



63rd Infantry Division Newsletter

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Greetings to all friends of the 63d Infantry Division. This is the 66th edition of the 63rd Infantry Division Internet Newsletter. The first edition of this newsletter was posted in August 2000. Should you be interested in what all previous newsletters contained you can access them by going to the bottom of each newsletter and clicking on the reference to the previous newsletter.

INTRODUCTION

As many of you know, Fred Clinton passed away on 9 July 2020. Fred can never be replaced. I have the honor of carrying on the 63rd Infantry Division website. Many people asked me if I would continue the Newsletter. So here goes.

My stepfather was Ralph G. Fox, Jr. He served in Cannon Company and later I Company of the 254th Infantry Regiment. He told me many stories of his experiences during training at Camp Van Dorn, combat in France and Germany, and occupation duty in Germany. As I heard the stories, I realized that the history of the 63rd Infantry Division is little noted in the history books. I tried to learn more about it and share the story with others.

Sadly, there are very few veterans of the 63rd Infantry Division still living. Many of you reading this newsletter are their family members. Like Fred, I am willing to help family and friends of 63rd Infantry Division veterans learn more about their service. I am also willing to help family members with the information needed to obtain awards and decorations for their veterans. In many cases these are unclaimed. See the Bulletin Board on the website for more information. Fred sent me his massive historical files which have been compiled over the years with countless hours of work on the part of dedicated veterans and others. I can usually find the basic service information for any member of the 63rd Infantry Division. I have already fulfilled a number of requests.

Like Fred, I am interested in receiving photos and other information about veterans of the 63rd Infantry Division. With your permission, I will publish them on the website.

He attained the rank of Colonel and retired from the Army after 31 years of service. His military decorations include the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Legion of Merit, four Bronze Star Medals, an Air Medal, three Commendation Medals, a Joint Service Commendation Medal, a French *Croix de Guerre* with Palm, a Meritorious Unit Citation and eleven battle stars. His foreign awards include four from the Vietnamese government, one from the Korean government and five from the French government including the Legion of Honor. He was named an honorary citizen of Jepsheim, France for his work on peace and reconciliation. He was a leading advocate for the construction of the *Croix du Moulin* memorial near Jepsheim.

He was a 63rd Infantry Division Historian and founded the 63rd Infantry Division website twenty years ago. He maintained extensive records of the division history and assisted countless veterans and their families in recovering World War II service records. He was instrumental in helping them receive awards and decorations.

Colonel Fred Clinton devoted his life to the service of others. He was much loved and respected by his buddies, friends and family. He will be profoundly missed.

GENERAL FREDERICK KROESSEN

It is a privilege to carry on the work of Fred and his predecessors.

Jim Sellers

IN MEMORIAM

2020 has been a sad year. The 63rd Infantry Division has lost more of its dwindling number of veterans.

COLONEL FRED CLINTON



Fred Clinton was born in Boston, MA on 27 July 1927. He passed away on 9 July 2020 in his home in Alexandria, VA.

He spent his early years in Norfolk, VA. In 1943 he enlisted in the Army at the age of 16. He served in the 63rd Infantry Division from October 1943 to August 1945. While in the division he was assigned to B Company, 363rd Medical Battalion; Ranger Platoon and D and B Companies of 254th Infantry Regiment. He fought in major engagements including the battle of Jepsheim, France and the penetration of the Siegfried Line near Ensheim, Germany.

In 1950 he fought in Korea with the 3rd Infantry Division. In Korea he attained the rank of First Sergeant and was appointed to the Army Adjutant General Corps.



and his wife narrowly escaped an assassination attempt by left-wing German terrorists in September 1981. Kroesen retired from the Army in 1983. "He was wise, caring, unselfish," retired General Carter Ham said in a statement. "One of the Army's great leaders. I will miss him. We will all miss him." Kroesen penned a book, *General Thoughts: Seventy Years with the Army*, published in 2003 by the Association of the US Army. (Quote from *Vietnam* magazine, August 2020, vol. 33, no. 2, p 12, provided by William Bailey)

Fred Clinton had the following comments on General Kroesen:

"Fritz" Kroesen was not just a four-star General, he was a GREAT GENERAL - an officer that put his soldiers first and was a gentleman through and through. General Kroesen arrived in the 63rd Division in June 1944 as a brand new 2nd Lieutenant directly from Officer Candidate School in Fort Benning, GA. By the end of January 1945 he commanded E Company, 254th Infantry Regiment. All officers in the company except 2nd Lieutenant Kroesen had been wounded or killed in action so he assumed command. He remained in command until the end of the war and by that time he was a Captain. He went on to become the first graduate of OCS to ever become a four-star General.

Although I did not know him during WWII since I was in D Company, 254th Infantry Regiment, I was fortunate enough to meet him at one of our division reunions. As it turned out, I found that he lived only a few miles from me in Alexandria, VA and we talked from time to time on the phone and by email. I recall one time just after I had heart surgery at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, I looked up from my bed one day and who should be there but General Kroesen. He had heard from Bill Scott that I was in the hospital and he decided to visit me and show his concern. There are other

In 1952 he returned to the United States and was promoted to Second Lieutenant. He was assigned to the 37th Infantry Division at Camp Polk, LA. He then served with the 10th and 2nd Infantry Divisions at various locations overseas and in the United States.

In 1968 he was assigned to Vietnam where he served as Adjutant General for the 4th Infantry Division.

On his return from Vietnam he served with STRATCOM Europe and as a department director at the Army Institute of Administration at Fort Harrison, IN.

During his military service he attended the Army Command General Staff College and the Army War College. He also received a degree from Benedictine College in Atchison, KS

stories I could tell about him. Just know that if I were ever a General in the Army I would want to be just like him.

In his book, *General Thoughts: Seventy Years with the Army*, General Kroesen wrote two articles about the battle of Jebbsheim.

[Internet Newsletter #65](#)

[Internet Newsletter #67](#)

[Home](#)