



★ CAMP BLANDING ★ CAMP VAN DORN ★

Blood and Fire

63rd Division Association, Inc.

• ARDENNES / ALSACE • RHINELAND • CENTRAL EUROPE •

VOL. 63, NO. 1

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and much more!

**If You Had a Great Time at the 62nd
 Reunion then just wait until
 August 18th - 20th, 2011
 for the 63rd Reunion**

**63rd Infantry Division Association Reunion's
 63rd Anniversary
 August 18th - 20th, 2011
 Crowne Plaza - Indianapolis Airport
 2501 South High School Road
 Indianapolis, Indiana 46241**

The Crowne Plaza Indianapolis Airport is the site of our 2011 reunion. It is a newly remodeled hotel near the Indianapolis Airport. The hotel offers a free shuttle to and from the airport and free parking. The room rate is \$99.00 plus state and city tax and includes a hot breakfast buffet in the hotel restaurant.

As mentioned in the President's Letter, you know that the 63rd Reunion will be one day shorter than in the past. The reunion will be as follows:

Thursday, August 18th, 2011

Registration
 Meet Your Buddies

Friday, August 19th, 2011

An Afternoon of Entertainment
 Remember Vaudeville? Get ready for an entertaining afternoon - followed by BINGO and prizes

Cocktails and Dinner Theater with a few surprises

Saturday, August 20th, 2011

Men's Meeting
 Women's Meeting
 Memorial Service
 Cocktails, Dinner, Dance

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Blood and Fire

Published by the 63rd Division Association to perpetuate the memory of our fallen comrades, to preserve the Esprit de Corps of the division, to assist in promoting an everlasting peace.

Three Issues Annually

ELECTED 2011 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT EDWARD FOWLE - FA862 332 Dayton Ave. Springfield, OH 45506 937-325-1990	SECOND VICE PRESIDENT JOHN "JACK" R. LINSOTT - A 253 18290 Timber Trail Drive Marysville, OH 43040 937-642-6576
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT JUDITH SCHAEFER - Associate 6152 George Fox Drive Galloway, OH 43119 614-878-6440	NATIONAL SECRETARY/TREASURER DONNA LaCOSSE P.O. Box 86 Morocco, IN 47963 219-285-2861
REUNION TREASURER MARY FRAN COLLIER - Associate 10812 S. Kenneth Ave., Oak Lawn, IL 60433 708-425-7785	

APPOINTED 2011 OFFICERS

HISTORIAN WILLIAM J. SCOTT - E 254 407 S. Walnut Street Sycamore, IL 60178 (815) 895-3967	ASSISTANT HISTORIAN KARIN FROBERG-MARZANO 180 Welsh Lane Granville, OH 23023 (740) 587-1705
WEBMASTER FREDERICK CLINTON - D 254 102 S. Jenkins Street Alexandria, VA 22304 (703) 751-7548	ASSISTANT WEBMASTER MICHAEL THOMPSON 7648 Lake Shore Drive Quinton, VA 23141 (804) 932-9688

BLOOD AND FIRE EDITOR
DONNA LaCOSSE
P.O. Box 86 - Morocco, IN 47963
(219) 285-2861

DIRECTORS

Term Ending August 2011

Edgar Moutoux, 505 E. 82nd Street Apt. 4G, New York, NY 10028 Telephone: 212-744-4418.....	253
John Downs, PO Box 254, Gilmantown, NH 03237	254
Wayne Armstrong, 271 Burns Drive, Westerville, OH 43082 Telephone: 614-890-5455.....	255
Gale Hammond, 4171 Marquis Way, Salt Lake city, UT 84124 Telephone: 801-277-7056.....	FA 863
Leonard Zimmerman, 3715 Ridgfield Rd., Lansing, MI 48906 Telephone: 517-321-2950.....	Sp. Trps.
Theodore Paulsen, 5248 Valley View Rd., Rancho Paos Verdes, CA 90275 Telephone: 310-541-2575.....	USAR

Term Ending August 2012

Herman Fabiani, 820 Balmoral Court, Inverness, FL 34453 Telephone: 352-637-2290.....	253
William Byrnes, 9645 Kedvale, Oaklawn, IL 60453 Telephone: 708-346-0632.....	254
David Montgomery, 114 Buckhorn Rd., Derby, KS 67037 Telephone: 316-788-2716.....	255
Archie Kumasaka, 2002 Windrow Dr., Princeton, NJ 08540 Telephone: 609-919-9649.....	HQ 863
Howard VanSchoor, 8192 Forest Lane, Mentor, OH 44060 Telephone: 440-946-9330.....	SIG 563
Alfred M. Diaz, 1254 Camino del Sur, San Dimas, CA 91773 Telephone: 626-966-8001.....	USAR

Term Ending August 2013

Vern Altberg, 289 W. Jamison Cir. #5, Littleton, CO 80120 Telephone: 720-283-4486.....	253
Leroy Bird, 4255 Sycamore St. SE, Iowa City, IA 52240	254
Kenneth Erickson, 35373 W. Creek Rd., Wallace, NE 69169 Telephone: 308-387-4518.....	255
Marsh Allen, 7714 Chinhook Ave., Gig Harbor, WA 98335 Telephone: 253-851-3843.....	FA 861
Thomas Chatham, 74 Darby Cay, Vero Beach, FL 32966 Telephone: 561-778-2699.....	QM 63
Beverly Houghton, 11307 Martha Ann Drive, Los Alamitos, CA 90720-3805 Telephone: 562-596-1408.....	USAR

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT ...

Edward F. Fowle, Jr.

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and are looking forward to a great and prosperous New Year.

As 2010 ended and I looked back on the 63 years of the life of our Association, I am grateful for all the efforts by many of our leaders. They, by their desire to keep alive the memory of our fallen comrades, are what made our Association grow and become one of the best known.

As you all know, our Division was deactivated in Boston in late 1945. The results of our war record spawned the activation of the 63rd Division as a National Guard Division in California.

The passing of time over the next 60-plus years, this new organization grew and changed many times, but the Blood and Fire Patch and what it has stood for remained. Their activities continued to make their grandfathers proud and I think that "Louie" would be proud to also call them "Hot Shots."

We were pleased to have several of the members of the 63rd ARCOM attend our 62nd reunion. Al Diaz has been attending, and has been a member of the Board of Directors for several years.

Tom Christianson of the 63rd Regional Support Command, and the Command Historian, was with us at the reunion and informed us of the 63rd U.S. Army Reserve Center in Moffett Field, California. This is a large new museum and the history of the World War II 63rd Division will have a large display in the museum.

We are looking for a copy of the 63rd Division Chronicles Book to place in that display. If anyone has a copy they would like to donate, please let us know.

This new facility is to be dedicated February 16, 2011 and they would like for you to attend.

I hope to see all of you at the 63rd reunion in Indianapolis, Indiana in August.

**2011 REUNION
AUGUST 18-19-20
INDIANAPOLIS, IN**

From the editor . . .

Donna LaCosse

As you all know by this time, I did not remove your name from the mailing list when I should have had. I followed orders from the powers that be! Most of you did not receive your November issue of the magazine until well into January, so I call this our bonus time!

I scratched your back, now you scratch mine! This is how it works - I sent you the February issue of the *Blood and Fire* so now you have to send me your subscription fee before May 1 or you will not receive the May issue.

Twenty-two copies of the November issue were returned to me because the members moved and left no forwarding address and neglected to tell me they had moved or were moving. Each magazine returned to me costs fifty-cents so you need to be current with your mailing address.

Twelve members did move and did not tell me they were moving but the post office forwarded those magazines and sent me the forwarding address. Each notification of a forwarding address also costs the Association fifty cents. It doesn't take long to add up into a nice tidy amount.

Maybe the above explanation will make it easier for you to understand why, as a Life Member, you are being asked to help with the cost of the publication. The Board had no choice last August when they decided to offer the *Blood and Fire* by subscription only.

And, I must tell you, I am just about ready to shake the bushes for more war-life stories!! Be sure you get your story ready and send it to me before it is too late to tell your story, or you have forgotten what happened. Others like to read about you and your family and your experiences, so either write your own story, or tell it to someone who can get your words on paper and then send it to me. It can be long or short, I don't care, just so I have your story for the magazine.

**PLAN NOW
TO ATTEND THE
2011
REUNION**

A Memo from the Secretary . . .

Donna LaCosse

Wow! This has certainly been a busy time for me. After the November issue of the *Blood and Fire* finally found its way to your mailbox, my mailbox has been overflowing almost every day. In fact, I had to take time away from the mail in order to get this February issue ready to go to press. So, if the check you sent me for your dues and subscription fees does not clear the bank when you think it should, have kind thoughts about me and allow me time to get your checks entered in the ledger before you tar and feather me and run me out of office!

I am giving all of you a second chance - my instructions were to remove your name from the mailing list if I did not hear from you by January 1. Well we all know that most did not receive their magazine until way past January 1! And, some of you did not understand what you were to do, so I am extending the time and expect to hear from a lot more of you before May 1, 2011.

I am sorry I did not make my explanation about the changes the board made in August more clear, because it was most evident from the messages you sent with your fees that you were not sure what you were supposed to do.

So, here again are the instructions that I hope are more clear to you.

Members who paid a Life Membership of \$40 many years ago should only send a \$15.00 subscription fee in order to receive the *Blood and Fire* magazine for one year. This also applies to the widows of Life Membership members.

If you cannot find your Life Membership card or don't remember where you put the card, or if the card has crumbled to confetti in your wallet, please let me know and I will issue you a new card. I have a record of all Life members so you will receive the same number you have always had. By so doing, you will remember what to do when December comes and it is time to subscribe for 2012.

Annual members, those who pay dues each year, will now pay \$10 membership plus the \$15.00 subscription fee. There are several of you who did not pay your dues for 2010 or for 2011 and that money should be sent to me as soon as possible. If you are in doubt, call me.

