introduction of college students who intend to become history teachers to the roster of participants in this year's trip to Normandy. He thanked the 29th Division Association for their donations over the past years.

Twenty-Niner Newsletter – PNC Donald McKee gave a brief history of his involvement in the publication of the *Twenty-Niner*. He strongly feels that the *Twenty-Niner* has been a great instrument in holding the association together over the years. PNC McKee explained the costs associated with the publication. He praised the efforts and abilities of Assistant Editor William Mund.

National D-Day Memorial – Jeff Fulgham, co-president of the National D-Day Memorial gave an update on the recent additions and future plans for the memorial. A sculpture will be made to honor Robert "Bob" Slaughter who was a major driving force behind the creation of this memorial.

Old Business

Election of Southern Region Vice Commander – Adjutant Mund stated that a "procedural error" had occurred during the election of officers at the business meeting on 15 September at the National Convention. This error resulted in PNC King being elected to the position of Southern Region Vice Commander.

Earlier in that meeting, Nominating Committee Chairman, I. John Vaccarino announced the names of all the candidates to be elected. Comrade Vaccarino announced the name of Southern Region Commander Mickey Johnson as the only candidate for the position of National Southern Region Vice Commander.

Later in the meeting, during the election phase, Commander Ivan V. Dooley asked if there were any nominations from the floor. PNC Bob Moscatti then made a motion to nominate PNC Bill King for the position of Southern Region Vice Commander. This motion was seconded and passed. A motion was made and passed to close the nominations. A further motion was offered to elect the officers by acclamation. This motion was also passed and the officers were elected.

It was the Adjutant's opinion that a "procedural" error occurred and that a separate election between Mickey Johnson and PNC King should have been conducted before the actual election of the other officers.

Adjutant Mund made a motion, seconded by NSVC Kutcher to conduct an election between Mickey Johnson and PNC Bill King to rectify the "procedural" error that had occurred. The motion was passed and PNC King was elected to the position of Southern Region Vice Commander.

Trip to France – NSVC Kutcher in his capacity as Tour Treasurer, updated everyone on the ongoing coordination efforts that he, along with Trip Coordinator Fran Sherr-Davino have been working on, concerning the trip to Normandy, France on 31 May – 13 June 2014 to observe the 70th anniversary of D-Day, 6 June 1944. The estimated cost of the trip is \$3,000, not including airfare. Current planning is for 10 ceremonies in various towns/areas. The central focus of the trip for the Association will be the moving ceremonies on June 6, 2014 at both Colleville Cemetery and Vireville Sur Mer, where the National Guard monument to the D-Day veterans is located.

Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery will occur on 19 May 2013 at 1:15pm. A buffet lunch is being planned afterwards. The date and time of this event had been announced last year at the NEC held in June, and also at the National Convention business meeting. There was some discussion about the possibility of securing a later time for the ceremony. NSVC Kutcher said he would try to get the time changed but could not guarantee it. He also stated that the third Sunday in May (between Mothers' Day and Memorial Day) appears to be the most acceptable date for this event in future years. A reusable artificial wreath was recommended to be procured for this ceremony and to be used for future events.

HMS Curacao – Maryland Region Senior Vice Commander Robert Wisch made some comments regarding the ongoing dialogue between Comrade George Linthicum and his contacts in the United Kingdom regarding our efforts to honor and commemorate the sailors of the Royal Navy who lost their lives in the tragic collision between the RMS Queen Mary and the HMS Curacao. A motion was made by Wisch and seconded by PNC Wilcox for the 29th Division Association to fund up to \$600 for a plaque for this purpose. An amended motion was offered by NSVC Kutcher and seconded by PNC Smith to increase this funding to \$800. The amended mo-

tion was passed along with the original motion. The plaque will be placed in the Memorial Gardens at the National Memorial Arboretum in the United Kingdom.

ESGR – The Commander presented Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) certificates to PNC King of Post 64 and NSO Walter Carter of Post 93 for their support of the ESGR.

