



## Executive Director's Message:

Greetings to all of my comrades both here in the United States and abroad who are members and supporters of the 29th Division Association. I have been very busy over the past several months and there is news to report.

I had the distinct honor and privilege to attend the 79th D-Day Anniversary at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA. I was very impressed with the program and the patriotic atmosphere that day. Check out my article elsewhere in the 29er for the details of my experience and pictures that I captured at the event.

I am very pleased to welcome Richard Carr, Post 64 Commander, to the National Executive Committee as our new National Finance Officer. We appreciate his stepping up to fill the position and assure a seamless transition.

It is with sadness that I report the resignation of my good friend, Houston Matney, who served for over 10 years as our Judge Advocate. Hou-

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Convention trips to feature Battle of Baltimore and B&O Railroad Museum

Our convention planning committee has been meeting regularly over the past several months to put in place an agenda that will appeal to all of our members and friends. The 2023 Convention will take place at the Delta Hotel in Hunt Valley, Maryland, October 19 – October 22.

The hotel is adjacent to a major shopping area that includes restaurants, like our favorite, Mission BBQ, a massive Wegman's Grocery store, multiplex movie theater and many specialty shops. In addition, there is a light rail stop that takes passengers into the heart of Baltimore City. The hotel features nearly 400 guest rooms that are beautifully appointed including free WIFI service, LCD televi-

sions and comfortable bedding. In addition, there is free parking, a gym, and onsite restaurant; pets are welcome.

We will kick off the 104th Convention on Thursday, October 19, with the registration desk opening at 4:00 PM. We are expecting a busload of attendees from Virginia arriving that day and we will be ready to greet them and other attendees who have arrived at a very comfortable hospitality suite that features easy chairs, cushy couches, plenty of bar space and 2 LCD TVs. There will be refreshments available and abounding camaraderie. The hospitality suite will be open throughout the convention.

On Friday morning we will gather in the

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CA562 By Dawn's Early Light  
by Edward Percy Moran, oil on canvas,  
c. 1912, Maryland Historical Society.

## THE TWENTY-NINER Vol. 67, No. 2 Summer 2023

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## DiNonno to succeed Rhodes as the 29th Infantry Division commanding general

RICHMOND, VA. – Brig. Gen. Joseph A. DiNonno has been selected to succeed Maj. Gen. John M. Rhodes as the commanding general of the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division, according to an announcement made April 21, 2023, by Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. A change of command ceremony is scheduled for Aug. 5 at Fort Belvoir.

"Please join me in congratulating Brig.

Gen. DiNonno on his selection to the serve as the next commanding general of the 29th Infantry Division," Williams said in his announcement. "He is a proven leader who brings a broad range of experience including multiple overseas deployments, leading Soldiers in combat and supporting law enforcement during civil disturbance response operations."

DiNonno has served as the 29th Infantry

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*A message from our National Commander:*

# Richard D. "Dick" Snyder

Hello fellow Twenty-Niners, I am so honored to be your Commander. Our Association has an historic and proud history. Summer is here and as I approach eight months in this position, it's been a very busy few months. During this period, I attended several post meetings. I was proud to install the newly elected officers of the Jerome L Day Post 48. With the assistance of Will Mund, we honored outgoing Commander Frank M. Rauschenberg who commanded the Post for 13 years. Much gratitude was expressed for the outstanding dedication to the Association and Post by Commander Rauschenberg. We wish incoming Commander Bill Rosier and his officers all the best.

I have attended meetings (ZOOM) for planning of our 104th Annual Reunion and Convention 19-22 October 2023 at Hunt Valley. The Convention Committee is working hard to make this convention a wonderful event. Since this is the first year under the new by-laws, this convention will not see the change of Commander and Vice



Commander. All other officers will be installed as usual. Included in this issue of the 29er are details concerning registration for the convention.

Many of our Posts are involved in planning of, and participation in Memorial Day Ceremonies. I was honored to ride on a Memorial Day Parade float in Sharpsburg, Md. Post 78 Cresap's Rifle from Frederick sponsored the float and provided candy for the parade watchers. I would like to commend Jeff Folkes and his crew in putting the float together and organizing the presence of the Association in the parade. For those who have never participated in an event in a small town, the experience was amazing. Families and people of all ages lined the one-mile parade route with every type of flag waving, showing how patriotic small towns can be. I was so pleased to be part of the parade. I was told this was the first year the Post participated, and this was a good learning experience for next year's parade.

A few days later, Frank Armiger the National Executive Director and I were present at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA for the 79th Commemoration of the Normandy Invasion. The ceremony, that lasted about an hour, was very well attended. Present were seven World War II Veterans, and they were, of course, recognized for their service.

The Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Honorable Glenn Youngkin and Major General Timothy Williams, 28th Adjutant General of Virginia, were present. The foundation at the Memorial, led by April

Cheek-Messier, work very hard to ensure that June 6 remains in our thoughts and prayers as part of our history. The service members who made the ultimate sacrifice and others will not be forgotten. I was honored to participate in the wreath laying ceremonies. Many thanks to Frank for being present and taking so many wonderful pictures that I'm sure will be seen in this and other Association Media. Also present at the ceremony were members of several 29th Division Association Posts from New England to Southwest Virginia.

I would like to add that next year will be the 80th Commemoration of the D-Day landing, a very important Anniversary for this event. If you are not inclined to attend the events in Normandy, France, a trip to the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA., would be a great alternative. Just something to consider for all 29th Division Association Posts.

On June 15 we held the NEC III Meeting at the 29th Division Museum, Verona, VA hosted by Jimmy Kilbourne and the staff at the Museum. What a fabulous museum! If you are traveling down I-81 please consider making an effort to visit.

As always, like any organization, we have had some personnel changes to the National Executive Committee. I would like to thank J. Brian Becker who accepted the Acting National Finance Officer until the NEC could find a permanent National Finance Officer. The NEC Selected Richard Carr of Post 64 for that position. We are very pleased he accepted. Just prior to the NEC III meeting we received the resignation of Judge Advocate Houston Matney. Houston worked tirelessly last year on our new by-laws and has been so important in this position for the last 10 years. We will miss Houston on the NEC.

I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable Summer of 2023. I wish everyone well and hope to see as many as possible at our Annual Convention in Hunt Valley in October.

**29 Lets Go!!**

Richard D. Snyder  
National Commander  
29th Division Association, Inc.

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## Donations to the *Twenty-Niner*

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our membership for their generosity in contributing to the *Twenty-Niner* for this issue. Note our cut-off date. If your contribution did not reach our National Executive Director by 15 July 2023 then it will not be listed until the next issue. Donation checks must be made payable to the **29th Division Association** and mailed to: **PO Box 548, Lutherville Timonium, MD 21094-0548**.

American Alloy Steel, Houston, TX

*In honor of Arthur J. Moore, F/115, Houston, TX*

Boone, Ronald & Shirley

Borosky, Beth & Bernard, Muscle Shoals, AL

*In memory of Kathleen Newman, Post 93*

Garrison, Jay, Post 94, Son, Durham, NC

*In memory of his father, Cecil Garrison, 104MED*

Graham, Dennis, Post 93, Arvene, NY

Krauss, Michael, Post 1-72, Son, Goldsboro, NC

*In memory of his father, PNC Samuel Krauss*

Piper, Samuel, Post 94, HHC/1/115, Longwood, FL

Post 78, Cresap's Rifles, Frederick, MD

*In memory of Wayne "Skeeter" Geisbert, A/1/115*

*n memory of John T. Helbert, E/115*

Snyder, PNC Richard & Lois, Post 110, DISCOM, Dallastown, PA

Taranto, Kevin, Post 94, Manhasset, NY

Thompson, David

Veteran Corps, Fifth Regiment Infantry

*In memory of James F. Laughland, Post 1-72, D/175*

*In memory of Arthur W. Pulket, Sr., Post 1-72, HHC/175*

White, Claire M., Daughter, North Reading, MA

*In memory of Eugene D. White, Sr., F/175*

## Help Wanted Editor/Publisher

The 29th Division Association is searching for someone to assume the duties of Editor/Publisher of the *Twenty-Niner* newsletter beginning 1 January 2025.

They are also searching for someone who has the ability to paginate, i.e. process text documents and photos into a 'pdf' page format utilizing software similar to *Microsoft Publisher*.

Anyone interested, please contact current editor, William Mund at [duster197329@gmail.com](mailto:duster197329@gmail.com) or 443-529-4233.

**Past editions of *The Twenty-Niner* from 2013 - present are now available on our website, [29thDivisionAssociation.com](http://29thDivisionAssociation.com), in the "For Members" section.**

## TAPS

The following list shows names of known 29ers and their ladies or family members who died and their deaths reported from 1 April 2023 through 15 July 2023. 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

Endler, Anton, S., "Bud", Post 110, HHB/110, Hanover, PA 5/23/23

Federman, Stanley, Post 110, HHB/110, Forest Grove, OR 3/22/23

Geisbert, Wayne E., "Skeeter", Post 78, A/1/115, Middletown, MD 5/22/23

Helbert, John T., Post 78, E/115, Lanham, MD 5/16/22

Howard, Keith S., Post 88, K/115, Cambridge, MD 7/4/23

Laughland, James F., Post 1-72, D/175, Lutherville-Timonium, MD 5/6/23

Malotte, Kenneth, Post 64, Associate, Vinton, VA 4/7/23

Mastrangelo, Charles V., Post 93, Son, North Brookfield, MA 7/5/22

Matthews, Alfred T., Post 88, HHC/2/115, Salisbury, MD 5/15/23

Nesmith, Marion J., Post 5, K/116, Snellville, GA 3/11/19

Newman, Kathleen, Post 93, Daughter, Los Angeles, CA 5/21/23

Pulket, Arthur W. Sr., Post 1-72, HHC/175, Bel Air, MD 5/28/23

Schelhouse, William B., Post 88, HHC/2/115, Centreville, VA 4/18/23

Stemple, Virgil, Post 1-72, B/175, Forest Hill, MD 4/2/23

Wright, Norman, Post 5, B/1/111, Virginia Beach, VA 6/9/21

## 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 our comrades who have died and whose deaths were reported to us since our last publication.

We ask survivors, friends, Post and Region 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.

Frank Armiger

National Executive Director

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**Save the date for the 104th Annual Reunion & Convention  
19-22 October 2023 — Delta Hotels - Marriott, in Hunt Valley, MD**



## DiNonno to succeed Rhodes

*(Continued from page 1)*

Division deputy commanding general for operations since September 2020, and he served in command and staff positions at every level of the Virginia Army National Guard including command and the squadron and brigade level.

Williams explained DiNonno was selected after going through the board process all eight National Guard divisions have agreed to utilize in order to identify the best talent from across geographic regions.

Rhodes will be assigned as the special assistant to the Director of Army National Guard for 18th Airborne Corps Matters effective Sept. 1, 2023.

“Maj. Gen. Rhodes has been a magnificent commander who led the 29th through a highly-successful federal active duty mobilization in support of Operation Spartan Shield,” Williams said. “He has also placed the division in solid footing with a higher state of preparedness for potential conflict with near-peer competitors as the Army shifts focus from using modular brigade combat teams in counterinsurgency operations to division-centric operations supporting large-scale combat operations.”