Each year when you pay your dues, I send you a membership card with a number on it and a letter telling you the number on your card and the year it was paid. The reason I send this is so you can file the

A word from your buddies . . .

253rd Regiment

Clement Capasso, E Company: My wife, Carmela, passed away on August 24, 2010. I live in Toms River, New Jersey and am doing fine.

Carl Anderson, E Company: I served with E Company from 1943 until the end of the war. I transferred to the 29th Regiment in August 1945 in Frankfort, Germany to a burned out unit for General Eisenhower and General Patton. Left for home in April 1946.

Robert F. Bennett, F Company: Phyllis and I have been married 64 years and are still in good health. We are active in veteran's clubs and church. See you all in Indianapolis!

James Mauldin, K Company: Norma and I are doing well. We live in an assisted living facility near one of our sons. I always enjoy the *Blood and Fire* newsletter and extend best New Year's wishes to all!

Martin Beer, L Company: Hope to make another reunion in the near future.

254th Regiment

Brewster Arms, B Company: Growing old isn't a lot of fun but it beats the alternative!!

Preston E. Johnson, B Company: My wife, Billie, died in December 2006. We were married almost 61 years. I am still active and do what I want to do!

Gerald R. Mattson Jr., B Company: I will be 85 on March 14 and Raman will be 84 on February 15. Our 65th wedding anniversary is July 18, 2011. We have eight children, 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. We still caretake the 20 unit apartments where we live, plus 24 more units a few blocks away. I walk between one and a half to four miles each day. That keeps us fairly busy! It helps to get our rent at a reduced rate!

Samuel L. Rhyner, D Company: I am 85 years old, married to Ida 14 years. My first wife died in 1995, after 50 years of marriage. I'm retired from the Army for 22 years and have been retired since 1972. I am having another hip replacement in February. Hope I can make the reunion this year!

Leo Brophy, F Company: I am now 95 years old. I am toughing it out and can still drive during daylight hours. Hope to make it to the reunion in Indy, the good Lord willing.

Manuel Rott, G Company: I was 88 years old on September 7, 2010. Health-wise, not too bad. I've had two hip replacements, triple by-pass and a pacemaker. I have been married to the same woman for 64 years! Eva and I have two sons, one daughter, and three grandchildren. I landed in France with Captain Lenig. I hope he is still around. When I entered the service, they sent me to Fort Riley, Kansas - Horse Cavalry - I never rode a horse in my life! I went to the service on May 12, 1943 and my mother passed away fifteen days later on May 27, 1943. I have never been to a reunion, always something came up. I kept in touch with some of my buddies. After Fort Riley, I went to Fort Brown, Texas, also Horse Cavalry. Orders came down asking if anyone would like to go to the Infantry. That's how I got to Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi. Please try and keep the *Blood and Fire* coming - I enjoy the magazine!

Gerrit Hoeksema, M Company: Mae and I are both still in our own home. We have been married 64 years, have 12 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. One grandson is a 2nd Lt. at Fort Benning, Georgia in Officer's Training.

Richard D. Kogler, M Company: My wife, Frances and I tied the knot May 4, 1946. Please add our anniversary date to the list of married people.

255th Regiment

Franklin T. Hepner, A Company: I am still kicking but not quite as high! I will be 88 in February; still enjoying our poker games two days a week and going to casinos two or three times a week to eat and try to win a few bucks!

Joseph Palmer, C Company: My wife, Nancy, fractured her back last July and we were unable to attend the August reunion. She is feeling much better now, but with surgery and nature, it just takes time to heal.

David Montgomery, E Company: Betty and I are doing good for our age! Hope to see you all in Indianapolis, Indiana in August!

Paul E. Schmidt, H Company: I will turn 85 in April. Betty and I will be married 62 years on May 14. Our health is good and we are thankful for that.

Harvey T. Heinly, I Company: Landis Homes sent this message telling us that Harvey has to have personal care and his wife, Anna, is suffering with Parkinsons.

A word from your buddies . . .

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Francis E. Klott, I Company: My wife and I will celebrate our 39th wedding anniversary on February 15, 2011. Maybe we can make it to the reunion this year. I have never been to one!

Robert Titterington, K Company: I am a retired school teacher and still in good health. I work with seniors in my church to keep busy.

Robert E. McClurken, L Company: I am Battlefield commissioned and stationed at Camp Blanding, Florida. I am vice-president of the Philadelphia Chapter.

Engineers 263

Calvin L. Stevens: Our family had six boys in the service for World War II; five were in combat. I fought in France and Germany; four of my brothers fought in the Pacific and our younger brother fought in Korea. And, we all survived! Our mother lived to be 96 after writing hundreds of letters. We were surely blessed.

Frank Duva: I was a welder in Headquarters 263, Combat Engineer Company, in the motor pool. When I was discharged in 1946, I worked at the Reliance Electric Company for 34 years as a welder. I retired in 1981. I will be 92 in May 2011, and I am starting to slow down!

Anti Tank

Henry Shartzter, 253: I had my 97th birthday the last day of December and celebrated with my family. I enjoy my T.V. and exercising twice a week at the Senior Citizen's Building. Happy New Year to all!

Paul Benson, 253: I am 91 years old and able to live alone. I lost my wife in 2000. Nita and I had four children. We were married in Kentucky when I was with the 98th Division in Florida. Then I went to Camp Van Dorn to train with the 63rd Division.

Ralph Fink, 254: I was 85 on January 6 and in good condition. I have played three different sports in Senior games. In 2009, I got a silver medal in badminton in the National Tournament in San Francisco. I enjoy the *Blood and Fire*. Keep up the good work!

Harold Black, 255: My health is bad and I can't attend reunions but I enjoy getting the *Blood and Fire*. Thank you.

John Morgan, 255: I got a new (Blood and Fire) hat and I love it. I wore it with pride on the Honor trip to the WW II monument in Washington D.C. earlier in November.

RECON

Sam Fittante: Sorry to hear that 2011 will be the last reunion! I have been a member for over 50 years and attended many reunions which we enjoyed. I was selected to go on the Honors Flight in November 2010 to Washington D.C. I visited the WW II, Korean and Vietnam Memorials, Arlington Cemetery, Washington Monument and the Capitol. Very nice and well-planned trip.

(Note: it has not been decided whether or not 2011 will be the last reunion for this division. There are still people who can travel and want the reunions to continue.)

Irving Gittelman: I am in my 86th year and retired from a practice of Pediatric Dentistry. Nathalie and I are in our 58th year of marriage. We met at the University of Illinois shortly after my return from Europe.

Field Artillery

Edward Stolpa, 781: I am on a defibrillator and I have a pacemaker.

Wilmot G. Presley, 861: I logged in the Redwoods for 50 years. I am 85 years old and doing very well. I live the furthest west of the 48 states with the giant Redwoods!

Jacob Pompe, 863: I'm doing fine at 88 years of age!

HEADQUARTERS

Moses Box, 253: I am retired from the Air Force. Thanks for taking care of this for the Division.

David R. Eveland, 254: Nellie and I will celebrate and enjoy our 63rd wedding anniversary April 23, 2011.

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NOTICE

It is no longer necessary for Life Members to pay a surcharge of five dollars annually. That policy was in effect for one year, and that year ended in 2004.

OUR HISTORY: THEN AND NOW

by Bill Scott, 13-Feb-11

e-mail: wjs631@comcast.net

As I have said before most of our new inquiries and orders come from relatives of 63rd men who have seen the details on the website, and then contacted me over the internet or by mail.

This has been particularly true in this fall and winter season. I have now received some of the biggest orders ever from relatives. The biggest ever has been for \$150 and an offer to pay for the shipping. One other day there were two orders that totaled over \$250. All this was mixed with orders of all smaller sizes that add up to a lot of work to get ready for mailing. The most recent order was from Germany.

When you mix this situation with the health and rehab problems that our age range now has you can see how difficult it is to get orders out quickly when you mix the big snowfall numbers into the picture.

It also means that there is no time in this time period to do the kind of research needed to get the existing records and rosters examined for problems.

I'm not complaining while trying to show the real situation that I face in the effort to help people trying to get more information on themselves or the relatives that were in the 3rd Infantry Division with us.

I'm sure that Donna LaCrosse faces even greater

problems with the various duties that she has taken on for us.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Thought you might be interested in learning just how many men were on the membership roster. This total number of men are veterans only. It does not include the Associate members.

As of January 1, 2011, there were 235 annual dues paying veteran members and 828 veterans who are Life Members. That makes a total of 1063.

Since then we have had numerous deaths and people who have moved and not sent a forwarding address, so as we go to press, that total figure is not accurate.

NOTICE

Smitty's Reunion will take place in March. Contact Herman Fabiani at 1-352-637-2290 for all the information pertaining to this reunion.

Secretary message . . .

information and when December "happens" you will remember when your fees need to be paid for the next year.

If this is still not clear to you, then call me and I will see if I can confuse you more with an explanation on the telephone, or in an answer to your e-mail!

I know, I talked about the *Blood and Fire* magazine in this column and not the *Blood and Fire* column, but being responsible for relating what the Board wants me to relate to you falls on my secretary shoulders. Good thing I have broad shoulders!!

Enough on that subject - please remember the annual reunion is in August in Indianapolis and we hope to see a larger attendance this year. The girls have worked hard in planning the 63rd reunion of the 63rd Infantry Division Association and I would not like to see their efforts be in vane.

If you are interested in keeping the reunions going, then come to the reunion and voice your opinions, or if you are unable to attend but like hearing about what went on at the reunion, write me

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

so I can report your desires when I attend the Board meeting at the reunion.

I hope this winter has not been as long for you as it has been for me! I have seen "white" for so long I can hardly remember what color grass is!! The crops should be extra healthy this year with all the moisture we have had the past few months!