New Business

Centennial Legion of Military Historic Commands – MD Region Vice Commander Robert Wisch, in his present capacity as Executive Officer of the Veteran Corps, 5th Regiment Infantry, MDNG, requested a motion for the 29th Division Association to place an ad (at a cost of \$100) in the Souvenir Program Book that is to be published in conjunction with the Centennial Legion of Historic Military Command's annual meeting that is being held in Baltimore 31 October – 3 November 2013. Motion was made by PNC Wilcox and seconded by PNC Recker. Motion was passed.

2014 Reunion and Convention – NSVC Kutcher made some brief comments on his ideas for the convention in 2014. PNC King suggested Staunton, Virginia as a site for the 2015 Reunion and Convention.

Futures Committee – The Commander appointed a committee to study various issues and concerns that will affect our organization in the upcoming years. One of the main concerns will be the status of posts that are not doing that well. The committee consists of: Commander Zang, NSVC Kutcher; PNC Dooley and PNC Wilcox.

Advance Printing Recognition – MD Region Vice Commander Wisch made a motion to present Advance Printing with a plaque to recognize their support of our organization over the course of many years. Advance Printers does the printing of the *29er* and other smaller printing jobs. Motion was seconded by Recker. Motion was passed.

Friends of the Medal of Honor Grove – Commander Zang received correspondence from the *Friends of the Medal of Honor Grove* in Valley Forge, PA., concerning the Maryland monument located in the Medal of Honor Grove at Valley Forge. The Grove is owned by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. After finding the Grove in desperate need for maintenance and repair, the *Friends of the Medal of Honor Grove* was founded. Their self-imposed mission is to maintain, improve and enhance the grove. Their request was to provide any pictures or written history concerning the Maryland monument and pavilion located at Valley Forge. They wish to restore the area to its original state. The Commander plans to visit the Grove sometime in late April to see firsthand what is taking place and to investigate the possibilities for our assistance. He will report back during our next NEC meeting, with an update.

Good of the Association

PNC/NED Wilcox made mention of the 29th Division's invitation to attend a "Day of Training" held the past few years during Annual Training at Fort A.P. Hill, VA. Actual date for this year will be determined later and posted in the *Chin Strap*.

NGAM Bull & Oyster Roast (formerly held by the MMOC) – 10 February 2013.

MD Region Meeting at Pikesville, on Wednesday, 13 February at 1100.

7th Annual Reunion 2-115th Infantry to be held on 9 March 2013 in Easton, MD.

Closing

With no further business, Commander Zang began the closing ceremonies. A closing prayer was offered by Reverend Schildt and a final salute to the colors. He announced that the NEC III meeting will be held on Thursday, 20 June 2013 at Camp Fretterd, MD.

Meeting was adjourned at 1306 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
WILLIAM S. MUND, JR.
Adjutant
National Executive Committee

NEC Members please note:

**These minutes will no longer be distributed individually.
This is your copy.**

Come join us in Virginia Beach for our 95th Convention & Annual Reunion

Holiday Inn and Suites, North Beach, Virginia Beach, Virginia 10-13 October 2013

(Continued from page 1)

morning with the National Memorial Service conducted by our National Chaplain John Schildt.

Please refer to the registration forms that appear on page 38. These forms may be duplicated or cut out and sent in with your payment for the meals and trip.

William Mund, our very capable National Adjutant and Assistant Editor of the 29er has again agreed to compile a program book that each attendee will receive upon registration at the hotel. This book is an important part of our convention as the funds generated through the sale of ads over the cost to produce the book, help pay some of the extra expenses generated by the convention.

After much discussion, the Convention Committee finds it necessary to make some adjustments to our fees and policies this year. Like everything else, hotel and travel costs have escalated tremendously and it has become difficult to continue on the same path that we've taken for so many years. We have begun by raising our registration fee to \$20.00 per person.