Williams said Rhodes embraced and expanded the “aligned for training” construct used by National Guard divisions to develop relationship with units from other states, and Rhodes developed strong relationships with the Adjutants General in those states with an eye on improving readiness and being prepared for future requirements. The 29th ID has three aligned combat arms brigades with the VNG’s 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the Georgia Army National Guard’s 48th IBCT and the Florida Army National Guard’s 53rd IBCT.

### Biographical summaries

DiNonno graduated from Old Dominion University and commissioned as a second lieutenant in May 1994. During the course of his career, he served in a wide variety of leadership positions including platoon leader, company executive officer, infantry company commander, planner, squadron operations officer, squadron executive officer, infantry brigade executive officer, commander of 2nd Squadron, 183rd Cavalry Regiment and commander of 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

He mobilized and deployed to Guantanamo Bay in 2002-03 as commander of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, to Kuwait in 2007-08 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as the operations officer of 2nd Squadron, 183rd Cavalry Regiment, to Iraq in 2011 in support of Operation New Dawn as the executive officer of 2-183rd Cavalry and to Joint Training Center Zarqa in Jordan in 2021 as the 29th ID deputy commanding general operations in support of Task Force Spartan and Operation Enduring Freedom.

DiNonno holds a Juris Doctor from Regent Law School, a Masters in Strategic Studies from the Army War College and a Bachelor of Science from Old Dominion University, and his military



**Brigadier General Joseph A. DiNonno**

achievements include earning the U.S. Army Ranger Tab, Expert Infantryman Badge, Airborne Badge and Air Assault Badge.

Rhodes took command of the 29th Infantry Division from Maj. Gen. John M. Epperly Oct. 3, 2020, and he led the division during the 9-month deployment to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility as the headquarters of Task Force Spartan, which exercises command and control of Operation Spartan Shield. He was commissioned a second lieutenant, Infantry in May 1987 through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps at Mississippi State University.

Prior to transferring to the Virginia Army National Guard in 2018, he served as Mississippi National Guard Assistant Adjutant General – Army and the commander of the 66th Troop Command. He also commanded a Joint Task Force in response to natural and man-made contingencies in support of homeland security and defense operations. From 2010-2013, he served as the commander of the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team.

His combat assignments include mortar platoon leader for the 6th Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division during Operation Desert Storm in 1991, commander of 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team during Operation Iraqi Freedom III in 2005, and deputy commander of 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team during Operation Iraqi Freedom 9.2 in 2009-2010.

Rhodes earned a Bachelor of Business Education from Mississippi State University in 1987, a Masters of Business Administration, Military Management from Touro University International in 2003 and Master of Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College in 2010.

*By Cotton Puryear | Virginia National Guard Public Affairs*



# Normandy Diary

## Part 5

By Colin H. McLaurin, CO, I/115

### Attack

I awoke about noon and as no activity could have been more appropriate at the moment, I ate again, this time a C -ration for variety consisting of a can of meat and beans, cold coffee, and hard biscuits. For dessert I indulged in a cigar which I obtained from my bedding roll which had by now been brought up.

My rest was cut short when I was informed that I was in charge of a company detail with the mission of erecting barbed wire entanglements around our position. A short while later, with my detail in tow, I ambled into the battalion headquarters area where rusty rolls of barbed wire were stacked. I found that it had not been broken down into company lots; so I told my men to take it easy until this had been done. While waiting for this to be accomplished, I strolled idly around the area. Our "weasels" were disposed in a field under trees which were scattered here and there. In one corner of the field I noticed the battalion supply officer busy eating. He had a big can of coffee heating over a can of burning gasoline. Seeing plenty of food lying around aroused my appetite even though I had just finished eating; so I accepted without hesitation an invitation to dine again.

The early part of the afternoon was spent in supervising the laying of the barbed wire in front of our position. When the work had progressed to such an extent that my presence was not required, I started another task, that of cleaning my weapons and ammunition. Due to the ducking I had received in crossing the inundated area, my carbine was so befouled and rusted that it probably would not have functioned properly. While I was engaged in this task, I heard the disturbing rumor that our battalion was scheduled to launch an attack on the enemy position to our front the next morning.

Sure enough, Capt. Spry came back from battalion late in the afternoon with an attack order. Calling all the company officers and key noncoms together, he gave us the dope. We were to make our first coordinated attack just before dawn the next morning. Our objective was a few miles away, and the Germans were known to be in positions to our front. A rolling barrage of artillery provided by battalions of Division and Corps artillery would precede our advance. Other details were given such as formation, base company, axis of signal communication, location of aid station, C.P., etc.

It was dark by the time all orders had been given and preparations made. I unrolled my bedroll with the idea of getting a few hours sleep. I even took off my shoes, jacket, and helmet for the first time. I slipped eagerly between the blankets and derived as much enjoyment out of the act as I ordinarily would have out of the softest and most luxurious bed. One of the pleasures of sleep in combat is, I think, that a soldier sort of lays his fears, responsibilities, worries, and mental strain aside in the same manner that he would his rifle. They are laid aside, but are always within reach in case his dreams are interrupted. That might be one explanation why some soldiers can keep fighting on and on and on.

My eyes had hardly closed when Capt. Spry called for another meeting for the purpose of imparting additional information. I decided that the time had not yet arrived when I could take advantage of my bedroll; so at the first opportunity, I regretfully rolled it back up. From then on it was a matter of waiting for the word to assemble.

The nights were not very cold, but there was a chill in the air that seemed to penetrate all through a person, leaving him tense and uncomfortable. We were in that state for the next three hours, and the prospect of our dawn attack had us all nervous and on edge, which only served to increase our discomfort.

Word finally came down from battalion to assemble and move out to our assigned positions on the LD (Line of Departure). We were to move through two gaps out into the barbed wire and then deploy along a sunken road. Word was sent down to the men, and soon the shadowy shapes of men could be seen converging on one point. After considerable shuffling and shifting around, we were ready.

We moved slowly behind K Company which would be deployed on our left. The sky gave no hint of approaching dawn. As always, is the case at night, the entire landscape takes on an entirely different appearance than that which is observed by day. Unless the terrain has been carefully studied, a person gets a feeling of helplessness which is bad when the person happens to be an Infantryman in combat. After fifteen or twenty minutes of stumbling, tripping, and bumping into one another, we were finally deployed on the LD. Dawn was fast approaching as indicated by the fact that the blackness of the night was taking on a grayish tinge, and objects could be seen more distinctly.

All was in readiness for the artillery preparation, the rolling barrage which we would follow up. We did not have long to wait. With breathtaking suddenness our calm surroundings were transformed into an inferno. In a couple of seconds, the air was filled with the thunder of exploding shells intermixed with the whistle of others approaching. As each shell exploded, a jagged ball of red flame would appear at the point of impact lighting up the area like a gigantic photo flash bulb.

The thought suddenly flashed through my mind that something had gone wrong, for the shells instead of falling on the enemy position, seemed to be falling on ours. After a minute or so of furious pounding, the strike of the shells moved forward, and a couple of minutes later, the firing ceased altogether. In my confused mind I realized that we should be moving out, yet, as far as I could tell, no one was moving. All was quiet. K Company, on our left, was the base company, and I mean that they would regulate the rate of advance of the battalion. Before I had time to investigate to see why they were not moving, I heard a voice coming out of the half darkness of dawn saying "K Company is wiped out." Slowly the terrible realization sank into my mind. K Company could not advance because there was no K Company to advance. They had been cut to pieces by our own artillery. With this demor-

alizing thought digested, another one crept into my consciousness. Our attack had become disorganized before we even started. Here we were, one stunned, cut up, disorganized battalion standing before a German position considered strong enough to rate a softening up by several battalions of artillery. This was a panic breeding situation. I could picture the battle wise German soldiers taking advantage of the situation by a counterattack. I had no doubt in my mind that counterattack would have been successful, for a confused, and disorganized force is at the mercy of any enemy who chooses to take advantage of them. The Germans had a reputation of being past masters of the technique of counterattack.

Before I could contact Capt. Spry, a member of the battalion staff came up and announced that the CO had issued instructions for the battalion to withdraw to the defensive position which we had left a short while before. I took charge of that portion of the company around me, the balance having become separated somehow, and with great difficulty started moving them back. I ordered one squad to remain in position in the sunken road to cover the withdrawal of the rest. We had to scramble through some of our own barbed wire and over a couple of hedgerows covered with their tangle of undergrowth. Control was difficult because the men were becoming panicky.

After making sure that this group was under control and knew where to go, I left it in charge of one of the platoon leaders and proceeded back to check up on the remainder of the company. I located the covering squad but saw no trace of the balance of the company or of the battalion either. The question that faced me at the moment was whether any units had moved forward or whether they had all moved back. It was daylight now and all the shelling and shouting had ceased. There was no indication of a counterattack either, for there was no noise coming from the enemy position up ahead.

After a minute or so spent in deliberation, I decided to reconnoiter the ground ahead to find out if any part of the battalion had advanced. There was a path conveniently leading in the right direction; so I followed the path of least resistance and slowly moved forward. Sure enough, I located a couple of sections of machine guns from the battalion's heavy weapons company set up on the near slope of a stream bed. There were also a couple of rifle platoons deployed along the bank, one of which was from my company.

Evidently these units had moved forward as scheduled but had stopped when they observed something had gone wrong. Now they did not know what to do; so they had just stopped. There were several officers in the group, the platoon leaders of the different platoons and another like myself who was out looking over the situation.

I could not see any sign of the enemy on the other side; so I suggested to the other officer who was encumbered by a platoon, that we cross the stream and look over the situation on the other side. He agreed. Having reached a decision, I told the machine gun platoon leader to have his guns cover us in case opposition developed.

I must admit that I felt a little nervous and excited as we started. The ground directly to the front was bare of cover and sloped sharply down to a small stream, designated as the Elle River on

the map, six or seven feet wide. On the other side of the stream the ground sloped upwards just as sharp for fifty yards and then leveled off. We raced across this open space and paused behind a hedgerow on the other side to regain our wind and to observe.

Some one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards to our left, a lone German machine gun cut loose with a burst, firing at some target which I could not see. It was fortunate that we had not chosen that area to reconnoiter. There was evidence that the Germans had occupied the area in strength, for there were many holes scattered around many of which showed signs of recent occupation. A cartridge belt here, a coat there, or a piece of mess equipment somewhere else gave the illusion that the Germans had made a quick departure. Judging from the machine gun fire though, some were still in the vicinity.

As we were simply reconnoitering, we did not try to move in on the machine gun but decided to advance straight forward a short distance. I had already concluded that there was not enough resistance to hold up the battalion, but it would be on the safe side to look around a bit more. We skirted around the edge of an orchard and moved slowly along a hedgerow which bordered it to the far side. At the intersection of two hedgerows we paused again. The banks were six feet high at this point, so in order to look around, I climbed up to the top and look over. I was shocked and momentarily dismayed to see two German soldiers standing up right behind an adjoining hedgerow. Fortunately, they were facing in the other direction, toward the stream which we had just crossed and did not see me. We were only twenty-five or thirty yards away from them yet they were completely unaware of our presence.