Hope you all stay healthy and happy, and think spring!

**send all articles
and photos to:
Donna LaCrosse
PO Box 86
Morocco, IN 47963**

-----COMPUTER DATA PRINTOUTS AND COPIES-----

PLEASE PRINT!

UNIT #1 UNIT #2 COST/EACH
Company, Battery, HQ?

1943-45 Unit Roster of Men (W/rank, serial no., dates, medals, casualties, deaths, etc.).....	_____	_____	\$4 ea. _____
Today's Unit Address-Phone list (for members only).....	_____	_____	\$2 ea. _____
1945 Unit Medals List (w/WWII home towns).....			\$2 ea. _____
1944-1945 Unit Itineraries (in Bn. group).....			\$3 ea. _____
Alphabetical List of CAMP BLANDING CADRE MEN with data.....			\$5 ea. _____
Today's Address & Phone List of CAMP BLANDING CADRE MEN (for members only)			\$2 ea. _____
Today's Address & Phone List by State.(for members only).....	State #1 _____	State #2 _____	\$2 ea. _____
1,030 Killed in Action, Died of Wound. & Non-Battle Death	ALPHA		\$5 ea. _____
KIA, DOW, NBD. with all known men shown and sorted by-----	ALL UNITS.....		\$5 ea. _____
KIA, DOW, NBD, best viewpoint	Sorted by' DATE, organization, unit		\$5 ea. _____
Casualty Summary compiled to date for ALL units with 8 categories.....			\$3 ea. _____
2007 Alpha list #35 with data on casualties, deaths, units, serial numbers, cadre, 70,258 names.....			\$74 ea. _____

-----MAP COPIES-----

11" x 17" 1:1,000,000 map of entire area of 63rd combat WITHOUT trail of 63rd units.			\$1 ea. _____
1:200,000 1939 map of ALSACE. Lorraine, & SAAR areas thru Siegfried Line area.....			\$5 ea. _____
1:50,000 map of COLMAR Pocket & Vosges Mtn. area in France for 254th guys			\$5 ea. _____
1:20,000 map of SW 1/4 of COLMAR map area w/Kaysersberg, etc. for 254th guys			\$5 ea. _____
Three 1:25,000 maps from S. of Sarreguemines to Saarbrucken w/great detail			\$13 set _____
Two 1:25,000 maps of the 63rd's SIEGFRIED LINE area w/forts, from 1/45 aerial photos w/legends.....			\$13 set _____
1:27,000 colored map of the 63rd's SIEGFRIED LINE area w/forts and 103 hour battle penetration			\$7 ea. _____
1:25,000 BLIESKASTEL map that shows Kirkel, Wurzbach, & Biesingen			\$5 ea. _____
1:100,000 KAISERSLAUTERN map that shows Homburg, Langmeil & Grunstadt.....			\$5 ea. _____
1:100,000 KARLSRUHE map that shows Bad Wimpfen, Heilbronn & Stuttgart.....			\$5 ea. _____
1:100,000 ELLWANGEN map from Waldenburg & Schwabisch Hall to Oberbobingen.....			\$5 ea. _____
1:25,000 MOGGLINGEN map shows from Obergroningen to Oberbobingen.....			\$5 ea. _____
8.5" x 14" 1:250,000 map shows from Mannheim to Rothenberg and Heilbronn			\$1 ea. _____

-----HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS-----

2nd Bn.-253 4-12 April 1945 events, rosters & Pres. Unit Citation award			\$14 ea. _____
Regimental histories for January-May 1945 in binders. copied from monthly combat reports:			
253rd ___, 254th ___, 255th ___:.....			\$13 ea. _____
General Order Copies for awards to individuals, such as badges and medals			NEW \$2 ea. _____
Reprint of 135-page 1986 softcover book. "With the 63rd Infantry Div. in WWII"			
by Col. James E. Hatcher of 254th and 255th			\$20 ea. _____
Unbound Xerographic copy of 1945 history & index for "The Trail of 254 Thru Blood & Fire"			
by Harris Peel, Vernon Kile, Algernon Keith & John Sontag.....			\$7 ea. _____
Bound English copy, w/o photos, of "LA BATAILLE DE JEBSHEIM" booklet of French residents' statements about the horrors.			
Written by Jean Scherer, and translated by Wm. C. Carter. 140 pages.....			\$20 ea. _____
Unbound inkjet color copy of 1945 "Victory in Europe" booklet.....			\$5 ea. _____
1943-45 combat history of 263rd Engineer Combat Bn. by Bill Snyder in binder.....			\$50 ea. _____
Jan-Apr 45 Combat Unit Journals of Hq 1st Bn-254 by date, hour, minute in binder.....			\$10 ea. _____
Ray Restani's Report of A-254 Attack at Eschringen, Germany, 15-Mar-45 in binder.			\$8 ea. _____
Short 1943-45 History of Hq 1st Bn-255 with "after action report" in binder.....			\$8 ea. _____
Unbound Germany's Siegfried Line history, details, drawings, & photos.....			\$5 ea. _____
Unbound History 7th U.S. Army, 15-Dec-44 to 25-Jan-45, "The Other Bulge"			\$4 ea. _____
Unbound 1944 "I am a Doughboy" booklet on inf. co. & plt. equipment, weapons, & training			\$4 ea. _____
-----PATCHES, can be ironed on or sewn on caps, jackets, etc.-----			
(A) 3.5" x 2.3" 63rd Infantry Division for uniform.....			\$4 ea. _____
(B) 2.5" x 1.45" 63rd Infantry Div. with "BLOOD & FIRE" below.....			\$3 ea. _____
(C) 2.66" x 2.35" 63rd w/"BLOOD & FIRE" and "63rd INFANTRY DIV." below			\$4 ea. _____
(D) 2.25" high x 3.5" wide US flag			\$3 ea. _____
(E) 2.5" high x 3.5" wide 63rd Division Siegfried Line sign patch.....			\$5 ea. _____
(F) 3.5" high x 3.5" wide 253rd Infantry Regiment w/motto "QUINTA ESSENTIA" (The Quintessence).....			\$5 ea. _____
(G) 3.6" high x 3.4" wide 254th Infantry Regiment w/motto "DEATH BEFORE DEFEAT"			\$5 ea. _____
(H) 3.5" high x 3.0" wide 255th Infantry Regiment with motto "COR FERREUM" (Heart of Steel)			\$5 ea. _____

-----1.2" CREST PINS w/2 clutch pins-----

253rd Infantry Regiment with motto.. "QUINTA ESSENTIA" (The Quintessence).....Not avail.
 254th Infantry Regiment with motto.. "DEATH BEFORE DEFEAT".....\$5 ea. ___
 255th Infantry Regiment with motto.. "COR FERREUM" (Heart of Steel).....\$5 ea. ___
 Colored pin description w/honors & 63rd Div. emblems.....253rd ___, 254th ___, 255th ___ \$1 ea.-

-----HAT PINS & BOLATIES-----

63rd Inf. Div. Patch pin ___ Combat Infantryman Badge pin ___ Combat Medic Badge pin ___\$4 ea. ___
 Ranger Badge pin ___, Silver Star Medal pin ___, Bronze Star Medal pin ___\$4 ea. ___
 Purple Heart Medal pin ___, Presidential Unit Citation Badge pin ___, Infantry pin ___\$4 ea. ___
 MP pin ___, POW Medal pin ___, Field Artillery pin ___, Corps of Engineers pin ___\$4 ea. ___
 Quartermaster pin ___, Signal Corps pin ___, Ruptured Duck pin ___, 7th Army Patch pin ___\$4 ea. ___
 Europe Africa Middle East pin ___, WWII Victory Medal pin ___, Army of Occupation pin ___\$4 ea. ___
 Full Size Expert Infantry Badge ___, Full Size Presidential Unit Citation Badge ___\$5 ea. ___
 63rd Inf. Div. deluxe bola tie with black cord ___, gold cord ___\$10 ea. ___

-----UNIT & ORGANIZATION AWARDS COPIES-----

Presidential Unit Citations copy: 2nd Bn.-253rd ___, 1st Bn.-254th ___, 3rd Bn.-254th ___\$2 ea. ___
 Pres. Unit Citation narrative for 3rd Bn. and Co. A & B-253rd Inf\$1 ea. ___
 French Croix deGuerre w/Palm for 254th Inf:.....8.5" x 11" \$5 ea. ___

-----COMPACT DISKS FOR MICROSOFT WINDOWS SYSTEMS-----

95 of 1943-45 *Blood & Fire* issues ___, 63rd Div. General Orders for medals, etc. ___,.....\$10 ea. ___
 853 page updated "Chronicles" history book w/photos, rosters, alpha list.....\$15 ea. ___
 Histories w/photos, rosters, & other info: 253rd ___, 254th ___\$12 ea. ___
 255th ___, All Artillery ___, 263rd Engineer & 363 Medical Bns. ___\$12 ea. ___
 Special Troops: HQ&HQ Co., Band, MP, QM, Recon, Signal, Ordnance ___\$12 ea. ___
 Combat Months Unit Morning Reports 12/44 - 5/45: 253rd ___, 254th ___, 255th ___,\$10 ea. ___
 Artillery ___, 263rd Engineer & 363 Medical Bns. ___\$10 ea. ___
 Special Troops: HQ&HQ Co., Band, MP, QM, Recon, Signal, Ordnance ___\$10 ea. ___
 63rd Pictorial history w/1,000+ stateside, combat & occupation scenes.....\$12 ea. ___

-----DVDs FOR MICROSOFT WINDOWS SYSTEMS-----

Organization histories w/63rd photos, 63rd Div. general orders, combat unit morning reports, unit rosters, 63rd Div. pictorial history, WWII Blood & Fire issues, all as listed above to get organization information together on one disk for ease of viewing and storage at a lower cost.
 253rd ___, 254th ___, 255th ___, Artillery ___, 263rd Engineer & 363 Medical Bns. ___\$30 ea. ___
 Special Troops: HQ&HQ Co., Band, MP, QM, Recon, Signal, Ordnance ___ all with the "Chronicles"\$30 ea. ___

-----CAPS-----

Bright white cap and bill, with adjustable white rear net for spring, summer or fall.....NEW\$10 ea. ___
 Light blue cap and bill, with adjustable blue rear net for spring, summer or fall.....\$10 ea. ___
 The new 63rd patch emblem has "BLOOD & FIRE" and "63rd INFANTRY DIV," like the "C" patch on the other page.