We are contractually bound to pay a certain amount once we have scheduled a motor coach for a trip. In the past we have suffered greatly from last minute cancellations. When we

have individuals who sign up for a trip and then cancel, our committed price to the bus company does not change. Because of this we are forced to now offer all trip prices on a non-refundable basis. This will affect only those who cancel after our advertised cut-off time.

Finally, we came very close to having to pay a penalty last year because of cancellations. Any free or discounted item we receive from the hotel (meeting rooms, ballroom, etc.) is based primarily on the headcounts we provide, both for meals and lodging. While individuals have up to 72 hours prior to date of arrival to cancel their lodging, this is not necessarily so for other items. We are contractually bound to pay for all meals ordered unless the number is reduced prior to the hotels cut-off time. Due to this, a non-refundable policy for meals cancelled after our advertised cut-off time will be effective beginning this year.

While we have thought long and hard on how we could avoid these changes, we feel it has become necessary while attempting to give you a quality reunion.

In addition, to help offset some of the additional expenses, we have included a raffle on page 39 of this issue of the 29er. Please consider taking the full page of tickets for \$25.00, or whatever you feel you can do to help. Additional tickets are available by request.

Doc's Corner

As this is my first installment of The TWENTY- NINER for 2013, my best New Year's greetings to all.

In the month of December 2012, there was a horrible incident in Connecticut. Many people (adults and children) were reported to have been executed by a young man who was characterized by some of the press reports of having Asperger's syndrome. During my more productive years, I was an Orthopedic surgeon and as a result, seldom had patients with manifestations other than those affecting bones and joints. In order to broaden my horizons on Asperger's, I went to a prestigious medical journal -- no, not the Journal of the American Medical Association, nor the New England Journal of Medicine, but the reliable medical source -- Wikipedia!

To quote, "Asperger syndrome (AS), also known as Asperger's syndrome ... is an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) that is characterized by significant difficulties in social interaction, alongside restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior and interests. It differs from other autism by its relative preservation of linguistic and cognitive development. Physical clumsiness and atypical (peculiar, odd) use of language are frequently reported. The cause is unknown."

By the
National Surgeon
Dr. Frank T. Barranco, Sr. MD
Post 110



That sounds peculiarly like me, especially clumsiness. (I used to spill my milk every day at the breakfast table or dinner, for that matter, and still do.)

"The mainstay of management is behavioral therapy, focusing on specific deficits to address poor communication skills, obsessive or repetitive routines, and physical clumsiness. Most children improve as they mature to adulthood, but social and communication difficulties may persist," as it apparently did in Connecticut.

One final plea to Post Commanders. I'm still looking for info on physicians that may be in your Posts, as I would like to communicate with them.

Have a great day,

Frank T. Barranco, Sr., MD

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We, Editor Don McKee, and Assistant Editor William Mund have enjoyed our many, many years of service to the association and its members. It is not an easy job but we do treasure our brief respites between issues. As age takes its toll, we hope to continue in our quest to put out a quality piece.

One of the items that we have chosen to highlight are the wartime stories of our WWII veterans and now, similar accounts of those 29ers who have served overseas since then. These, we feel make our 29er recognized as one of the best of all military magazines. However, we must stress again that when you send these in, we are not able to handle multiple pages of typed text. Even though the industry likes to play up their computer scanning abilities, they really are not effective in going from typed versions to the format we need for our page composition and printing. We have had to resort to re-typing it in WORD for the shorter pieces. We no longer have this inclination.

So, we ask that in your submission of veteran's stories that you need to find someone who can type it in WORD, or it cannot be used. Once it's in WORD it can be sent to us via the internet and our processing can go forward with dispatch.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. For now, computer users, this means finding a family member or a friend to assist. We need your stories. Let's hope that we can move forward in the continuation of our 25 year old publication record.