I motioned for my companion to be silent, slowly raised my carbine to my shoulder, aimed, and pulled the trigger. The Germans seemed to disappear into the ground, and at the same time I realized that my carbine had jammed-the bolt had not fully closed after ejecting the empty cartridge case. My reaction to this situation was to drop back down behind the hedgerow. I was in what I considered a ticklish situation-that is, precarious or delicate to handle.

My companion, Lt. Ungerleider, whispered, "What's up?" I whispered back, "There are two Germans up there." After waiting fifteen or twenty seconds and hearing no alarming sounds, I raised myself back up on top of the hedgerow and peeked over. I was astonished to see the Germans standing back up at their stations where I had first observed them as if nothing had happened.

I eased back down from my perch and whispered to Ungerleider. "They're back up again. Give me your carbine." He handed it over and I gave him mine. I climbed back up for the third time, again raised the gun to my shoulder and pulled the trigger. Again the Germans disappeared behind some tall grass as they hit the dirt. This time there was no jam, and I aimed at the spot where they had disappeared and emptied the remaining fourteen cartridges in the magazine with the hope that each shot ended its flight in a German.

As we had discovered that the area was only lightly defended at best, I suggested that we return and inform Captain Hankins so that he would hasten the reorganization of the battalion and continue the attack. Our route back was slightly different than our

way up, and as we approached the stream, I heard what sounded like someone groaning. Sure enough, a few moments later I saw a human form lying on his back.

As we approached within a few yards, I saw that he was a German, and from his torn clothes and position, I judged that one of our artillery shells had exploded near him. His legs were lying over a fallen tree and had the appearance of being blown there by the blast of the exploding shell. His face bore a look that seemed to me to be a combination of shock, bewilderment, and intense suffering. His eyes were blank and staring, and though he was facing us, he gave no indication of having seen us. Every breath was accompanied with a low moan which sounded more animal than human. He aroused somewhat the same emotion in me that I had sometimes felt when I was hunting and had wounded a partridge, rabbit or dove. When I would walk up on the wounded and disabled game, I would feel a twinge of pity for it and kill it quickly to put it out of its misery. I felt the same emotion rise up in me as I looked at this German soldier. I wanted to shoot him, not for the sake of killing him but to put him out of his misery. I restrained the impulse, however, and as I did not have time to aid him, Ungerleider and I left him to his fate.

We raced back across the stream to the accompaniment of the chatter of the German machine gun and the hammering of four of ours giving us covering fire as we crossed the stream and open ground. (I do not want to give the impression that we were under direct fire of the German machinegun, for I had figured that our route did not come under the gunner's line of fire.)

When we arrived safely on the other side, I told Ungerleider that I would go back and tell the battalion commander that I thought that the battalion could advance without much resistance. As I started back, I heard our machine guns still shooting. This exasperated me a little, for I knew that the gunners did not have a target but were just shooting blindly. I mumbled out loud something about "wasting ammunition" and then almost ran into my regimental commander, Colonel Slappy, who had suddenly appeared on the scene.

He said, "Lieutenant McLauren, what's holding you up? Where are you going?" I replied, "Colonel, I have been investigating the situation across the stream and am going to report to Capt. Hankins that I think that it is all right to move forward." Col. Slappy pointed toward the group on the bank and said, "McLaurin, we are wasting time. Get these men moving, now; I will see Capt. Hankins." I said "Yes, sir;" turned around and started back.

Here was a situation where the Colonel's ideas as to how the situation should be handled did not agree with mine. The regimental commander seemed to me to be committing the battalion piecemeal and, what was worse, while we were still confused and shocked from our disaster of the morning. I did not know at the time that the disaster was actually not as bad as I thought or that an entire company plus another platoon had advanced as scheduled. My feelings on the matter were that it would have been much better if I were allowed to give my report to my battalion commander and then let him move the balance of the battalion forward all together. Troops are also at a disadvantage when they have to "pick up" and "take off" without warning. It always irked me to have to act in such a manner. Orders are orders though.

I explained the situation to the officers in a very few words, and in less than a minute later, after receiving signals from them that their platoons were ready, I yelled, "OK, let's go!" and at the same time motioned the men forward with my arm.

Again we crossed the open space. Upon reaching the far side, I heard the German machine gun shooting again. This time I was nearer. Judging from the sound, it seemed to be between fifty and seventy-five yards away just behind a small rise in the ground and adjacent to a big two story house which stood slightly to my left.

I called to the men around me and said, "Let's get the machine gun." As we started toward it, I started shooting and ordered the other men to do the same. Just as we were nearing the enemy position, one of the riflemen pulled out a hand grenade, pulled the pin, and raised his arm to throw it. Somehow or other he fumbled it and the grenade fell to the ground at our feet. Instinctively I dived to one side and fell flat on the ground. The other men did the same, and we all spent a tense four seconds waiting for it to explode and wondering whether we would be hit by a fragment.

After a mild explosion, I stood up and looked around. No one was hurt; so we proceeded on as if nothing had happened. Fortunately, no one had tried to play the hero and try to shield the others with his body as has been done in fact and fiction.

We arrived at the spot where I had thought the gun to be located only to find no machine gun there. There was, however, a German soldier lying on the ground and who appeared to be departing from this world. He was a little bushy depression and his muscles were jerking in what appeared to be some sort of death reflex much like a chicken which has had its neck wrung. All of my shouting, shooting, and running had stimulated me to such a pitch that I lost all sense of fear and humanity. In their place there arose in me a desire to come to grips with the enemy and kill. My dormant animal instincts, long suppressed, must have at last risen to the surface, and I am rather ashamed to admit that I emptied the few remaining shots from my carbine into the German's body.

This was the only time that I was aroused to such a state, and from this experience I can see the psychology behind the war whoop and battle cry. They whip up the emotions of soldiers to such a pitch that they will brave almost certain death to satisfy their desire to close with the enemy. Our Army has a name for this emotional state. It is called "the spirit of the bayonet." By now, unseen enemy observers began directing artillery fire on our area. I dashed into the nearby house with the intention of searching it. Just as got inside a couple of shells exploded just outside. The concussion of one of them shook the house a little and shattered glass from doors and windows. I immediately decided that the house was a target; so I dashed back out just as quickly as I had entered.

Our group now started advancing through a small wooded area on the north west outskirts of a little village named St. Jean de Savigny. A short council of war was held to decide whether to enter the village or bypass it, and the latter course of action agreed upon. As we moved on, my attention was suddenly attracted by a movement to the front. As my eyes focused on the spot, I saw an American soldier, apparently wounded, trying unsuccessfully to get up. I hurried over to where he lay and was



shocked to find one of our battalion officers-Lt. Bramlette, the battalion's S-2. He was lying on his stomach and there was a hole the size of a silver dollar in one side of his back. A piece of shrapnel had no doubt punctured his lung and air was being inhaled and exhaled through that bloody hole with each breath. He was conscious but his face was very pale from shock and loss of blood. He recognized me and asked that I put his canteen by his mouth so that he could drink. This I did and I also told him that I would get a medic. In training we had been warned not to use riflemen to take wounded back. The theory was that combat personnel could not pause from their job of fighting in order to evacuate or care for the wounded. The medical personnel were organized to do that job. In spite of this, I could not resist sending one of my riflemen back to guide litter bearers to where the wounded officer lay. Later, I was surprised to learn that Lt. Bramlette had gotten to his feet and unassisted had walked several hundred yards to where the battalion aid station was set up. I also learned months later that he had recovered from his wound. This surprised me for when I had seen him, he looked about dead.

The far edge of the woods was bordered by a road running more or less parallel to our front. On our left front, I could see the roofs of the village. To our front and right front, the ground consisted of pastures and cultivated fields surrounded of course by hedgerows. As artillery shells were still falling in the woods and seemed to be confined to that area, I decided to move out in the open ground on the right.

Now that the excitement created by the shelling and dashing around had subsided somewhat, my brain began to function in a more orderly fashion. I saw that it would be foolhardy to try to continue the advance with my little band. It would be much better from a tactical standpoint to wait until the balance of the battalion came up and then to proceed forward as a unit. Besides, I was not too well oriented at the time due to the fact that I had lost my map a couple of days before. I did find one by accident which Lt. Bramlette had no doubt dropped when he was wounded. Its scale was so small though that it was hard to pinpoint one's position exactly.

The other officers who were with me concurred with this line of reasoning; so I looked around for a good position and chose an area about three hundred yards away. While moving to this area, we flushed up and captured several Germans who were either snipers or had become separated from their unit. Two of them had been wounded, and one was too quick for us and scampered away and disappeared before we could apprehend or shoot him.

Considerable time had been taken up in dealing with the Germans and searching the area for others, and before we could deploy on the position which I had chosen, the remainder of the battalion came into sight. Captain Spry was along with the balance of I Company (The one to which I belonged) with the exception of the third rifle platoon which I now learned had jumped off with L Company and was now somewhere to our front. I also learned that its platoon leader, Lt. Neville, had been killed. His was the first death among the officers of the company.

I also learned the details of K Company's catastrophe. The entire company had not been wiped out by the artillery, but

the company commander, his second in command and most of a platoon of thirty odd men had been killed or wounded. It was no wonder that those remaining had been too stunned to move. It was tragic.

After these mishaps, the battalion was very much weakened. Every rifle company had been affected in a way which weakened it. L Company had had an officer killed as well as several enlisted men. The remaining members of the platoon were separated from the company. K Company, the hardest hit, had lost two officers and had had one entire platoon either killed or wounded. L Company had moved out as scheduled and as a result was isolated from the battalion as well as bearing the brunt of the German resistance. In fact the battalion commander has just received word from it by radio that it was surrounded by the enemy. That was the situation at the moment.

Captain Hankins decided to strike out cross country with the mission of relieving L Company which seemed to be in a tough spot. The maps that we were using at that particular time were not too good for such a movement, but they would have to do.

I had hoped that with the arrival of Capt. Spry the responsibility of command would shift to him where it belonged. When Captain Hankins issued his movement order, our company was designated as the base company, and I was delegated by Capt. Spry as the officer responsible for maintaining the correct course.

After the units were deployed in their assigned formation, we moved out. There was no sign of Germans. My tense nerves began to relax, and I began to feel a sense of thankfulness that the situation was more favorable for us as most of our battalion was reformed and advancing under the central control of Capt. Hankins.

Ten or fifteen minutes later during a short halt, Capt. Hankins came up and expressed his opinion that we were bearing too far to the right. I must say that he could have been right, for I had not taken the time to calculate the exact azimuth to our objective but had figured it roughly and meant to maintain the exact course by checking with terrain features from time to time. It so happened that the features at hand were not very suitable for an accurate check. I have since suspected also that the map was either inaccurate or not up to date for that particular piece of terrain. We could not have been far wrong though, and our exact position could have been ascertained by taking a few minutes to check. Capt. Hankins, for some reason, did not have his compass; so I offered him mine. He accepted it and with that gesture thereby took on the job of steering the proper course.