-----CHALLENGE COINS-----

1.5" 63rd Infantry Division Antique Bronze Challenge Coin with plastic bag\$10 ea. ___
 1.5" 254th Infantry Regiment Brilliant Gold Challenge Coin with plastic pocket case.....\$10 ea. ___
 3.5" x 3.5" x 1.25" Dark Blue Coin Presentation Case.....\$5 ea. ___

February 2011 Form #70 Check # _____ TOTAL \$ _____

Mail To: BILL SCOTT, 63RD DIV. HISTORIAN, 407 S. WALNUT ST., SYCAMORE, IL 60178-2234
 (Make check or money order to: 63RD DIV. HISTORY FUND) - - - PLEASE USE ADDRESS STICKER OR PRINT CAREFULLY

NAME: _____ UNIT(S): _____
 STREET: _____ APT. _____ P.O. BOX: _____
 CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ - _____
 SPOUSE: _____ TELEPHONE: (_____) _____ - _____
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ FAX: (_____) _____ - _____
 I AM THE: _____ OF _____

(SON, GRANDSON, DAUGHTER, BROTHER?)

63RD VET'S NAME

A word from your buddies . . .

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Arthur Morthorst, 254: Mary Jean and I will be married 63 years on June 5, 2011.

Elmer J. Bellor, 861: I am now 91 years and still do all my own work. I still drive and garden. Lourene and I have been married 64 years.

John Kupchella, 861: Retired from Johnstown Steel for 35 years. I am involved in Stream Cleanup from mine water and Rail for Trails. I was a part of the wire telephone communication system.

MED

Robert D. Cohlmeier, 363: Vivian and I are doing well. We didn't get to come to the reunion due to sickness but are o.k. now. Hope to be in Indianapolis in August.

SV

Harold Schafer, 861: I married Madaline on June 5, sixty-three years ago (2011). Madeline will be 86 on February 14, 2011. We have three children, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Associate Members

Betty Bonifield, widow of Dayle, I 253: I am still doing well here at my home in Friendship Village of S. Hills. I have missed seeing all of you the past two years but think of you often. I still enjoy the *Blood and Fire* - it brings back many happy memories.

Josephine Brandon, widow of Glen, A 253: Glen has been gone 32 years. I am 86 years old and still work at the Disabled American Veterans Thrift Store one day a week as a volunteer.

Rose Dalton, widow of Matthew James, E 253: My husband died March 25, 1993 at the Hines Veteran's Hospital in Maywood, Illinois.

Daphne T. Jamision, widow of Frederick, 263 Engineers: Fred died January 28, 2004, just short of our 65th wedding anniversary.

Lucille Le Marbe, widow of Robert, G 253: My husband passed away January 20, 2008. I turned 86 on December 7. I do not have a computer, credit cards, etc. that other people have. If I don't have the cash, I don't buy! I guess I learned this from my favorite uncle who lived in Rensselaer, Indiana. (*Editor's note: Rensselaer is our neighboring town!*) I look forward to receiving the *Blood and Fire* as do my grandchildren, especially our nine-year

old grandson, Vincent. He is my star boarder in the summer and on the weekends. I understand changes must be made, so am enclosing a check. Keep up the good work and have fun at the reunion in Indianapolis

Sharline Lewis, widow of Robert, AT 255: My husband was a Life member and enjoyed the *Blood and Fire* issues until he died in 1994. I also like reading it and when I am through reading it, I send it to my son in Philadelphia. I am 84 years old and have COPD and on oxygen 24-7, so I don't go much. Robert was stationed at Camp Van Dorn and we were married there on October 26, 1944. He enjoyed being in the service and fighting for his country. I pray for all the men who are fighting to keep us all safe.

Hedy Savelli, widow of Attildo, G 253: I am a German War Bride. We met in May 1945 in my home town. He was in the G.I. show "Carmen" and the rehearsal for that was in my back yard. Their first performance was in the Town Hall in my home town. I arrived in the United States in 1947 and we were married in November 1948. Sadly I lost my Attildo in 1995.

The reunion I enjoyed the most was ...

By Norman Cady, FA862

Although we have attended several reunions, the one we enjoyed the most was the one in San Antonio, Texas in July of 1977.

My wife, Barbara, and I sure enjoyed seeing old friends that we hadn't seen since in late 1944. The wives had joined their husbands while we were in training. They mostly lived in McComb, about 40 miles from Camp, as well as in Centreville.

These wartime friends included Sam and Jo House from Indiana, Jean and Kaye Therry from Illinois, Walter and Florence McGinley from New Jersey. We also remember the Sandbrinks and the Musiels from the reunion.

Our memories of San Antonio include the Alamo, the river boat ride through the heart of town, "Big Time Machine" restaurant, Mario's Mexican restaurant, and "Buckhorn Brewery", where all the reunion attendees enjoyed a barbeque dinner, cowboy band and dancing.

All these good friends have passed away except Florence McGinley, my wife and I. The three of us are in our nineties and going strong. We have memories, but due to our ages, have probably attended our last reunion.

- *Letters and Opinions* -

PONY EXPRESS DELIVERY

(This letter was dated May 12, 2010)

I had a lot of things to take to my wife in the hospital so I handed the bus driver my *Blood & Fire* magazine and some other things to hold for me. After he left, I went to get my magazine and it wasn't on the window sill and he was long gone. I asked Bill Scott to send me a newspaper and I received the *Blood and Fire* today. It must have come by pony express!

There are some good things in it this time. I liked the story about the man who had never driven before. I noticed it is all infantry men and hardly any artillery men that are mentioned in the paper. I wonder if Bill has any men from AF 861. I wish I could find some.

I could have been writing to Walter Johnston, the chief in charge of our crew. He lives in Tifton, Georgia and we have been writing letters since the war ended.

When we were split up after the war ended in Germany, I was transferred about five times. I was in two outfits that were supposed to go to Japan. I ended up leaving for the USA and I got discharged June 6, 1946.

In my travels I had phone numbers and addresses I lost somewhere in Chicago. Sgt. Johnston has sent me letters since 1946. He sent me pictures of myself and of the two of us taken in Germany in June 1945.

I remember several buddies I had at that time. One guy was Burl Sutton and one guy was Nick Pann. He was with the 255th Infantry and was a cook. He was a charter member when he came to the Chicago reunion.

I am going to be 90 years old on May 24. We will be married 66 years on June 25. Both of us are in assisted living. We both have high blood pressure and I have been falling a lot. I had a fractured hip three years ago.

Al Safranek, FA 861

QUIET MAN ABOUT WAR

My husband, Abraham Levy, G and F 255, received a Battlefield Commission, a Bronze Star, and a Purple Heart. He went from Private to Lieutenant.

Abe is very quiet about his war service. But several years ago he was invited to join the National Order of Battlefield Commissioners (NOBC) and that is how we learned about the honor of his service. This organization was disbanded during a ceremony in Washington D.C. this past June.

Abe celebrated his 95th birthday on July 27, 2010 with his family. We have three wonderful children, all married and six grandchildren (two married).

We live in Hewlett, Long Island and will celebrate 63 years of marriage on February 22, 2011.

Serving with the 63rd has been a great source of honor for him and he wishes all a very Happy New Year and good luck for the future of the Association.

I am writing this at Abe's direction as he is legally blind and has very low vision.

Mikki Levy

FELL BUT DOING WELL

My husband, Bob Ross, fell from a ladder in May 2008 and on July 15, he was rushed to Billings, Montana to have brain surgery. He spent a month in the ICU and another month in New Therapy Hospital in Billings. He lost his speech and we have been working on getting that back to what it used to be. He is doing well and wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

Nancy Ross

INVITED TO SPEAK AGAIN

I was invited for the second time to talk to the students, teachers, visitors and veterans at the local school on Veteran's Day, November 11.

It was quite an honor and a very moving moment. Almost 400 people were present. It is so important for the youngsters to be aware of and appreciate the importance of the times we went through and cannot forget.