29th Division Association Supplies Available

ITEM	COST	POSTAGE & HANDLING	MAILED
Book—Ever Forward 116th Inf. History (soft cover)	\$17.90	\$5.60	\$23.50
Book—Ever Forward 116th Inf. History (hard cover)	\$25.00	\$5.60	\$30.60
Book—29th, Let's Go—29th Division History	\$29.00	\$5.60	\$34.60
Book—Beyond the Beachhead	\$19.90	\$5.60	\$25.50
Book—115th Infantry in WWII	\$25.00	\$5.60	\$30.60
Book—Omaha Beach and Beyond (The Long March of Sgt. Slaughter)	\$25.00	\$5.60	\$30.60
Book—From Beachhead to Brittany (Joseph Balkoski)	\$28.00	\$5.60	\$33.60
Book—From Brittany to the Reich (Joseph Balkoski)	\$27.00	\$5.60	\$32.60
Book—Our Tortured Souls (Joseph Balkoski)	\$27.00	\$5.60	\$32.60
Book—Frederick in the Civil War (John W. Schildt)	\$17.50	\$2.25	\$19.75
29th Div. Assn. Note Pads (5 1/2 x 8 1/2)	\$1.75	\$1.25	\$3.00
29th Div. Assn. Note Pads (4 1/4 x 5 1/2)	\$1.35	\$0.65	\$2.00
Crest—115th Infantry Regiment	\$5.50	\$1.05	\$6.55
Crest—116th Infantry Regiment	\$5.50	\$1.05	\$6.55
Crest—175th Infantry Regiment	\$5.50	\$1.05	\$6.55
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
Golf balls w/29th logo (sleeve of three)	\$5.00	\$2.50	\$7.50
Key chain w/29th logo	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$2.50
Lapel pin	\$3.95	\$1.05	\$5.00
Lapel pin, past post commander	\$5.00	\$1.05	\$6.05
Ladies pendant	\$6.00	\$1.05	\$7.05
Medallion (for plaques)	\$6.00	\$1.05	\$7.05
Plaque, wood 29th Div. Ass. Logo	\$10.00	\$1.75	\$11.75
Pocket purse—squeeze	\$2.00	\$0.75	\$2.75
29th Div. Assn. pocket patch	\$6.00	\$1.05	\$7.05
Pocket patch holder	\$3.00	\$1.05	\$4.05
Shoulder patch, 29th ID	\$3.50	\$0.50	\$4.00
Jacket, coach, navy with logo in S, M, L, XL, 2XL	\$27.00	\$5.60	\$32.60
Golf Shirt, embroidered 100% cotton pullover (royal blue, white, gray in L, XL, 2XL)	\$23.00	\$5.60	\$28.60
29th Div. Official Assn. Necktie	\$20.00	\$1.95	\$21.95
29th Div. Assn. Bolo Tie	\$6.00	\$1.25	\$7.25
29th Assn. Dress Hat (state size)	\$29.00	\$5.60	\$34.60
Hat, Baseball w/29th logo (embroidered)	\$15.00	\$2.50	\$17.50
Hat, Baseball w/29th logo (embroidered/ Summer mesh)	\$12.00	\$2.50	\$14.50

Checks should be made payable to the 29th Division Association and mailed with orders to:

**National Property Officer, 29th Division Association
403 Caledonia Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21227-4707
Phone — 410-242-1820**

Special Note

**DUE TO A POSTAL RATE INCREASE,
SOME PRICES HAVE CHANGED.**

Souvenir Program Book Ads

You are authorized to insert copy to occupy a space of _____ page for which we agree to pay the rate indicated.

Full Page	\$100.00
Half Page	70.00
Quarter Page	40.00
Eighth Page	25.00

IMPORTANT: The deadline for ads and boosters is **September 9, 2013**. Make up your ad copy, attach to this form with your check payable to the 29th Division Association & mail to:

William S. Mund, Jr.
441 Chalfonte Drive
Baltimore, MD 21228
(443-529-4233)

IMPORTANT: "Camera Ready" copy is needed. Please make sure your ads are complete and legible. Thank You.