From this point on our luck seemed to run out and later, as our situation began to deteriorate, events unfolded into what seemed to be a living nightmare. Nervous tension began mounting again, just as if an unseen hand had turned a switch and changed the entire battalion with this psychological current. To make matters worse, we began to receive fire from snipers again. Uncertainty began to sap the confidence of us all and with that uncertainty a certain amount of confusion began to spread throughout the battalion.

*To be continued*

# Virginia National Guard troops depart for Texas border support mission

RICHMOND, VA – Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen departed for Texas July 8, 2023, where they will assist the Texas Military Department and Operation Lone Star border security operation. The VNG assembled Joint Task Force Cardinal, a group of approximately 100 Soldiers and Airmen, with another 10 personnel as the task force leadership team and support element, at Fort Barfoot July 5 for training and administrative tasks prior to their departure. The mission is expected to last about 30 days.

"I am inspired by all of you. I can't put it any other way," said Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin when he visited the troops July 6 at Fort Barfoot. "On behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, I just want to say thank you. Thank you for your commitment, thank you for your love of nation, and thank you for your love of the commonwealth."

Youngkin also thanked families and acknowledged the Soldiers and Airmen will be missing out on time with loved ones while they are gone. "I want to thank you for the sacrifice you are undertaking as we head into an extremely important mission," he said.

Youngkin approved the VNG troop deployment after Virginia received requests for support to Texas via the Emergency Management Assistance Compact process. They are deploying to Texas in a state active duty status funded by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Youngkin explained that when a state needs help, they "send up a flare" and say they need help via EMAC, and Virginia will answer that call.

"Someone called for help, and we are going to go help them," he said. "That's what this is all about. I firmly believe this is a worthy mission."

Youngkin commended the troops for coming together from across Virginia to work as a team and acknowledged they are well prepared and well trained.

"I want you to know that we got your back," he said. "Our nation and Virginians are grateful. We salute you."

The VNG's Portsmouth-based 2nd Squadron, 183rd Cavalry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team is the headquarters for Task Force Cardinal and will be augmented by Virginia Army and Air National Guard units based in Lynchburg, Winchester, Fredericksburg, Danville, Staunton and Hampton.

The commander of 2nd Squadron, a U.S. Army major, and a first sergeant will serve as the overall command team for the task force. Along with approximately 10 administrative and sustainment support personnel, they will liaise with the Texas Military Department throughout the duration of the mission and ensure the health and welfare of all VNG personnel on the mission.

"I know from personal experience having supported operations on the Southwest Border that border security, law enforcement and public safety organizations face tremendous challenges," said Maj. Gen. James W. Ring, the Adjutant General of Virginia.



Photo by Mike Vrabel

**Brig. Gen. Todd Hubbard, the VNG Director of the Joint Staff, and Col. David Lands, the Director of Staff for the Virginia Air National Guard, shook hands with the departing Soldiers and Airmen and thanked them for their service.**

"Just as the Virginia National Guard stands ready to assist our fellow Virginians in times of need, our Soldiers and Airmen are also ready to provide assistance to other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact process and will provide requested capabilities to help our fellow Americans."

Ring also acknowledged the team effort required to pull together the task force on short notice.

"I am incredibly proud how quickly the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Air National Guard, Virginia Defense Force and Virginia Department of Military Affairs all came together to make sure the service members heading to Texas have everything they need to ensure mission success," Ring said. "We also want to thank the families and employers for their support."

Members of the Virginia Defense Force and state employees from the Virginia Department of Military Affairs provided administrative and logistical support to get the troops ready for the mission.

The Task Force Cardinal commander will maintain military command authority over all VNG personnel as they provide capabilities to the Texas Military Department in support of Operation Lone Star. The task force commander will remain under the military command authority of VNG senior leadership in the Commonwealth of Virginia and ultimately the Virginia governor, who is the commander in chief of the Virginia National Guard.

According to a news release published June 30 by Texas Governor Gregg Abbott, the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Texas National Guard continue to work together to "secure the border; stop the smuggling of drugs, weapons, and people into Texas; and prevent, detect, and interdict transnational criminal behavior between ports of entry."

The news release indicated that since the launch of Operation Lone Star, the multi-agency effort has led to more than 386,000 illegal immigrant apprehensions and more than 30,000 criminal arrests, with more than 28,000 felony charges reported. Texas law enforcement has seized more than 420 million lethal doses of fentanyl.

*By Cotton Puryear | Virginia National Guard Public Affairs*

## Battle of Baltimore Staff Ride B&O Railroad Museum

(Continued from page 1)

hotel lobby to board a bus for the Battle of Baltimore staff ride. Our own Historian *Emeritus*, Joe Balkoski, will lead the event. Joe, in addition to being an expert on the 29th Division, served as Director of the Maryland Museum of Military History. As such he developed an in depth knowledge of the battle that culminated in the bombardment of Fort McHenry and the penning of our national anthem by Francis Scott Key. Over the years Joe conducted many of these staff rides for a wide variety of audiences. Through Joe's interpretation you will learn that there was much more to the battle than the bombardment.

The British were fresh off of an overwhelming victory at the Battle of Bladensburg that led to the burning of Washington, DC. With that success the British set their eyes on Baltimore, a city known for its port that provided safe harbor to many of the privateers who were harassing and severely damaging British shipping. Thus, the British fleet sailed up the Chesapeake Bay in September 1814.

The invasion would be by both land and sea with British infantry and artillery landing at the end of a peninsula that is present day Fort Howard. Nearly 5,000 troops including veterans of the Napoleonic Wars and Royal Marines under the command of Major General Robert Ross, an experienced and highly competent leader proceeded up the peninsula with Baltimore in their sights.

However, MG Sam Smith recognized the British intention and dispatched Maryland Militia to meet and delay the foe. It was at North Point about 5 miles from Baltimore where the British met stiff resistance from the militia that included the 5th Maryland Regiment (now the 175th Infantry formerly of the 29th Division) who took a stand and delayed the enemy, but even more importantly mortally wounded their commander MG Ross.

Though the 5th Maryland Regiment (the North Point defenders) eventually made an organized retreat from the skirmish, their defense was key in halting the British advance. The death of their commander demoralized the invading troops and stalled their advance until another, less able general took command.

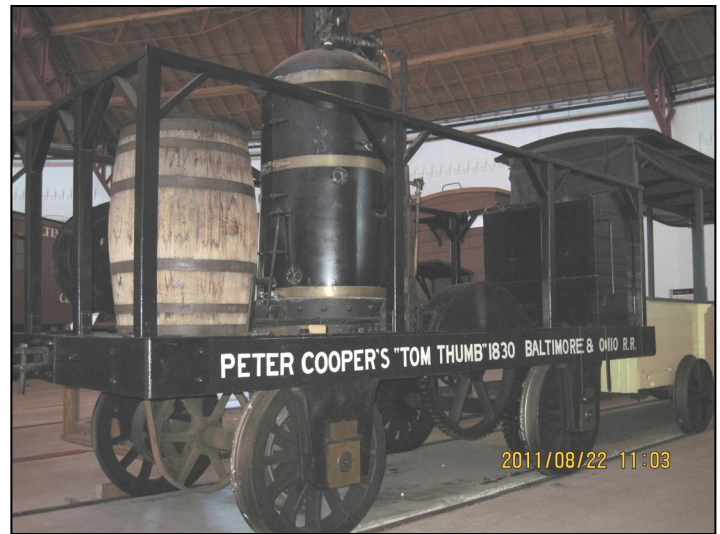
Given the extra time, MG Smith erected stout breastworks on Hampstead Hill (now in Patterson Park) facing eastward. There the invading British troops encountered over 10,000 US troops and 100 cannon. They wisely decided to retreat since the fleet was not in position to support them, ending the land invasion.

### Help Wanted Editor/Publisher

The 29th Division Association is searching for someone to assume the duties of Editor/Publisher of the *Twenty-Niner* newsletter beginning 1 January 2025.

They are also searching for someone who has the ability to paginate, i.e. process text documents and photos into a 'pdf' page format utilizing software similar to *Microsoft Publisher*.

Anyone interested, please contact current editor, William Mund at [duster197329@gmail.com](mailto:duster197329@gmail.com) or 443-529-4233.



Peter Cooper's "Tom Thumb" 1830 Baltimore & Ohio R.R.

At sea, the British fleet had moved up the Chesapeake Bay but encountered a formidable star fortification, Fort McHenry. It was here that 1,000 men under General George Armistead manned their batteries and forced the British ships to move out of range. After the bombardment of more than 1,500 shells throughout the night, Francis Scott Key, a detainee on one of the British ships, noted that the huge flag was still flying at dawn over the fort, leading to his writing our national anthem.

Our staff ride will continue for the full day with stops at North Point, Fort Howard, Hampstead Hill and Fort McHenry. At midday we will stop at a local eatery for lunch.

After we return to the hotel we will have an opportunity to relax and freshen up for the evening event. Just as we did at Arlington last year, we are planning to gather for heavy hors d'oeuvres and an open bar. It will be a relaxing evening with a casual atmosphere and a speaker.

On Friday, we will start the day with our annual business meeting that is open to all members. Those who will not be attending the meeting will have free time to do as they wish. After lunch we will gather in the lobby to board the bus for a tour of the B&O Railroad Museum located in downtown Baltimore.

The museum has been called one of the most significant collections of railroad treasures in the world and has the largest collection of 19th-century locomotives in the U.S. The museum is located in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's old Mount Clare Station and adjacent roundhouse which is where, in 1829, the B&O began America's first railroad. Mount Clare is considered to be a birthplace of American railroading, as the site of the first regular railroad passenger service in the U.S., beginning on May 22, 1830.

That evening we will have a buffet dinner at the hotel with our guest speaker, BG Joseph A. DiNonno, the newly appointed commander of the 29th Division on 5 August. We are honored to have MG DiNonno join us and talk about his plans for the 29th ID in an evolving US Army.

On Sunday, Chaplain Joel Jenkins will lead our annual memorial service as we remember our veterans who passed since the last convention. This very moving ceremony will be our last event for the weekend as we wish all of our attendees safe travels home.

We look forward to seeing you in October!

By Frank Armiger, National Executive Director



# Birckhead takes command as Adjutant General of Maryland

BALTIMORE, MD – Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, commander in chief of the Maryland Military Department, hosted the change of command ceremony for the new adjutant general for Maryland.

Maj. Gen. Timothy E. Gowen, the 30th adjutant general for Maryland, relinquished command of the Maryland National Guard and the Maryland Military Department to Maj. Gen. Janeen L. Birckhead at a change of command ceremony held at the Fifth Regiment Armory, Saturday, June 3, 2023.

As part of the ceremony, Gowen, as the outgoing commander, received the colors from the Maryland Army National Guard's senior enlisted leader, Command Sgt. Maj. David Harry. Gowen passed the organization's colors to Gov. Moore, who then passed the colors to the 31st adjutant general, Birckhead. The colors were then returned to Harry, who then returned them to the color guard, signifying the conclusion of the transition.

"Over the past three and a half years under the skilled and visionary leadership of Maj. Gen. Gowen, the Maryland National Guard has risen to even greater heights," said Gov. Moore. "I have every confidence that Maj. Gen. Birckhead will lead you with great distinction and integrity and that she will work tirelessly to ensure that Maryland's National Guard remains one of America's very best military organizations."