I also very recently received a letter from the widow of a French friend who died. He had been active in the Resistance and suffered from his resistance action. I spoke to him often - he lived in a small town in Normandy-Les Pieux. One more link to the past has gone out for me. I also served in the 9th Division in Normandy which is how I became acquainted with my

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Happy Anniversary



March

- 2: Juanita & Richard Wanamaker – K 254 – 1945
- 4: Rowene & Frederick Kroesen – E 254 – 1944
- 5: Jo & Martin Beer – L 253 – 1948
- 7: Barbara & Craig Ethier – Associate – 1981
- 10: Franceska & Donald Meeker – L 253 - 1951
- 12: Donna & Harold LaCosse – F 254 – 1948
- 12: Beryl & Pasquale Scorzelli – A 255 – 1946
- 14: Marjorie & Jacob Gesek – FA 861 – 1953
- 14: Bertha & Walter E. Harmon – G 253 – 1947
- 18: Jacquelin & Charles King – SV 254 – 1946
- 22: Juanita & Junior McDaniel – G 255 – 1947
- 30: Joyce & Paul Schwene – Associate – 1994

April

- 2: Joyce & Andrew Kidwell – ORD 763 – 1949
- 2: Leota & John J. Toom – FA 718 – 1941
- 6: Lucille & Levy O. Collier – D 255 – 1950
- 6: Barbara & Sherman Kumpf – FA 863 - 1947
- 8: Betty & Ralph J. Almstrom – I 253 - 1962
- 9: Helen & Donald Ivie – USAR – 1947
- 13: Dale & Donald Lindstrom – FA 718 – 1957
- 14: Gwynn & Tom Malan – A 255 – 1946
- 19: Gloria & Mario Antoci – E 253 – 1947
- 19: Marilyn & Jeffrey Rushing – Assoc - 1985
- 24: Mary & Sam Fittante – RECON 63 – 1954
- 24: Brenda & Nicholas Piazza – MED 254 - 1981
- 30: Eleanor & Stanley Kozlowski – I 255 – 1949

May

- 1: D'Arline & Charles Driemeyer – I 253 – 1954
- 2: Audrey & Ralph Alexander – G 253 – 1953
- 4: Vertalee & Bill Pillsbury – HQ 63 – 1946
- 5: Marie & Joseph Pacelle – K 253 – 1944
- 5: India & James Rathburn – I 255 – 1951
- 6: Ann & Sam L. Redfield – G 253 - 1961
- 7: Antoinette & Robert Barnard – FA 861 – 1959
- 8: Marlene & Walter Pucher – B 255
- 9: Helen & Edwin Smith – ENG 263 - 1948
- 13: Lillian & Ernest D. Howard – HQ 253 -
- 15: Jean & James S. Settineri – H 254 – 1948
- 15: Rosemary & Wm. Smeigh Jr. – Assoc - 1948
- 16: Charlotte & Herb Schneiderman – AS 254 – 1949
- 16: Olga & Michael Grib – B 255 – 1953
- 21: Margo & Bill Shirer – MED 263 - 1949
- 24: Fannie & George Millis – HQ 63 – 1952
- 24: Marie & Benedict Parenti – L 255 – 1952
- 25: Lourene & Elmer Bellow – HQ 255 – 1946
- 28: Mary & Charles Dolan – A 254 – 1949

- 28: Marlene & Ray W. Peterson – HQ 255 – 1947

June

- 1: Nancy & Bob Ross – G 254 - 1946
- 2: Ernestine & Allen Agnew – H 255 – 1950
- 2: Herminia & Stephen Shores – MED 363 – 1951
- 4: Vertalee & William Pillsbury – HQ 63 - 1946
- 5: Cleda & John Dumont – HQ 63 – 1948
- 6: Del & Clare Gerity – C 253 – 1947
- 6: Dolores & Bill Davis – G 254 – 1947
- 6: Marjorie & Charles Ewart – AT 253 –
- 6: Mary & Edgar Torrence – G 254 – 1942
- 6: Vera & James F. Jordan – HQ 254 – 1944
- 7: Donna & Edward Fowle – FA 862 – 1944
- 7: Gladys & Joe Perez – C 253 – 1952
- 7: Rachel & Donald Reents – FA 863 – 1969
- 7: Ruth & William Murray – AT 718 – 1944
- 7: Lacey & Melvin Stahl – E 255 – 1951
- 9: Mary & Jan C. Mennig – USAR - 1979
- 10: Elaine & Angelo Davis – F 254 – 1949
- 12: Catherine & Glen Foster – A 253 – 1946
- 12: Thea & Wm. Beckett – HQ 254 - 1942
- 15: Nancy & Tom Cone – Associate – 1974
- 18: Nathalie & Irving Gittleman – RECON 63 - 1953
- 22: Claire & Bill Hughson – Associate – 1947
- 22: Betty & Marvin E. Karr – C 253 – 1948
- 23: Joan & James Casey – L 255 – 1951
- 23: Helen & Linwood Fogg – C 255 – 1950
- 24: Gwynne & David Bonifield – Associate – 1978
- 25: Ernestine & Allen Agnew – H 255 – 1950
- 25: Marion & Charles H. Malloy – MED 255 - 1955
- 25: Marion & Albert Safranek – FA 861 – 1944
- 26: Dorothy & Robert Gross – HQ 253 – 1949
- 26: Florence & Sheldon Toder – CN 254 – 1952
- 27: Joan & Lewis Germain – L 254 – 1952
- 28: Kit & Carl Anderson – E 253 – 1947
- 28: Edith & Edward Karcheski – B 254 – 1941
- 28: Mae & Domenick Pecchia – H 255 – 1947
- 30: Iva & Richard Schulz – FA 718 – 1956
- 30: Eileen & Robert Titterington – K 255 – 1948

OMITTED FROM FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 2: Edith & Earl Stirm – HQ 253 – 1947
- 22: Juanita & Jr. McDaniels – G 254 - 1947

NO DATE GIVEN

- Erna & Tom McDonald – HQ 254 – 1953
- Dorothy & Daron Vaughn – L 253 - 1949

- Letters and Opinions -

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

friend, now deceased.

I am enclosing a copy of my talk that can be printed in the *Blood and Fire* if desired.

Mike Habermann, QM 63.

(Editor's note: A copy of his talk can be found elsewhere in this issue.)

DON'T WANT TO MISS AN ISSUE

My check is in the mail. I am a Life Member and don't want to miss an issue of the *Blood and Fire*. The older I get, these issues bring back memories I treasure. I wish there were more guys who were in the 861st FABN who would write to the paper so I could get in touch with them.

Donald Freese, FA 861

STILLENOY READING PAPER

My check is in the mail today! I have been unable to attend the last few reunions, because of my wife's health. But, I still enjoy reading about the reunions and would miss that if the magazine were to be discontinued. Keep up the good work!

Theo Mathis

NOT GETTING BLOOD AND FIRE

I re-read the letter I received from you concerning the subscription for the *Blood and Fire* and thank you for using my donation to cover the charge. Frankly, I must tell you the last issue of the magazine I received was dated November 2008! Someone in our local post office must be enjoying my *Blood and Fire*! I have to assume I have missed two or three issues. Please make sure my name is on the mailing list and I will resume receiving the magazine because I really miss it.

Allan Bikofsky, E 253

CAN'T MEET DEADLINE

I received the November issue of the *Blood and Fire* today, January 3, 2011 and saw the notice. There is no way I could have sent you a check before January 1! Will you please keep me on the mailing list

so I get the February issue? I really do enjoy reading them.

Charles Driemeyer, I 253

HAPPY TO RENEW PAST

Thanks for the memories! As we age, we are happy to renew the past.

James Ernster, L 253

READING MAGAZINE A JOY

I was a member of the Headquarters wire team and kept in touch with my Sgt.'s wife, Louise Mulcahy until she passed away last year.

One of my fondest memories is being an altar boy, Mass serving for Father Fournie for four days on the ship Thomas Barrie, until we landed in France. Mass was held on the top deck of the ship. Friends from home saw me and we had a short reunion.

I enjoy reading the *Blood and Fire* and want to thank you for a job well done.

Vincent Fealy, HQ 253

GUESS WHAT???

I bought a hat and medals for the hat from Bill Scott and discovered the whole thing was made in China!???

Thomas Glunt, HQ 254

IT WAS A NICE ARTICLE

I want to thank you for the nice article and the picture of my dad and me. Also, the picture of my good friend, Jack Verling from Iowa. I am 85 years old and Jack is 95 years old!

Gale R. Hill, HQ 253

PLEASE KEEP ME ON LIST

I got my magazine January 3 and hope you get my check in time. I will not miss one issue!! I really enjoy reading the *Blood and Fire* and hope I won't miss one!

Kathryn Izell, Associate

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

- Letters and Opinions -

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CHECK ENCLOSED

My check is enclosed. Let us not lose this important magazine!

Dick Mertes, L&R 254

OOPS! MISSED DEADLINE

Apparently delayed by the holiday mail, my *Blood and Fire* did not arrive until January 8, so I missed the deadline. If my check does not arrive in time for me to receive the February issue, please keep me on the list for future issues. Thank you for excellent production of the newsletter.

Edward Hacskaylo, E 255

WIDOW ENJOYS THE B & F

I am the widow of Arlton D. Landers, who was a member of the band. He died January 27, 1998. We were married 53 years and four months, have two children, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Enclosed is my subscription check - I enjoy reading the *Blood and Fire*.

Nan Landers, Associate

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME

I had my 85th birthday on July 3, 2010 and Kathy and I celebrated our 63rd wedding anniversary on December 20, 2010. I started in the RTG Camp Van Dorn about March 1944. On completion I was assigned to L Company 254. Shipped out of Camp Shanks on the Saturnia, bound for Marseille, France. I was shipped out of the 63rd Division on Christmas day 1944 and sent to the 90th Division, where I saw combat in the Ardennes.

Robert E. Curtis, L 254

WHAT A NICE SURPRISE!

What a nice surprise to see myself on page 21 of the November issue of the *Blood and Fire*. I have a feeling that Sgt. Ernest Howard sent this in. He was our jeep driver, and had eyes like a cat. He could drive that jeep on the blackest night and never hit a shell hole. I was hardly ever out of his sight through the whole war.

Aubrey Rogers, 1st. Bn 253

GOT SICK AT REUNION

The last reunion I attended was in Virginia Beach. I got sick and was in the hospital for nine days. The members at the reunion saw that my wife was taken care of. I am thankful for that.

Eugene Moore, FA 861

LEARNED FROM B & FIRE

My husband, Olaf Miller, HQ 253, rarely talked about the war. I have learned so much from reading the *Blood and Fire*. Thank you so much.

Evelyn Miller, widow

WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

You do a great job with the *Blood and Fire* and I really appreciate it. I served with the 63rd during WWII and after the war, I joined the National Guard. I graduated from regular Army Officer school at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and was on active duty during the Korean War. I retired after 20 years of service.

I would love to hear from any former members of A-Battery 863rd FA Bn, 63rd Division.