Patrons

During the 95th year of our 29th Division Association, your name and the names of all your family should appear in the Souvenir Program Book. The cost per name is \$2.00. Please print each name legibly.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Tel. #: _____

This coupon, with your check, made out as indicated above, should also be received by September 9. Mail to William S. Mund, Jr. at the address above.

**95th ANNUAL CONVENTION
OCTOBER 10 TO 13, 2013
ADVANCE REGISTRATION FORM**

Please print and make your reservation early.

Name: _____ Unit: _____ Post: _____

Name: _____ Unit: _____ Post: _____

Enclose separate sheet for more names. Please select your entrees for the dinners.
EACH PERSON MUST PAY THE REGISTRATION CHARGE.

Registration Charge (Non-refundable) No. @ _____ \$20.00 \$ _____

Friday Evening Plated Dinner (Open Seating) No. @ _____ \$30.00 \$ _____

Chicken Marsala _____

Stuffed Baked Flounder _____

Saturday Evening Banquet (Assigned Seating) No. @ _____ \$30.00 \$ _____

Grilled Salmon _____ Pork Tenderloin _____

Friday Trip—Naval Base Cruise followed by lunch at
The Freemason Abbey Restaurant No. @ _____ \$35.00 \$ _____

TOTAL: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Make check payable to 29th Division Assn. and mail to
Robert Moscati, 1910 Calais Ct, Baltimore Md. 21244

The cost of meals and trips cancelled prior to the cut-off date will be refunded. Due to contractual agreements with providers and caterers, cancellations made after the cut-off date will be non-refundable.

Any questions, contact Bob Moscati at (410) 944-1639 or Email at Rmoscati@msn.com

CUT-OFF DATE FOR REGISTRATIONS IS SEPTEMBER 9, 2013

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

**HOLIDAY INN AND SUITES, NORTH BEACH
3900 ATLANTIC AVENUE
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA 23451**

**Call 757-428-1711
For Reservations**

The group room rate is \$95 plus 13% tax per night & must be guaranteed with a credit card or one night's deposit by check or cash. Check in time is 3 PM and check out time is 11 AM.

BE SURE TO TELL THEM YOU ARE WITH THE 29TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION

MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS EARLY. WE ONLY HAVE A LIMITED NUMBER OF ROOMS AND YOU CAN CANCEL UP TO 72 HOURS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL WITHOUT CHARGES.

**CUT-OFF DATE FOR GETTING THE DISCOUNTED ROOM RATE IS
SEPTEMBER 9, 2013**

29TH DIVISION ASSOC. DONATION COUPONS				
NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME
ADDRESS	ADDRESS	ADDRESS	ADDRESS	ADDRESS
CITY / STATE				
PHONE NUMBER				
COMPLETE INFORMATION ABOVE AND RETURN WITH CHECK TO 29TH DIVISION ASSOC. PO BOX 1546 FREDERICK, MD 21702	COMPLETE INFORMATION ABOVE AND RETURN WITH CHECK TO 29TH DIVISION ASSOC. PO BOX 1546 FREDERICK, MD 21702	COMPLETE INFORMATION ABOVE AND RETURN WITH CHECK TO 29TH DIVISION ASSOC. PO BOX 1546 FREDERICK, MD 21702	COMPLETE INFORMATION ABOVE AND RETURN WITH CHECK TO 29TH DIVISION ASSOC. PO BOX 1546 FREDERICK, MD 21702	COMPLETE INFORMATION ABOVE AND RETURN WITH CHECK TO 29TH DIVISION ASSOC. PO BOX 1546 FREDERICK, MD 21702
HOLDER OF THE WINNING TICKET WILL RECEIVE 50% OF TOTAL COLLECTED OR NOT LESS THAN \$200.00	HOLDER OF THE WINNING TICKET WILL RECEIVE 50% OF TOTAL COLLECTED OR NOT LESS THAN \$200.00	HOLDER OF THE WINNING TICKET WILL RECEIVE 50% OF TOTAL COLLECTED OR NOT LESS THAN \$200.00	HOLDER OF THE WINNING TICKET WILL RECEIVE 50% OF TOTAL COLLECTED OR NOT LESS THAN \$200.00	HOLDER OF THE WINNING TICKET WILL RECEIVE 50% OF TOTAL COLLECTED OR NOT LESS THAN \$200.00
DONATION IS \$5 A TICKET YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN	DONATION IS \$5 A TICKET YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN	DONATION IS \$5 A TICKET YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN	DONATION IS \$5 A TICKET YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN	DONATION IS \$5 A TICKET YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN
THANK YOU AND HAVE A GREAT DAY!				