Birckhead, who was promoted from the rank of brigadier general earlier in the day at a ceremony held at Morgan State University, previously served as the assistant adjutant general-Army since May 2018. She now leads the daily operations of the Maryland Military Department, which includes the Maryland Army National Guard, Maryland Air National Guard and Maryland Defense Force.

"I do not take this charge lightly. I will use the breadth and depth of my experience to do the best for you to ensure readiness," said Birckhead. "I will remember my commitment to not only the Soldiers and Airmen but also the civilians who are a part of the Maryland Military Department."

The adjutant general is a member of the governor's cabinet and is responsible for the readiness, administration, and training of more than 7,000 members of the Military Department, generating nearly \$300 million annually for Maryland's economy.

"I commit to leaving this organization better than before," he said, underscoring his determination to take care of service members and ensure the continued success of the organization's cyber operations and future flying mission.

Before the end of the ceremony, the Maryland Military Department conducted a Pass in Review with Soldiers, Airmen, and Maryland Defense Force volunteers. The Pass in Review is a long-standing military tradition where the newly assigned commander is able to inspect the troops through a display of drill and ceremony.

Birckhead graduated magna cum laude from Hampton University on an Army ROTC scholarship. Her undergraduate degree is in political science. She also holds two master's degrees – a masters in general administration from the University of Maryland University College and a masters in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

Birckhead's military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, NATO Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon, and Afghanistan Campaign Medal. As the newly appointed commander of the Maryland National Guard, she will be the only Black woman currently leading a state military across the nation.



**MG Janeen Birckhead receives the colors from MD Governor Wes Moore at the Change of Command ceremony held on 3 June at the Fifth Regiment Armory in Baltimore, MD.**

Additionally, two assumption of command ceremonies took place at the Fifth Regiment Armory for the assistant adjutants general. Maryland Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Drew E. Dougherty assumed command from retired Brig. Gen. Edward S. Jones, and Maryland Army National Guard Col. Andrew W. Collins assumed command from Birckhead.

"I stand humbled, determined, proud, and ready," said Collins. "[The Maryland Army National Guard Soldiers] always have and always will be my number one priority."

In his address, Dougherty emphasized his dedication to continuous improvement of an already excellent organization.

*By 1LT Paul Jeong and CPT Ben Hughes,  
courtesy of the Maryland Military Department*

## REMINDER!!

The online store is open and available for ordering 24/7. All items purchased from the store generate income for the Association. If you are unable to order online or have a question feel free to email or call me for assistance. Remember the simplest way to get to the online store is from the Association webpage. Catch the inventory reduction sale going on now!!

**[www.29thdivisionassociation.com/store](http://www.29thdivisionassociation.com/store)**

Valerie Simmers  
[vhawk0926@gmail.com](mailto:vhawk0926@gmail.com)  
(410) 459-3760

## Executive Director's Message:

(Continued from page 1)

ston has been a tireless advocate for the Association and most recently prepared our revamped By-Laws that are now in place. He began work on the new procedures manual and I will work with him on the transition. He has already prepared the outline of the contents and most of the job descriptions. On behalf of the Association, I extend our deepfelt gratefulness for his contributions.

We are now making great progress on two projects that were affected by the COVID pandemic. The first one was completed last month at the Bodmin Keep Museum in Cornwall, UK where members of the 29th Division trained to prepare for the D-Day invasion.

Many thanks to Museum Director, Helen Bishop-Stephens, and Drew Memorials for their outstanding efforts to prepare a refurbished plaque and place it at the entrance to the museum. We will have an official unveiling on 12 October.

Susan Kearney of Post 93 will represent the Association at the event. It was at Bodmin where her father trained and met his future wife, Susan's mother. All members of the 29th Division Association are invited to attend. As the event gets closer, we will provide more details.

The other project is the restoration of the 115th Infantry Regimental flag that was carried ashore at Omaha Beach in Normandy on D-Day. The flag is now in Washington, DC in the hands of Julia M. Brennan – Textile Conservation Services, a firm recommended by the US Army Center of Military History. On behalf of the Association, I want to thank Barbara Taylor, Maryland Museum of Military History, for managing the process and assuring that the treasured flag was safely shipped. Once the flag is restored and reframed. It will be displayed with the other 29th Division flags in the WWII room at the Museum.

I am working with the Convention Planning Committee to plan for the upcoming Annual Reunion in October. As described in a separate article we have established an agenda for the event. My next step is to meet with the Convention Services Manager at the Delta Hotel to plan the meals and refreshments. We will keep you posted on the details. I am looking forward to a great turnout for the Convention.

Finally, I would like to give a "shout-out" to PNC David Ginsburg. In April, PNC Ginsburg accepted the position of Executive Director of the Pikesville Armory Foundation where he had previously

served as a board member representing the veterans' interests. PNC Ginsburg will be driving the redevelopment of the facility to serve the community and the various veterans' groups that meet there. In particular, one of the first buildings that the Foundation will address is the NCO Club where we hold NEC and Post meetings, as well as other veteran and historic group meetings. With PNC Ginsburg in the lead we can be assured that the Association interests will be a priority.

### Highlights of the Zoom NEC III Meeting on 15 June

National Commander Dick Snyder called the National Executive Committee meeting to order at 1100 hours. This was another hybrid meeting with in person attendees at the 29th Division Museum in Verona, VA, as well as online via Zoom.

National Judge Advocate Houston Matney sent his resignation as Judge Advocate due to health issues that prevented his continuing

to function as JA at this time. He offered sincere thanks and appreciation to all for the opportunity to serve for the last ten years. He wished the best for the association going forward. We are currently searching for his replacement.

Commander Snyder provided an overview of his activities since the last NEC. He attended a Memorial Day parade in Sharpsburg sponsored by Post 78, Cresap's Rifles, that went very well. He and NED Armiger attended the D-Day events at the D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA.

Commander Snyder placed a wreath at the D-Day Memorial. He thanked Post 64 for their efforts there as well.

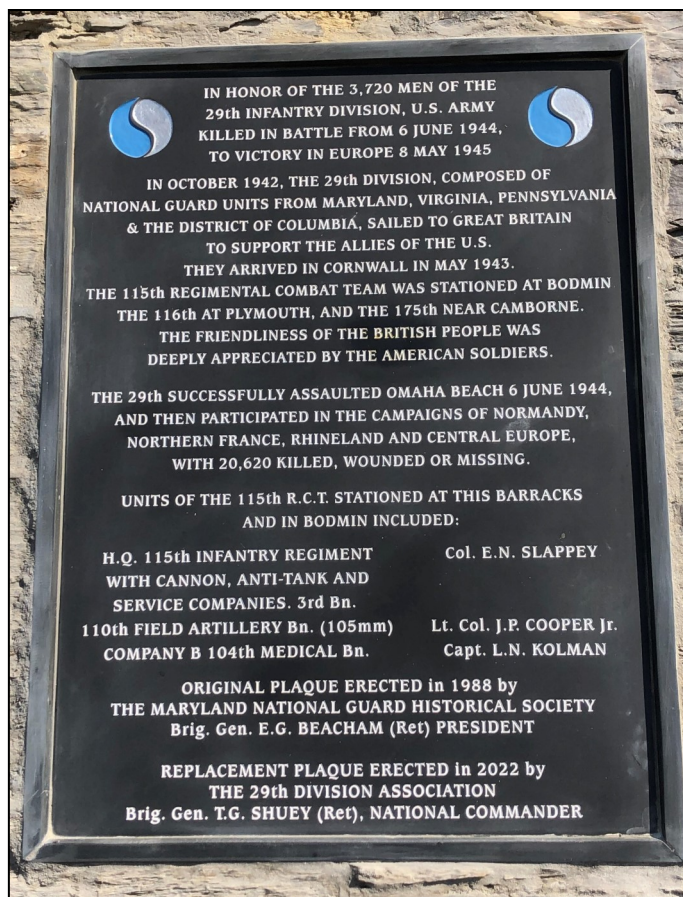
The 115th Regimental flag that went ashore on D-Day is now in the hands of the restoration company. We will monitor the process as it moves to completion.

PNC Hinz drafted a policy for the Class A and Class B hats that he presented for review. Once reviewed, revised as necessary and accepted the policy will be included in the new Procedures Manual.

The 29th Division change of command will be held at 1000 Hours on 5 August 2023. It will take place on the parade field in front of the Division HQ at Fort Belvoir, VA. The remaining plans are not yet set as coordination between staffs of the incoming and outgoing commanders work out their preferences. Details will follow in an email to everyone once confirmed.

Commander Snyder stated the importance and priority of the 80th Anniversary of D-Day next year. He personally plans to attend the events in Normandy and lay a wreath sponsored by the 29th Division Association. We are also planning to have a major presence at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA.

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29th Division Plaque at the entrance to Bodmin Keep Museum.



# Ring takes command of VNG as Adjutant General of Virginia

RICHMOND, VA – Brig. Gen. James W. Ring took command of the Virginia National Guard as the Adjutant General of Virginia from Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams and was promoted to major general during a ceremony June 3, 2023, at the VNG Sergeant Bob Slaughter Headquarters at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia. Lt. Gen. Marc H. Sasseville, the Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau, presided over the ceremony.

Ring, who has served as the VNG Director of the Joint Staff since 2018, was appointed to succeed Williams by Governor Glenn Youngkin, who announced the appointment in March 2023. He now will lead the Virginia Army National Guard, the Virginia Air National Guard and the Virginia Defense Force.

"It is an honor to stand before you today as the 29th Adjutant General of Virginia," said Ring during the ceremony. "I thank Governor Youngkin for my appointment to this important role and for the opportunity to serve the Soldiers, Airmen and civilians of the Virginia National Guard."

Williams has served as the Adjutant General of Virginia since 2014, serving under three different governors. He will formally retire July 1, 2023.

"As I share this time with you, I'm incredibly humbled," said Williams. "Every day, even the days, weeks and months that were away from home, have been a blessing and I can't believe how fortunate I've been to serve our nation and our state working shoulder to shoulder with such amazing and selfless professionals. You truly are the best that our nation can offer."

Hundreds of current and former Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, as well as family, friends and colleagues of both Ring and Williams, attended the ceremony, as did retired Maj. Gen. Craig Crenshaw, the Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, and multiple lawmakers and their representatives.

Youngkin and Crenshaw both offered their congratulations to Ring as well as the retiring Williams.

"On behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, congratulations Maj. Gen. Williams on your 38 years of exemplary service to the United States Army and the Virginia National Guard," Youngkin said in a statement read during the ceremony. "The dedication and professionalism you have displayed throughout your career are a credit to this nation and the commonwealth."

"Maj. Gen. Williams has been a superb leader for the Virginia National Guard and has positively influenced its future," said Crenshaw. "I'm excited to work with Maj. Gen. Ring as he takes the helm as the new the Adjutant General, he brings tremendous talent."

Sasseville also gave remarks at the event honoring both Ring and Williams for their service to commonwealth and country.