Douglas Shaheen, FA 863

WILL MAKE A COPY

I must make a copy of an article that was in the Boston newspaper during the war. My husband's family was so glad to hear where the 63rd was. I only have the original but will make a copy and send it to you. Edward, K 255, passed away on May 25, 2005. I miss him very much.

Betty Balestrieri, widow

HUSBAND PASSED AWAY

My husband, Pasquale Scorgelli, A 255, passed away July 3, 2010 from colon cancer. He was very proud to have been a part of the 63rd Infantry Division. He received the Silver Star for saving his platoon and also received the Bronze Star.

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- Letters and Opinions -

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Pat and I were married in England, so I was a war bride. We would have been married 65 years on our next anniversary. We had four children and a very happy life together. He was a great man and we will always miss him.

Beryl Scorgelli, widow

REMEMBER THE WYATT'S?

Just want to inform you that we are still going strong! Due to lots of medical problems, we just could not make the last few reunions, but are going to do our best to get there this year!! Since it could be the last reunion, we don't want to miss being there.

Ben and Evelyn Wyatt, F 254

DEATH REPORTED

This is to inform you of the death of my husband of 55 years, Joseph S. Gullo, H 255. He passed away on November 24, 2010. He enjoyed reading the issues of the *Blood and Fire*.

We attended several reunions and I believe he was a Life Member, and like so many other members, was stationed at Camp Van Dorn many years ago. He was 86 years old and the beloved father of seven children and a grandfather of sixteen.

Patricia Gullo, widow

I AM STILL IN THE 63RD

I enjoy reading the *Blood and Fire* even though I recognize fewer people by name. I still have hopes of finding another AT 253 member - that was what my husband, Daniel Boone was in. We were adopted by F 253 and for over 20 years we enjoyed a mini-reunion each March with them in Baton Rouge. Even though Boone died in 2000, I am still a 63rder!!

Eleanor Bullock, widow

BRINGS BACK MEMORIES

We enjoy the news from you and can imagine how much work you have to put in it to make it so interesting. Thank you for all you do. We have not been able to make the reunions in many years so enjoy the photos and comments made by all. Brings back good memories.

Leo & Evelyn Langenback B 254

HOW LONG IS LONG?

I took out a Life Membership some 20 years ago. How long was that supposed to last? I feel like I should start paying dues again after this long! I don't even remember what I paid at that time. I sent my subscription check but please let me know if I should start paying dues again. Thank you for all you do.

Robert Curtis, L 254

(Editor's note: It is not necessary for Life Members to pay dues.)

AMIORAMINOTALIFER?

You wrote to me last year and told me I was a member for life, now you tell me I owe money! I am sending a check - please advise me if I owe more.

Ira Brichta, CN 254

(Editor's note: To charge a subscription fee for the Blood and Fire was decided by the Executive Board during the 2010 reunion. That is why you were asked for money this year. Sorry about that.)

SEE YOU AT THE REUNION

Linda and I are looking forward to attending the 63rd Reunion of the 63rd Division Association in August 2011. The good Lord willing!

Linda & Wayne Armstrong, C 255

FEEL LIKE I AM THERE

I was in Pennsylvania over Christmas and when I returned to Kentucky on January 2, I found the November *Blood and Fire*. My check is in the mail and I don't regret in the least having to pay this new yearly fee. The stories are well written and I feel like I am there with these individual soldiers of the 63rd Division.

My dad was a Sgt. in the 718th Field Artillery Co. C. He whistled, yodeled and played the mandolin. His men pitched in and bought him a mandolin which he still played into the 21st century.

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- Letters and Opinions -

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Are there any back issues?

Robert Chadwick, Associate

(Editor's note: No back issues were given to me when I replaced the former editor after his death.)

IT HAS BEEN A GOOD RUN!

It is sad to see the Association membership declining but let's face it, it was a sort of "Last Man's Club" going in. Sixty-three years has been a pretty good run!

My wife, Florence and I are blessed to be in relatively good health at 87 years and celebrated our 63rd wedding anniversary August 23, 2010. We have two great-granddaughters.

Lost Sheep
Need To
Be Found



The November issue of the Blood and Fire was returned because it could not be delivered. Following are the names and the last known address of those who did not receive their magazine. If you have information concerning these individuals, please let me know.

Joseph Afaricano, 342 Minute Rd., Union, NJ 07083

Richard Cook, 1440 N. Lake Shore Drive # 8H,
Chicago, IL 60610

Jean Denault, 810 Trapelo Rd., Belmont, MA 02478

Salvatore Dirubbo, 450 Boulevard, Peekskill, NY
10566

Robert Freiwald, 21 Wilcox Rd., New Brunswick,
NJ 08801

Keith Hinsman, 6520 Mendota Ave., Middleton, WI
53562

Aldine Hoover, R#1, Box 241, Patton, PA 16668

William Hughson, PO Box 955, St. Michaels, MD
21663

Charles Jeffrey, 3206 Bert Kouns Lane, Shreveport,
LA 71118

We appreciate the efforts of the officers, like yourself, who strive to keep the Association going.

Bernard Lucas, FA

HECTIC PAST FEW YEARS

I apologize for the delinquent dues for 2009 and 2010. These past few years have been hectic as I have been traveling back and forth from Iraq. After that I had a recent move from Pennsylvania to Georgia. Life has been busy!

Enclosed is a check for back dues, present dues and subscription to the *Blood and Fire*.

SSG Timothy Boland, Associate

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

George Michna, 11 Dudley Hts., Albany, NY 12210
Thomas Miller, 960 Blvd. Heron Ct., Belleville, IL
82223

George Murphy, 1951 Grandhaven Dr. #127,
Murrills Inlet, SC 29576

Peg O'Neill, 1201 N. Harrison # 218, Wilmington,
DE 19806

William Sears, RR2, Freeville, NY 13068

Edna Shaw, PO Box 128, Wallaceton, PA 16876

Jean Thierry, 409 S. Walnut, Wenona, IL 61377

Josephone Vento, 1 Acorn Rd., Apt. A,
Manahawkin, NJ 08050

Bobby Wallace, 1086 Terry Gatesville Rd., Crystal
Springs, MS 39069

Ralph Weaver, 318 Williams Ave., Walnut Port, PA
18088

Meyer Weinberg, 2000 S. Ocean Blvd., #108, N.
Palm Beach, FL 33480

Anne Weiss, 1301 W. Maitland Blvd., Apt. 217,
Maitland, FL 32751

Thelma Welte, 300 Elm Street, Westville, NJ 08093

- Notice -

Please support the reunion committee by sending an ad for the Souvenir Book. There is an Ad Book Reservation Form in this issue of the *Blood and Fire* for you to use and the address of Donna LaCosse.

Hotel Registration Form
Crowne Plaza, Indianapolis Airport – August 18 – 20, 2011

Mail or Call:

Crowne Plaza Indianapolis Airport
2501 South High School Road
Indianapolis, IN 46241
317.244.6861

Attention: 63rd Infantry Division Association (mention when making reservations)

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone () _____ **Sharing room with:** _____

Arrival Date _____ **Time** _____ **Departure Date/Time** _____

SPECIAL REQUESTS:

King Bed _____ Two Queen Bed _____ Two double beds _____
 Wheelchair Accessible room _____ *Crown Plaza is a smoke free environment!*

RATE: \$99.00 per room + State and Local Tax (12.5%)*.

*The rates are for 3-day pre and/or post convention

Breakfast Buffet included in the price of the room. Coupons will be issued at check in

Free Parking

FREE SHUTTLE FROM INDIANAPOLIS AIRPORT: When you arrive at airport baggage claim call **The Crowne Plaza Indianapolis Airport -317.244.6861** to send shuttle to pick you up at arrivals outside baggage claim.

CUT OFF DATE: July 28, 2011. Reservations received after this date will be processed on space available basis, at the prevailing public rate.

GUARANTEE: Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card for first night lodging (no personal checks accepted)

MC _____ Visa _____ American Express _____ Discover _____

Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date: _____

CANCELLATION POLICY: Cancellations must be made 24 hours before arrival date.

SIGNATURE: (same as credit card holder)

**63RD INFANTRY DIVISION REGISTRATION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
AUGUST 18 - 20, 2011**

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event & total. Send that amount payable to **63rd Infantry Division Association, 10812 S. Kenneth Ave., Oak Lawn, IL 60453**. In the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations). Your canceled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or **before July 28, 2011**. After that date, reservations will be accepted only on a space available basis. Make a copy of this form before mailing.

CUT OFF DATE: JULY 28, 2011

			# Attending
Thursday, August 18th			
Meet Your Buddies	7:00pm-11:00pm	No Charge	Free
Friday, August 19th			
Board of Directors Meeting	9:00am-11:00am		
Please register for Vaudvillities and Bingo:			
Vaudvillities Performance	1:30 - 2:30pm	No Charge	Free
BINGO with prizes	3:00 - 5:00pm	No Charge	Free
Cocktails - Cash Bar	6:00 - 7:00pm		
Speaker with presentations	6:30pm - 7:00pm		
Dinner Theatre Buffet	7:00 - 10:00pm	\$50.00	\$
Saturday, August 20th			
Men's Meeting	9:00am-11:00am		
Ladies Meeting with entertainment	9:00am-11:00am		
Memorial Service	11:30am-12:30pm		
Cocktails - Cash Bar	6:00pm-7:00pm		
Dinner/Dance	7:00pm-10:30pm		
Please choose dinner entrée:			
Amish Roasted Chicken		\$42.00	\$
Roast Beef Tenderloin		\$48.00	\$
Pecan Crusted Salmon		\$44.00	\$
Children's Plate (chicken tenders)		\$12.50	\$
REGISTRATION FOR 2011 REUNION			
63rd Infantry Division Association Males		\$35.00	\$
(Widows of 63rd Vets do NOT pay registration fee)			
Affiliate Members		\$35.00	\$
GRAND TOTAL DUE TO 63RD INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION			\$

Name: _____	Nickname: _____	Unit/Co. _____
Spouse Name: _____	Guest Name: _____	
Street Address: _____		
City: _____	State _____	Zip: _____
Shuttle from the airport to the hotel:	Plane: ()	Free Shuttle - Contact #: 317.244.6861
	Auto: ()	
Emergency contact: _____		
Phone Number: _____		

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

- *Cancellation of refund activities made prior to cut-off date will result in a full refund.
- *Cancellation made after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that the commitments and guarantees do not result in a liability by the Association.
- *Cancellation of your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Check# _____	Date Rec'd _____
Name Tag Completed _____	
Package Completed _____	

63rd reunion . . .