NOTE: RETURN ALL 5 TICKETS OR CUT OFF AND RETURN THE NUMBER YOU WANT WITH YOUR CHECK FOR \$5.00 FOR EACH TICKET

DRAWING WILL BE HELD AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2013 — YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN

THOSE WHO MAY WANT ADDITIONAL TICKETS SHOULD CONTACT NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AT 301-695-9558 OR TWONINER1@HOTMAIL.COM

COMPLETE NAME, ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBER AND RETURN WITH CHECK TO 29TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION-P. O. BOX 1546 - FREDERICK, MD 21702-0546

ENVELOPES BEARING TICKETS AND CHECKS MUST BE POSTMARKED NOT LATER THAN OCTOBER 1, 2013

National Officers of the 29th Division Association and their families shall not be allowed to participate in this raffle.

29th Division Association
P.O. Box 1546
Frederick, MD 21702-0546

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1262
Baltimore, MD

Address Service Requested

Association Membership

All applications of prospective members should be mailed to our National Headquarters address. Assignment to a respective Post is normally made on information taken from the application regarding current or former military unit and/or your current home address. Membership dues vary slightly from Post to Post, but if you send a check for \$12.00 made payable to the 29th Division Association, that will normally suffice. Send your check and application addressed to:

National Headquarters
29th Division Association
P.O. Box 1546
Frederick, MD 21702-0546

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| MD Post 1 | Catonsville, MD |
| FL Post 2 | Sarasota, FL |
| VA Post 5 | Virginia Beach, VA |
| FL Post 27 | New Port Richie, FL |
| HQ Post 29 | At Large |
| MD Post 48 | Westminster, MD |
| VA Post 64 | Roanoke, VA |
| MD Post 72 | Baltimore, MD |
| MD Post 78 | Frederick, MD |
| VA Post 84 | Fort Belvoir, VA |
| MD Post 85 | Harford & Cecil County, MD |
| MD Post 88 | Eastern Shore, DE & MD |
| NE Post 93 | New England |
| MD Post 94 | Silver Spring, MD |
| MD Post 110 | Pikesville, MD |
| VA Post 116 | Staunton, VA |
| PA Post 175 | Pennsylvania |
| MD Post 224 | Edgewood, Md |
| MD Post 229 | Parkville, MD |
| MD Post 729 | Blue Ridge Summit, PA |

You Can Help Our Association Grow

Support your Post and the Association. Be on the alert for prospective new members and tell them about our Association. Give prospects an application and encourage them to enroll.



"29 Let's Go!"

Application for Membership in 29TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.

Please Print

Applicant _____

E-mail Address (if available) _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip+4 _____

I was a member of ____ Company ____ Battery ____ Regiment

29th Division WWII _____ NG _____ 29th Inf Div _____

*GWOT _____ Children/Grandchildren _____

Phone Number _____

I hereby apply for membership in the 29th Division Association, Inc.

and herewith transmit \$ _____ as annual membership dues

In _____ Post No. _____

which includes the National dues and one year subscription to the official publication of the 29th division Association, Inc. "The Twenty-Niner." which is published three times per year.

*GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

Applicant's Signature _____