"Both of these men typify the National Guard's extraordinary history of dedication, readiness and valor," said Sasseville. "For Maj. Gen. Ring, it is a celebration of achievements and demonstrated potential. It is a higher evolution of a career based on service and excellence, and it is the ascension to a position of profound trust and responsibility, and it marks a new chapter in



**Brig. Gen. James W. Ring takes command of the Virginia National Guard as the Adjutant General of Virginia.**

the 416-year history of the Virginia National Guard. But today is also a celebration of conclusions. For Maj. Gen. Williams, today is a celebration of your legacy. It is a remembrance of your enduring contributions to the Virginia National Guard and to the whole of our nation."

During the ceremony, VNG Soldiers assigned to the Norfolk-based 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team blank fired the honor salute, and VNG Airmen assigned to the 192nd Wing at Joint Base Langley-Eustis performed an F-22 flyover. The Troutville-based 29th Infantry Division Band provided ceremonial music for the event, and members of the VDF provided traffic support and medical assistance for the ceremony.

The Adjutant General of Virginia serves as the agency head for the Virginia Department of Military Affairs, the state agency providing leadership and administrative support to the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Air National Guard and Virginia Defense Force.

Ring is a 1988 Distinguished Military Graduate of Virginia Military Institute, and he holds a master's degree from the Command and General Staff College in Military Arts and Science and a master's degree from the U.S. Army War College in Strategic Studies. He commanded at the company, battalion, brigade and general officer task force levels and has served with distinction in key leader operational assignments from the state to national levels. He has deployed in support of Operation New Horizons in

*(Continued on page 15)*



## 29th Division Association National officers join with Post 64 and others in Bedford on 6 June

June 6, 2023 was a beautiful, sunny, peaceful day in Bedford, nestled in the Shenandoah Mountains in southwest Virginia. It was a far cry from that overcast day on Omaha Beach in 1944 when troops of the 29th Division landed in the first waves. However, there would be an eternal connection between the town and Normandy from that day forward. For it was there that the "Bedford Boys" in Company A, 116th Infantry, hit the beaches where they met fierce opposition from well-entrenched Nazi forces. Some of them would never see the beach as their landing boats were sunk on the approach. At the end of the day, Company A, formerly of the Virginia National Guard, was virtually destroyed, suffering over 90% casualties.

The small town of Bedford would never again be the same. So many young men lost – a generation that could not be replaced. Therefore, it was only fitting that the National Memorial be located there. But, the memorial honors all of the men and women who were involved in Operation Overlord from the Rangers at Pointe du Hoc to the nurses who tended the many wounded soldiers, sailors and airmen.

As the crowd started gathering, April Cheek-Messier, President and CEO of the National D-Day Memorial Foundation, stood prominently in front of the great arch greeting visitors and VIPs alike. Born and raised in Bedford she has been an influential leader in the growth of the Memorial over the years and later in the day would oversee the opening of a new nature trail on its 50+ acres.

The 29th Division Association was well represented. National Commander, Dick Snyder, National Finance Officer and Post 64 Commander, Richard Carr, and National Executive Director, Frank Armiger, were all there along with members of Posts 64, 29, 116 and 93. All were gathered under a tent that provided much needed shade on a cloudless day.

The 29th Division Band was also there playing the overture and choral prelude to the ceremony followed by the invocation. The 29th Drum and Fife in their new uniforms paraded the colors, proudly borne by SFC Richard Carr and saluted as the band played the National Anthem.

After Daniel Stoddard, Chairman of the National D-Day Memorial Foundation, welcomed the guests and attendees, Kevin Hymel strode to the podium. Mr. Hymel is one of the foremost George S. Patton scholars in the world. He spoke about the "what if" Patton was there. Among his conjectures were the following: Patton would have insisted on a nighttime landing and would have been fully involved with the training at all levels; under his command the troops in the landing would have carried much less equipment, but many more radios; and he would have never landed 2 airborne divisions behind Utah Beach after the disastrous airborne mission in Sicily.

Our next speaker was John C. Mc Manus, Professor of Military History at Missouri University of Science and Technology, who read the Caperton Letter. CPL Willy Caperton was a member of the 2nd Rangers who scaled the cliffs at Pointe du Hoc on the Normandy Peninsula. Although the mission was successful, CPL Caperton was KIA. LTC James E. Rudder, commander of the 2nd Rangers, out of his deep sense of duty wrote a very touching letter to his mother that ended with the following:

"So our comrade has gone and we realize that there is a void in your heart which neither your Country's gratitude nor our sympathy can fill. We, with whom he shared his life ask only now to share his memory that it may inspire us all to the gaining of an early Victory and the making of a lasting peace."

Next came the wreath laying ceremony. National Commander Dick



Left to right: Jackson Sink, NC Dick Snyder, COL Daniel Collins.

Snyder along with COL Daniel Collins, Chief of Staff of the 29th Division, and Jackson Sink (Great Grandson of a WWII veteran) placed the 29th Division Association wreath in front of the wall where all of the 29th Division plaques are located.

April Cheek-Messier followed the wreath laying ceremony and remembered Bob Slaughter who landed with the 116th Infantry on D-Day. It was always his dream to have a national memorial that was fitting for the sacrifices on that day on the land, in the air and at sea. As she recounted, it was through his tireless work and advocacy that the National D-Day Memorial became a reality. It was he, who in 1989 would form a committee that later became the National D-Day Memorial Foundation.

April then introduced the Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia, to the gathering. Governor Youngkin gave an inspirational speech in which he described the memorial as both a place of remembrance and a place of reverence. In particular, he cited the veterans who were there and the ones who had passed, either in battle or after WWII. This was the "greatest generation" where ordinary men accomplished extraordinary acts of valor and we have our liberties and freedoms because of those acts.

Our next speaker was George Patton Waters, grandson of General George S. Patton. "Pat" shared quotes from his famous grandfather, but admitted that some could not be repeated in "polite" company. Three of the memorable quotes that he shared were: (1) "Lead me, follow me or get out of the way;" (2) "Don't tell a person how to do something. Tell him what you want done and you'll be surprised at his ingenuity;" (3) "You're not beaten until you admit it." There is no doubt that Patton's spirit lives on at the National D-Day Memorial.

MG Tim Williams, Adjutant General of Virginia and 29th Division Association member, followed with a recognition of the WWII veterans. He felt that it was appropriate that this would be the last event he attended as an active service member. He would retire shortly thereafter having served for 38 years. He especially remembered the Bedford Boys who were all members of the Virginia National Guard. He then proceeded along with Governor Youngkin and April Cheek-Messier to personally greet and meet with the WWII veterans.

The commemorative observance ended with a benediction and dedicatory prayer provided by John Long followed by more music from the 29th Division Band.

After the program Post 64 held a wonderful luncheon for our members at the Pig and Pineapple featuring good old southern style comfort food. It was a great way to end a memorable day.

*By Frank Armiger, National Executive Director*

# WWI Monument Update

The First Army attack on the Heights of the Meuse began on 8 October 1918. It was supported by river and canal crossings at multiple locations. The key site was the repaired bridge at Consenvoye. It was the largest village among the supporting communes and became the main source of the supplies and reinforcements needed to sustain the 29th and 33rd Divisions in their attack to drive the Germans from the heights. Following the war, Consenvoye, which had been occupied by the Germans since February 1916, decided that as they rebuilt their destroyed village, they needed to do something to honor their American liberators.

To do so, the residents chose to set aside a "triangular plot of land" near the bridge to create a park "as a memorial to the men who gave their lives to free Consenvoye from the enemy."

Proposed location: (N49°19.630' E005°12.293")

In response, the 29th Division Association felt it would be appropriate to erect a monument on the proposed site to recognize the town's role in supporting the American advance to the Heights of the Meuse. On November 23, 1931, National Commander Fairfield H. Hodges announced plans to "erect a memorial at Consenvoye on the east bank of the Meuse in France to honor fallen members of the Twenty-Ninth division, A.E.F." In a letter to the Association membership for support, H. J. Leeper, Secretary of the 29th Division Association's Memorial Committee, wrote the following regarding Consenvoye: "They have been spending every available dollar to rebuild their homes, public buildings Church, and have replaced the bridge across the Meuse and have held this piece of ground sacred." He urged the membership to support the effort closing with "remember, God let you come back."



German monument erected to honor the Austrian-Hungarians who fought and died here at the site of the initial attack.

German monument erected to honor the Austrian-Hungarians who fought and died here at the site of the initial attack.



From left to right: Town leader, PNC Shuey, Sculptor Stein, Mayor Dormois, other town leaders on the proposed site.

Unfortunately, the effort would fail as a result of the growing Great Depression in America and just as it was ending, the outbreak of World War II.

Again, the 29th Division was at war and the monument in Consenvoye on the back burner and finally forgotten until a visit to the town, plus their remaining interest in honoring the sacrifice of our World War I predecessors. **Come on 29th, Let's Get Going and make this happen.**

Well known Verdun sculptor Jean Victor Stein has asked for the honor of creating it after he completes his work on the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris early next year. The current Mayor of Consenvoye, M. Andre Dormois and the town are excited that we may now finally live up to our end of the bargain to provide a monument to honor our Twenty-Niners who made the ultimate sacrifice in WWI. It will be carved from a 3-ton block of local stone, depicting a 29er advancing toward the Molleville Farm.

"Twenty-Nine Let's Go!"

The next step will be sketches of the monument prepared by Mn. Stein, followed by determination of the appropriate monument size and price.

The goal is to have it unveiled on 8 October 2024, a hundred and six years after the attack on the Heights of the Meuse that contributed to the Armistice, 11 November 1918.

By PNC Ted Shuey

## MG James W. Ring, TAG-VA

(Continued from page 13)

U.S. Southern Command; Operation Joint Forge in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Operation Iraqi Freedom in Southwest Asia; as well as to Operation Jump Start on the U.S. Southwest Border.

Williams, a lifelong Virginian and a 1985 graduate of Virginia Tech, earned his commission as a field artillery officer. He has served at every level beginning with a tour on active duty with the

3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and then transitioning to the Virginia Army National Guard in 1990. Williams served much of his military career as a traditional status National Guard Soldier and also built a career as a federal civil servant culminating as the Director of Training Support and Doctrine at the Combined Arms Support Command at Fort Lee, Virginia. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Management Science from Virginia Tech and has a Master of Arts in Management from Webster University and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

By Mike Vrabel | Virginia National Guard Public Affairs



# 104th Annual Reunion & Convention Hotel Information

## 19-22 October 2023



## HOTEL RESERVATIONS

**Delta Hotels – Marriott – Baltimore Hunt Valley**  
**245 Shawan Road**  
**Hunt Valley, MD 21031**

**For reservations call 844-781-7404. Hotel phone number is: 410-785-7000**

The group room rate is 159.00 plus tax (15.5%) per night for one guest. No charge for additional guest in the room. Reservations must be guaranteed with a credit card for one night. Check in time is 4 PM and check out time is 11 AM.