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

All activities will take place in the beautiful Crowne Plaza Hotel

ON YOUR OWN

Some things to see and do while attending the 63rd Infantry Division Association Reunion

The Oliver Winery is located about 45 miles south of Crowne Plaza Hotel at the airport. The address is 8024 North State Road 37, Bloomington, Indiana 47404. Telephone: 812-876-9309. www.oliverwinery.com

It is Indiana's largest winery, and the grounds are very lovely. It is open weekdays from 10 am. to 6 p.m. every day. There is no charge. There is a very large building in which they have wine displays and various selections of wine related accessories and specialty foods. They have gourmet cheeses and freshly baked bread. In the center of the room is a very large bar for wine tasting. Just outside in the back is a large cement patio area with numerous tables and chairs. There are tours available so please check the website for information.

There is a free shuttle from the hotel to the Oliver Winery. If you decide and want to go to the winery, please check at the front desk for the shuttle. We will have a sheet to sign for the shuttle - we will let you know when the bus is full (holds 28). Friday morning or Saturday afternoon will be available.

Welcome To Indianapolis Elevate Your Getaway! The Circle City has it all, take a look...

You might already know that Indy hosts the largest single-day sporting event in the world, and that our zoo is ranked Top 10 nationally. You might even know that our legendary children's museum is the world's largest. But did you know that there are over 200 restaurants, Circle Centre Mall and the beautiful Central Canal within walking distance once you are downtown?

To elaborate: Two downtown landmarks, Monument Circle (The Soldiers and Sailors Monument) and Indiana War Memorial Plaza are great urban spaces. The 24 acre

plaza, like Washington, D.C.'s National Mall, gives Indy the distinction of devoting more acreage to honoring veterans than any other city. It's second to D.C. in number of war memorials. In the Civil War, 75 percent of eligible men from Indiana joined the Union, second only to Delaware per capita. And since then, Indiana's war casualties have numbered double the national average. So please...visit the Plaza!

Downtown boasts three remarkable pro-sports venues: The Lucas Oil Stadium is home to the Indianapolis Colts, Super Bowl champs in 2007; Conseco Fieldhouse is home to NBA's Indiana Pacers and WNBA's Indiana Fever. The Indianapolis Indians play AAA baseball at Victory Field, our beautiful new stadium. Nearby also visit NCAA Hall of Champions, The National Collegiate Athletic Museum.

See in close proximity, our triple accredited zoo, exhibiting exotic animals within 5 different living habitats. Also the aquarium there with the world's only underwater dolphin viewing dome!! Then just next door inside, see the Hilbert Conservatory and be amazed by free-flying butterflies each summer.

Next you might want to try out the White River Junction Train Ride...a 10 minute ride winding all around the zoo, where you will see animals of many kinds and the other facilities that keep the zoo running.

Perhaps you'd rather enjoy the 1 1/2 mile riverside promenade along the canal, or better still, rent a paddleboat and see the city from the water,OR....visit the IMAX theater which delivers 2D and 3D films to a six and a half story screen!!

Next door to the Park grounds are the Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art....a wonderful museum, and be sure to climb into an authentic stage coach on the lower level before leaving.

Want to shop? Circle Centre Mall is just a block or two east where you can visit Nordstrom's and Carson Pierie Scott department stores as well as many specialty shops.

Hungry? If you don't want to eat in Champs or the Food Court at Circle Centre, just step outside and take advantage of the many wonderful restaurants Indy has to offer.

Feeling tired? Then take a carriage ride around the city

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

63rd reunion . . .

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

offered by Blue Ribbon Carriage Co. and Yellow Rose Carriage.

How about taking the kids to the World's Biggest and Best Children's Museum! This is not just for kids....see 100,000 artifacts and [get this](#) ! ...a 27 foot tall water clock. The 43 foot tall Fireworks of Glass Tower will blow you away! Also, a great Dinosphere exhibit. See for yourself by going to childrensmuseum.org

If you are inclined to get out of the city a little way, how about visiting The Indianapolis Museum of Art? The main building contains changing and permanent exhibitions ranging from ancient artifacts to contemporary masterpieces.

Don't leave the Indianapolis area without visiting the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Capital of the World! In the Hall of Fame Museum you will see one of the most diversified collections of antique classic passenger autos and racing cars in the world! Take a look at the famous 500 mile track.

Of course, there are many more places to visit, such as Connor Prairie, a "hands on" pioneer village where families of today explore and discover what it was like to live and play in Indiana's past.

We have much, much more to offer, so please come and check us out!

One of my experiences

By David R. Eveland, HQ 254

The 63rd is the greatest group of men that ever were - from General Hibbs to the new recruit.

I remember when we arrived in the ROTC, General Hibbs came and gave us a talking to. He told us, "you boys are now men and we are going to train you to go to war. No man is better than the other - that includes all Officers and you men. We are one. If your hands are full, he should have saluted you."

Life was great; I never met an officer that I couldn't talk to. But, the book says "don't speak until spoken to" and this means the officer is to speak first.

Let me tell you one of my experiences. On my ten-day leave, at the train station in Chicago, I saluted a young Lieutenant and said good morning. The ass-eating I got for that was for the book! He took my name and sent a letter to my Captain. When I got back to camp, the first Sergeant and the Captain wanted to see me. I went in his office, saluted him and reported.

"Have a seat, Eveland," he said, and handed me the letter he wrote to the Lieutenant. The words he called the guy, I can't write. He also told him he hoped he would wind up in his command.

Carried a telephone for Colonial Tucker, and General Harris came to visit our forward switchboard in Ensheim. After the war, Lt. Rowan was transferred to the 36th. And, later I was also transferred. When Lt. Rowan was motor officer, he got me in the motor pool and I drove for Major Thorndike until I came home.

Lt. Paul Rowan was one of the greatest men I ever knew. He later became a Lt. Col. I visited him in Georgia several times before he died.

Now the men of the 63rd are getting to be fewer and fewer. The youngest man I know of is 84-year-old Francis Meyers of Louisiana.

I think we should all give a standing ovation to our historian, Bill Scott and to Fred Clinton for the hours and days they have worked to keep our history. Where would our history be without them?

I sit here and remember the men I spent my days with in the 63rd. A country boy who spent his days working with a few men, then I joined an army of men from all walks of life, and they were mostly from the city!

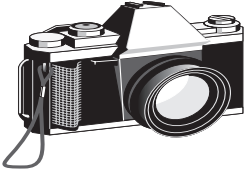
My training in the A&P is where I did fit in because most of it was what I had done in civilian life. But when I became a wireman in combat, now that was new to me. I didn't know anything about telephones. Three of us country boys became wiremen one day before Hill 216 and we did our job. Cole was wounded in the Seigfred Line, Smith got the Silver Star and I got

Ads needed for Souvenir Ad Book

Ads for the 2011 Reunion Souvenir Ad Book are needed.

It always helps when ads arrive early, so please help support this project by using the form found in this issue of the *Blood and Fire*, and send greetings, honorary messages, memorials, or for a reason of your own, real soon.

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BLOOD AND FIRE PHOTO GALLERY

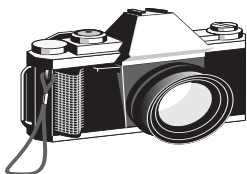
Old friends, Bertie Beeks, the West twins, Melvin and Marvin and their uncle Henry West, met at the 62nd Annual Reunion held in Ohio last August, after not seeing each other for several years. Bertie's husband, Bob Beeks, K 255, and the twins father, Frank West became friends during the war.



Gina Iseminger and her father, Harold LaCosse, F 254, share lunch and a smile during the August reunion.

At Ease! This group enjoyed a "time out" during the August reunion in Ohio. The clown kept them entertained! From the left, Bill Scott, Cele Scott, Donna LaCosse, Gina Iseminger, Clown Al Klingler, Rhonda Wolverton, Barbara Elder and John Downs. Barbara is modeling the balloon hat Al made for her.





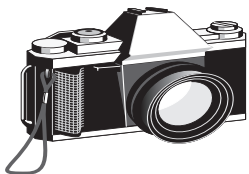
BLOOD AND FIRE PHOTO GALLERY



Gerald Bungert, FA 718, and Bob Dole taken at the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C., June 2010.

Rev. Vincent Stratton with General Petraeus, Chaplain for the 63rd Infantry Division Association, taken during an August ceremony held in Washington D.C.





BLOOD AND FIRE PHOTO GALLERY



John Downs, F 254, carved this Unicyclist from a piece of basswood. The carving, including the base, is eight inches tall and six inches thick. A natural finish was applied when the carving was completed. This piece of work earned John the “Editor's Choice” ribbon in a recent competition.

The wartime journey . . .

me a plane was shot down and one of the parachutes did not open. I don't know whether or not this was the place.

During the winter of 1945, 1946, I was stationed at a ski lodge in Mandlwandhaus where I learned to ski and I shot several goats. I had their horns mounted and brought them home.

During October, November and December, 1945, I was at logger No. 9 where I guarded SS Prisoners. One of them drew a picture of me in my uniform. I was really impressed at how disciplined those soldiers were. I also skied and hunted Hirsch deer and other game in the mountains that were about 10 kilometers from Altenau.