**BE SURE TO REFERENCE THE 29TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION ROOM BLOCK**

**MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS EARLY. WE ONLY HAVE A LIMITED NUMBER OF ROOMS**  
**CANCELLATION MAY BE MADE UP TO 3PM THE DAY PRIOR TO ARRIVAL WITHOUT CHARGES**

**CUT-OFF DATE FOR GETTING THE DISCOUNTED**  
**ROOM RATE IS SEPTEMBER 18, 2023.**





Chaplain's Comments:**CH (COL) Joel Jenkins  
US Army (RET)**

**A**s a former Division Chaplain of the 29th ID, I am keenly aware of the incredible accomplishments and sacrifices of the soldiers who have served in "our division." During my 27 years of service as an Army chaplain I've been privileged to wear several prestigious division "patches." These include the 29th ID, the 30th ID, and the 82nd ABN DIV.

It's been my honor to serve alongside some great Americans. In Iraq, while serving on the staff of General Martin Dempsey, I personally lost a number of "battle buddies." Over the years I have reached the conclusion that those who serve in America's military are, in many ways, a different breed for they have "paid their dues" to live in the land of liberty.

There is an undeniable, and unpayable debt that every citizen owes to those "who were willing to put his or her life on the line" for the good of the nation's citizenry. Organizations like our 29th Infantry Association exist as a reminder that if any free nation takes her liberties for granted, then those liberties are in certain peril.

Sometimes, when we speak of the 30% casualty rate of the 29th in WW I, and the almost 30,000 total casualties of the 29th in WW II, we may lose sight of the individuals and their families who make up those sacrifices. Recently, I read a National Park article on Gettysburg that reminded me of the numerous "sacred" sites that house the remains of such heroes. I've visited



American cemeteries from Hawaii to Arlington and to Colleville-sur-Mer, as well as Gettysburg.

The article pointed out Gettysburg National Cemetery houses 500 graves of fallen WW II soldiers, sailors and airmen. Twelve of the 500 perished on D-Day, 06 June 1944. These, along with their fallen comrades, were brought "back home" and reinterred at Gettysburg.

Of course, one irony is the fact President Eisenhower made Gettysburg his home. And yes, he is the one who ordered those twelve, along with the other thousands who died on that day, to storm the beaches of Normandy.

In an attempt to "put a face" on such loss, I share the name of Clairius Riggs. He was a 21 year old coal miner from Cambria County, PA and belonged to Company B, 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division. He and his company were just off the shore of France, eating their breakfast of steak, bread and gravy, while hearing Eisenhower's Order of the Day read aloud. Of

the 30 men on Clairius Riggs' landing craft, when the ramp went down, German machine gun fire almost immediately killed 28, including the young Pennsylvanian.

Clairius Riggs gave his life, and his death will forever continue to be his personal payment for America's future. Plus, every subsequent generation of his family will continue to pay "freedom's high cost."

Let us encourage others to join us in our worthy cause of "never, ever, forgetting" each of our 1.3 fellow Americans whose lives were offered in our nation's conflicts.

Our Association has a large geographical footprint and it's impossible to share the names of all of our fellow members in times of need. So in conclusion, I share the following prayer:

*Oh God, we ask that you guard and bless each of our fellow 29th ID Association members and their families.*

*Some of our number have recently finished their race, and others struggle with life challenging circumstances. We ask you to provide your loving grace and peace to any of our number who find themselves at a place of pain, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual.*

*We ask your blessing upon our nation, and that you might grant wisdom and compassion to those in positions of authority. We pray that you might call our nation back to a spirit of service, not only to God, but also to country.*

*We pray for our military members, especially those in harm's way, and we ask again, above all else, God bless America!*

*CH (COL) Joel Jenkins,  
US Army (RET)*

**Executive Director's Message:**

*(Continued from page 12)*

Will Mund reported that we currently have 2,477 members. There are 1,747 members assigned to the different posts and 730 unassigned who did not affiliate with a specific post.

Chaplain Jenkins spoke about several people to keep in our prayers: the deaths of BG (Ret) Joseph Goode, BG (Ret) Terry Tyler, and Past Commander of the 175th, Arthur Pulket. He also mentioned

the sick and distressed: Commander Snyder's wife, Lois, who had open heart surgery and fortunately is doing well; Post 78 Commander, Jim Hutts who had major surgery, CSM (Ret) Bob Kuykendall who had fallen and had major surgery on his femur and was undergoing rehab and to also remember his wife Charlotte who is experiencing some medical issues and undergoing treatment, PNC Wisch who is receiving chemo treatments, PNC Bill King and wife Juanita with Bill's fall and medical issues, and Houston Matney with his eye condition.

VC Kilbourne gave a brief update about the 29th Division Museum: the expansion completed thus far, and the plans for continued expansion and remodeling. Much will be done in preparation for the 80th Anniversary of D-Day. He stated the "WWII Room" will be totally redone and include more from the various units of the 29th Division.

Chaplain Jenkins closed the meeting with a heartfelt prayer.

*By Frank Armiger  
National Executive Director*

# The 29<sup>th</sup> Division and the Belfort Ruse

Much is rightly made of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive and Molleville Farm, but we tend to overlook what the Division did before October 1918. The men of the 29th had traveled to France on over fifteen different ships, arriving at the end of June. The Division reassembled at Prouthoy, north of Dijon for training. They were then assigned to the French XL Corps and planning began to move the men of the Blue and Gray to Alsace. Prouthoy was only about 90 miles away, but the movement did not run smoothly. The 29th replaced the 32nd Division, made up of National Guard regiments from Michigan and Wisconsin, which had arrived in France back in February.

On July 18, the Division Headquarters relocated to Valdoie, a small community just north of the Belfort Gap. Located on the border of France and Germany, the area had seen considerable fighting in 1914. It was now known as a "hot bed" of German spy activity as the Gap ran into German occupied Alsace. Over the next two months, the Americans would try and use these facts to their advantage.

On August 20th, General Pershing arrived in Belfort to inspect the 29th Division. Overall, he was impressed with the Division with one exception: the use of the British work salute. This salute allowed soldiers who were using both hands to acknowledge an officer through head movement rather than drop their work to give a hand salute. Brigadier General Charles G. Morton had seen this in France in 1917 and believed it increased efficiency. Pershing disagreed.

Word of Pershing's visit travelled quickly, as it was meant to. The next morning, the Germans launched an hour and a half artillery barrage starting at 4:40 am. This was followed by a raid of about 120 men. They targeted the line held by the 113th. Four soldiers were killed, 23 were wounded, and three members of the Regiment were captured.

Next came Marshal Petain, who at the time was seen as a great hero of France. His inspection of the 29th was followed by Major General Omar Bundy who commanded the 6th Army Corps. Alone, each visit was important, but together they created a stir on the German side of the line. According to the Divisional history, The General Staff had developed plans for the 29th with the 79th and 80th Divisions to make a full-scale attack on the Belfort Gap. This had then been sidelined in favor of preparations for the St. Mihiel Offensive where the 80th Division would play a part. Captain Arthur L. Conger, Jr, the head of the Information Division of the G2 Section, now took these plans to Belfort and conveniently left them at what is now known as the Grand Hôtel du Tonneau d'Or, where they quickly disappeared.

As part of the deception, the Signal troops of the Division were issued with additional radio sets borrowed from the French. New telephone exchanges and lines were laid so as to create the idea that there was at least an additional U.S. Division in the Belfort Sector. When these systems were

issued, a different coding system was utilized to further convince the Germans that the messages sent did not come from the Blue and Gray.

On the 24th, the Germans sent a smaller raiding part. Private Alexander was killed and Corporal Lane was shot in the mouth, but the German officer leading the raid was also severely wounded. In response, 100 handpicked men of K Company of the 115th and I Company of the 116th went on a counter raid at 4:45 on August 31st. Led by Captain Lee and Lieutenant Sprague of the 115th, the raid might have been successful, but a late friendly round landed in the midst of the advancing men. In the end, little was accomplished, but Sprague earned the D.S.C. for his heroism. The next raid came on the morning of September 7th and was led by the 113th. Unlike events from the week before, the bombardment obliterated the German frontline and the men from New Jersey were able to push deep into the enemy positions.

How successful was the ruse? Less than 24 hours into the St. Mihiel Offensive started, the Germans launched a long-range bombardment of the town of Montreux-Chateau, where Division Headquarters and a number of barracks were located. The Kaiser's generals were not taking any chances. During that September 13th attack, 7 soldiers of the 113th were killed and an additional 54 men wounded. The Germans then began gassing our lines. During their time in Belfort, the Division suffered 923 casualties, 586 were from gas. A majority of the latter came between September 13th and 23rd when the 38th French Division took over the sector. To the north, between September 12th and 15th, the Americans captured 200 square miles of territory and took 15,000 prisoners. The Germans outside of Belfort waited for an attack that never came. Like the First Army Group during Operation Overload, the 29th Division fooled their enemy. But unlike, the former, our men did so on the front-line risking everything.

*Dr. Edmund D. Potter, National Historian*

## Help Wanted Editor/Publisher

The 29th Division Association is searching for someone to assume the duties of Editor/Publisher of the *Twenty-Niner* newsletter beginning 1 January 2025.

They are also searching for someone who has the ability to paginate, i.e. process text documents and photos into a 'pdf' page format utilizing software similar to *Microsoft Publisher*.

Anyone interested, please contact current editor, William Mund at [duster197329@gmail.com](mailto:duster197329@gmail.com) or 443-529-4233.

# A March for the 29th

*By Richard Raymond, III, Post 64*

There's something really uplifting about a swingy parade march, with the band tootling away, and the troops keeping in good step. It's even more uplifting when the music is composed especially for your unit. The 29th "Blue and Gray" Division has its share of martial tunes, some of which are for marching, others for listening. And the songs are written in the spirit of the time,

by gifted and dedicated lyricists and composers. But to this date, and to my knowledge, none has yet been adopted as the official Pass in Review of the Blue and Gray. For ceremonial occasions, the only march played by our 29th Army Band is the Paul Anka tune from "The Longest Day". Isn't it time to consider an uplifting update?

At the Stonewall Brigade Museum in Verona, we find published histories of the Division in the Great War of 1914-18, in the last few pages appear the lyrics of "The Boys of Blue and Gray", complete with printed music. But the words are sadly out of date. And in a 78 rpm album at home, I have the recording of "Blue and Gray", as a song I think it lacks a certain something, "Whether men of Dixie or Yanks, We've got guns and planes and tanks." Tin Pan Alley stuff.

With this in mind, and being of a musical nature, as I watched the 1985 reactivation of the Division, I wished that there might be a rousing march for the troops to parade by. But as yet there being none, I sat down to write one. And during my AGR tour with the 1-111th FA (Norfolk), while attending Advanced NCOES, I took the music to the Bandmaster of the 77th Army Band at Ft. Sill. He very kindly turned me over to SSG Louis Leonhart, their arranger, and the good sergeant not only produced a bang-up, swingy arrangement, but had his band play and record it on tape!

Thrilled was not the word, when I heard it, I determined to offer it to the Division for their use. But alas, though I've sent them several hard-to-make copies on tape, and provided the lyrics (see below), so far no one at Division HQ seems to be interested in it. And I guess that all copies are gathering dust in someone's desk drawer. With this in mind, I've gone ahead and solicited our 29th Band to give it a try. For I still have the original score, and will make copies for all parts. In the lyrics I cite the Division's long history, the two-state combination, the many and varied missions, the promise of unstinting future service. Woven into the melody are echoes of "Maryland, My Maryland" and "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" (with a pox on Political Correctness).

Some day, perhaps, should my fond dream be realized, when the Division--or any part thereof-- is assembled for a formal ceremony, at the command "Pass in Review", the stirring strains of "The Men of Blue and Gray" will peal out over the field, and the ranks will move as one, shoulders back and heads high with pride.

## THE MEN OF BLUE AND GRAY \*

Pass in Review for  
29th "Blue and Gray" Infantry Division (Light)

*The Twenty-Ninth Division!  
We fly our flag with pride,  
Three hundred years of volunteers  
Are marching at our side,  
We carry out the mission,  
always lead the way  
Against the foe, our cry "Let's Go!",  
THE MEN OF BLUE AND GRAY!*

*We've marched with Meade or Jackson,  
Saved life in fire and flood,  
Made history in Normandy  
And sealed it with our blood,  
Stood guard in civil conflict,  
Lived out our Longest Day,  
No task too great for either state,  
THE MEN OF BLUE AND GRAY!*

*Wherever duty calls us  
We'll answer, as of old,  
Forevermore, in peace or war,  
Undaunted, strong and bold--  
From Baltimore to Richmond,  
From mountains to the Bay,  
We ever stand to guard our land,  
THE MEN OF BLUE AND GRAY!*

3-86

*\* These lyrics were written to accompany the original march music, composed by the author and arranged for band by SSG Louis Leonhart of the 77th U. S. Army Band, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma.*

**Save the date for the 104th Annual Reunion & Convention  
19-22 October 2023 — Delta Hotels - Marriott in Hunt Valley, MD**



# 79th D-Day observance draws 900 to D-Day Memorial



**World War II veterans are recognized at the commemoration of the 79th Anniversary of D-Day.**

Seventy-nine years have passed since D-Day, the invasion of Normandy which defined the Allied war effort in Europe. There are few participants from that epic event still with us, but the good news: there are many today who want to honor the valor, fidelity, and sacrifice of the D-Day generation.

The bad news: there are others among us for whom the date June 6, 1944 has little meaning. It is to this group, especially the young of this group, that the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA directs its programs. So the annual commemoration of the landings in Normandy every June 6th serves to remind folks what D-Day was—and what it meant.

This year, nearly 900 patriotic Americans gathered at the Memorial to recall the crucial events of 79 years ago and the heroism the day demonstrated. Included in the audience was a small group of veterans old enough to remember the events of WWII, and at least one who was actually there for the invasion of Normandy on D-Day.

Several interesting speakers were on hand to honor the day. Historian Kevin Hymel, author of a multivolume biography of General George Patton, addressed the role of the famous general in the Normandy campaign. Dr. John McManus, author of fourteen books on the Second World War, paid tribute to a fallen Ranger from Pointe du Hoc. McManus is host of the National D-Day Memorial's popular podcast "Someone Talked!" while Hymel has been a frequent guest.

Also on hand was George Patton "Pat" Waters, grandson of George Patton, who shared some inspiring quotes of his grandfather. The 29th Division was well-represented in the proceedings, with Major General Timothy Williams, retired Adjutant General of Virginia paying tribute to the WWII veterans on hand, and the 29th Division Band provided the music. Several members of the 29th Division Association served to lay wreaths in memory of the "Blue and the Gray" fallen. The Naval Attaché of France was also on hand to deliver thanks from his grateful nation.

Glenn Youngkin, governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, challenged the crowd to remember the import of the day: "Today... we come face to face with the inescapable truth that the freedom that we enjoy today, that the liberties we hold dear—and yet too often take for granted—were won in battle; gained and then protected by heroes who gave their lives so we could be free."

Afterwards, Governor Youngkin, General Williams, Major General Craig Crenshaw (USMC Ret., Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs for Virginia), and Memorial president April Cheek-Messier person-

ally greeted every World War II veteran who was in attendance—at least eight of them, some over 100 years old. One in particular was noted: Mr. Ernest Fulcher, a Navy veteran who 79 years before had been on a patrol craft off of Omaha Beach.

Other events through the day kept the Memorial grounds busy. Both McManus and Hymel signed copies of their books, and a recording of the "Someone Talked!" podcast was held before a live audience. There was also a ribbon-cutting to dedicate the Ridgway-Deming Walking Trail at the Memorial, the first phase of a wooded walking path around the Memorial grounds. All told, over 2000 people visited the Memorial through the day on June 6.

Next year will mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, and plans are already in the works for an extended weekend of events. Check the National D-Day Memorial's website, [www.dday.org](http://www.dday.org), frequently for updates on the 80th Anniversary plans as they develop.

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



**Governor Youngkin, April-Cheek Messier, & Secretary Crenshaw.**



# The FoG — Friends of the Guard

*Time for another update on the FoG's support of the Virginia National Guard Historical Foundation: Since our last report most of the effort has been focused on the volunteers restoring the M7B2 Priest we received in 2022. In the meantime we said goodbye to the Russian 76mm ZiS 3 cannon which was taken to the Petersburg Readiness Center in March 2023. In April we took possession of another M7B2 Priest to work on when the first one is finished. And the beat goes on...*

Priest number 2 arrives at the Joint Force Headquarters to be preserved and refurbished for display at another location.



Hard at work as the sun comes up, these volunteers are working on the south side of the Priest to clean off the rust and grime before the rust converter and paint can be applied.



And a surprise! Under several layers of paint we found this 1st Cav logo, most likely indicating Korean War service. This model of the Priest was modified for Korean War use by raising the gun to allow 65 degrees of elevation for reverse slope fire missions. That modification required also raising the armor on the "pulpit" for the 50 cal. to allow it to fire over the cannon. Further paint removal indicates a large unit crest was under the STAR. More to follow.



All cleaned up and ready to go to its new home at the Petersburg Army, the ZiS 3 is on a flatrack and ready for transport.

Now on display at the Petersburg Armory, the Russian 76mm ZiS 3 cannon is on a concrete pad made exactly for its dimensions. The concrete form boards are still in place.



Some of the hardworking crew in front of the first M7B2 Priest: From left Paul Rolon, Forrest Malcomb, MG Timothy Williams, Tom Michels, Doug Weiser, Steve Bourgeois, Craig Jewell, John Bleattler, and Brian Wood. Not pictured are Jim McClure and James Ebertowski who were in another area refurbishing some donated bookcases for use as part of the VANG HQ Reference Library.

## 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 (Color)	\$200	Quarter Page (B&W)	\$40
Full Page (B&W)	\$100	Eighth Page (B&W)	\$25
Half Page (B&W)	\$70		

**IMPORTANT:** The deadline for ads and boosters is **September 7, 2023**. 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 21228-4017  
443-529-4233  
[duster197329@gmail.com](mailto:duster197329@gmail.com)

**IMPORTANT:** "Camera Ready" copy is needed. Please make sure your ads are complete and legible. Any questions concerning ads etc., please contact William Mund at the above listed address. Thank You.

## Patrons

Commemorating our 104th Annual Reunion & Convention, 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.

_____	_____
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

This coupon, with your check, made out as indicated above, should also be received no later than **September 7, 2023**. Mail to William S. Mund, Jr. at the address above.



## Hunt Valley Convention Tour/Museum Details

**Battle of Baltimore Tour:** Led by our own Joe Balkoski, we will learn all about the British invasion force's attempt to capture the port city of Baltimore. After burning Washington, DC, the British set their eyes on Baltimore, a known refuge for privateers who harassed British trade ships. The tour will cover both the land and sea elements of the invasion. We will retrace the steps of the British force that landed at present-day Ft. Howard and proceeded up the Patapsco Neck toward Baltimore. We'll stop at the site at the Battle of North Point where Maryland militia including the 5th Regiment (present-day 175th Infantry) met and delayed the British force killing their commander. We will complete the land portion of the attack at Patterson Park where the American troops stopped the invasion at Hampstead Hill.

On the naval side of the invasion we will visit and tour Ft. McHenry where the unsuccessful bombardment led to Francis Scott Key's penning of the words to our national anthem as he saw the massive US flag still flying at dawn.

**B&O Railroad Museum:** We will spend an afternoon that includes a 30 minute tour at the museum and historic railway station exhibiting historic railroad equipment in Baltimore, MD. The museum has been called one of the most significant collections of railroad treasures in the world and has the largest collection of 19th-century locomotives in the U.S. The museum is located in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's old Mount Clare Station and adjacent roundhouse which is where, in 1829, the B&O began America's first railroad. Mount Clare is considered to be a birthplace of American railroading, as the site of the first regular railroad passenger service in the U.S., beginning on May 22, 1830. The museum houses collections of 19th- and 20th-century artifacts related to America's railroads.

## 104th Annual Convention October 19 – 22, 2023 ADVANCE REGISTRATION FORM

Please print and make your reservation early.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ Post: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ Post: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose separate sheet for more names.

Please select the events you plan to attend.

### **EACH PERSON MUST PAY A REGISTRATION CHARGE!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**NEW for this Year!** More ways to participate. Choose the day(s) that fit your schedule or budget. Come for the weekend or just Friday or Saturday. All registrations INCLUDE unlimited hospitality room visits for food and drinks, open bar during dinner events, convention souvenir gift bag and program, attendance at all conventions seminars and business meetings for the registration period you choose.

Registration Charge (Non-refundable)

**Both Days, Friday and Saturday.**

#: \_\_\_\_\_ (x) \$140.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Includes hors d'oeuvre reception on Friday and buffet dinner on Saturday.

**Or:**

Registration Charge (Non-refundable)

**for Friday, 20 October 2023.**

#: \_\_\_\_\_ (x) \$70.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Includes hors d'oeuvre reception on Friday.

Registration Charge (Non-refundable)

**for Saturday, 21 October 2023**

#: \_\_\_\_\_ (x) \$90.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Includes buffet dinner on Saturday.

Tour for Friday, 20 October 2023

**Staff Ride: Battle of Baltimore**

#: \_\_\_\_\_ (x) \$10.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

9AM-4PM, Lunch on your own at a location to be determined.

Museum tour for Saturday, 21 October 2023

#: \_\_\_\_\_ (x) \$20.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**B&O Railroad Museum**

1PM-4:30PM

**Grand total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Make checks payable to: **29th Division Association, Inc.** and mail to:

**William Mund, 441 Chalfonte Drive, Baltimore, MD 21228-4017**

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.

**See page 16 for hotel information and prices.**

Any questions, contact Will Mund at (443) 529-4233 or email at duster197329@gmail.com

**CUT-OFF DATE FOR REGISTRATIONS IS October 8, 2023**

**29th Division Association, Inc**  
PO Box 548  
Lutherville-Timonium, MD 21094

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Baltimore, MD

***Thank you, for your help***

**SAVING OUR PATCH!**



**Our most urgent cause in 2022 was to defend our famous and iconic Blue & Gray shoulder patch from the work of the DOD's Naming Commission to have the patch retired. We were successful in that effort.**