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

From February 15, 1946 through June 18, 1946, I was assigned to the fuel and transportation in Salzburg where I had a chauffeur, a big Mercedes, and a secretary. While there I wrote to the burial groups in Italy and as it turned out, my friend from Clarksdale, Harvey Gresham, received the letter and wrote me back. It was a pleasant surprise.

In March 1946 I went skiing at Kitzbuhel. By June I was at Le Harve and waiting to go home. Camp Philip Morris. On July 7, 1946 I left Le Harve at long last and headed for New York and Ann. I landed at New York on July 15, 1946. I arrived at Fort Bragg on Sunday around July 20 and was discharged in September 1946.

One of my experiences . . .

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

the Bronze Star.

All the boys in the A&P, the Como, the motor pool, the Medics, the Riflemen I talked to on the front line would sometimes spread a little bull, but I remember them all. The first reunion I went to was in Las Vegas. I stepped out of the room and heard Charles Cadle down the hall. I told Nellie that I knew that was Cadle, the ridge-runner from Virginia, who was in the Anti Tank. Sure enough, it was.

Oh, I could go on and on, but what I really want to say is I am the same today as I was back then - only older!

Befriending a Polish prisoner

By George English, B 718

In April of 1945, my buddy Walter Mastej of Michigan, and I helped liberate the Landsberg Concentration Camp in Germany while with the 63rd Infantry Division.

While there, we befriended a Polish prisoner of that camp. Walter could speak some Polish, so it was a great help in conversing with the prisoner.

We took him to the doctor's house we were occupying, gave him a warm bath in a portable tub, shaved him, and cut his hair. Then we dressed him in the doctor's clothes, which needless to say, just hung on him as he was a skeleton of a man. Still, he cried with happiness.

Then I went into the attic and cut down hams and cheeses the doctor was hoarding. I put them into a pillowcase, together with more clothes and gave them to the poor soul.

After we fed him, we took him to the Army Depot for his return to Poland. Walter and I gave him what little money we had, and I gave him my watch. He continued to cry and thanked us so very much for helping him, and then he kissed us both good-bye. Then we cried.

I am now 86-years-old and sometimes forget things, but this is one memory I will never forget.

Little tidbits of my life

By Fred H. Hess, HQ 253

If this little note seems a bit goofy, it is because I am being helped by a little Golden Retriever named Heidi. Need I say more?

Here are some tidbits that you can possibly use just the way you usually do.

I was born October 9, 1925. Charlotte and I were married March 31, 1948.

Charlotte and I went through school together. I remember her in kindergarten as a mean-looking little kid, and I was a very knowledgeable first grader. By the time I was in the fifth grade, I noticed Char wore those ugly brown stockings which prompted me to start calling her "ole spaghetti legs." We starting in high school.

I was a stubborn American-Kraut gung-ho about joining the Navy and flying my favorite plane, the Boeing F4B4. I didn't want to be thrown into the infantry so I decided to enlist in the Navy while I was still 17.

The Naval Recruiter was out to lunch so the Army Recruiter "advised" me to join the Army and then transfer to the Navy because a member of the military would have some kind of "priority."

Oops! First mistake.

The officer who decided where I would go had a different "orientation" than me so when several friends got off the train for basic training in the Air Force, I stayed on the train for several more dismal days. In disbelief I read the huge banner over the tracks at the entrance to my basic training home in Texas.

CAMP WOLTERS . . . INFANTRY REPLACEMENT TRAINING CENTER.

Poor down-hearted woe is me! Needless to say, I was in good shape and ended up really enjoying basic training.

From Texas I was sent to the great 63rd Headquarters Company of the 253 Regiment. I stayed with the 63rd for the rest of the war. I did catch "the double golf sticks" for not registering for the draft and was threatened to be sent overseas by a lady from the Draft Board. Poor me again!

After leaving the Army, Charlotte and I were married March 31, 1948, which makes us married 62 years. We have three great kids, five grandkids and so far, one great-grandchild.

I retired from General Electric and Charlotte retired from nursing.

I have a pinched nerve in my spinal assembly so I have to use a walker. Poor me again!

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English speaking German

By Calvin L. Stevens, ENG 263

As I reflect on my military history, the next experience may appear as a fantasy, but it is not an embellishment of the experience, which needs none.

After going through the Siegfried Line, Lt. Johnson gathered us together in a field behind the line. Everyone was accounted for and with only a few minor injuries. Breaking through the Siegfried Line was our main objective and although we had very heavy shelling, we did not receive as much resistance as we had anticipated.

Two hundred yards from where we stood there was a very heavy wooded area. The trees had very few leaves since it was the spring of the year. We were on the ridge and as we looked down through the trees, we could see a town of eight or ten houses with a barn connected to one of the houses.

The road curved to the left on a hillside down through the town. We had two mine sweepers with us, so Lt. Johnson said, "Let's go on the road and sweep for mines, because the vehicles coming behind us will want the roads swept." We gradually and cautiously proceeded down towards the town and noticed one of the infamous pillboxes on the hillside to our left.

With our rifles drawn and two men sweeping for mines, we slowly made our way down towards the town. When we got just below the pillbox, we heard a shrill whistle from the direction of the pillbox. We immediately stopped and waited for someone to appear. We proceeded a little further and heard the whistle again, and this time we saw someone wave a white flag. Then we saw 15 German soldiers standing there and yelling in German that they wanted to surrender. One of the men spoke a little German so we understood them.

We waved them down to the town and into the barn where we put them on their knees in a semi-circle for interrogation. One of our men spoke to them in German but didn't make much progress. Then one of the Germans said he spoke English. Lt. Johnson gave him a very extensive cross examination of the situation. The one German spoke English like he was my next door neighbor.

He told us when the Germans knew we were ready to attack the Siegfried Line, they took all the young and able-bodied soldiers and retreated across the Rhine River, and told the others to hold off the American soldiers to the end. He said, "I'll be damned if I was ready to die! We are too old to be fighting." Their average age must have been around

40 years.

After Johnston was finished, I went over to the English-speaking German and asked, "Where did you learn how to speak English?" He said, "Mainly Mainly in the United States, why do you ask?" I asked him, "Where in the United States?" He said, "In Pennsylvania." "Where in Pennsylvania?" I asked and he said he had lived on the north side of Pittsburgh for several years and had worked at J & L Steel. I was for a loss of words to believe what was happening!

I thought I would trap him, so I said, "I live near Butler. Do you know where that is?" He replied, "I have been in Butler several times shopping." And, then he named several stores.

I asked him, "How did you get here in this situation?" He answered, "I came over to see my sick mother and see the rest of the family and they immediately drafted me into the Army. I hope someday to go back to the United States."

Then he volunteered to give us a tour of the pillbox above the town. It was a complex of five rooms, almost like a complete house with three-foot walls of reinforced concrete. He also showed us one of the machine gun openings which covered the road we had walked down. Then he said, "If it hadn't been for my attachment to the United States, we could have wiped all of you out in a matter of minutes."

Many times I have thought about this incident and it makes me feel totally exhausted to think how close we were to the end of our lives.

Again, I have reflected back and said, "Why me? Surely God had to be with us."

We took the prisoners of war back to be turned in.

Little tidbits . . .

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

Well, it is either "pill" time, "bed" time or "bathroom" time so I will close for now and if you read all of this, it's poor you!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Please send in your old or recent photos to be placed in the *Blood & Fire* photo gallery each quarter.

Send to Donna LaCrosse, PO Box 86,
Morocco, Indiana 47963.

Activities that keep me closely related to my World War duty

By John Dumont

As a student in the eighth grade, my science teacher taught the class about radio and gave instructions as to how to build a crystal set radio. A near neighbor friend and I both built our crystal set radios. Then we wanted to be able to talk to each other. At that time, "mail order" radio kits could be put together for amateur radio "hams" to use in the FCC Amateur Frequencies.

My friend and I both received a radio kit for Christmas. We put them together and were able to talk to each other. Only one problem, neither of us had the needed FCC Amateur license. We were violating the law! I was possessed by the amateur radio bug that I decided to study the law, learn Morse Code and get my license. By the time it took me to feel ready for the test, I made an appointment and was examined by an FCC Examiner.

By that time World War II had begun. Amateur Radio was suspended except for the "War Emergency Radio Service" under the auspices of the Civil Defense Operation. By then (1942) I was an 11th grade high school student. I had my FCC Operator's License but could not operate my own personal "ham" station. I graduated from High School in 1943 and entered active military service on January 29, 1944.

After basic training, my duty assignment was as a radio operator with Hq Btry 63rd Div Arty at Camp Van Dorn.

After WW II ended, I returned home and became an active "Ham" operator. It was great to be on the air with my own call sign, W8YML. However, military communication was still in my blood since I did enjoy using Morse Code as a way to talk to my friends. After using Morse Code in combat situations in the war in Europe, it became a "second" language. (I still enjoy chatting by Morse Code on the "Ham" bands)

I then learned the Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) that enabled FCC Licensed Operators and their stations to become part of the Military Service. I became licensed with the Navy-Marine Corps MARS service with the call sign of NNNOKRQ. In addition to message traffic, I am authorized to operate on the MARS Afloat Network to provide toll-free two-way phone calls from deployed personnel and

their loved ones at home.

Being able to do this enables me to continue to "Serve those who serve." As one ship operator once told me, "The joy you bring to others is the joy that comes back to you." Nothing could be more true, for I have many years filled with joy by my being able to do this for current active duty members and their loved ones at home.

Not only is MARS devoted to its morale boosting service, but stands by as an auxiliary communication service in times of emergency for military and civilian authorities.

Even though I am licensed in the Navy-Marine Corps MARS Service, my license permits me to operate on the Army Air Force MARS Nets as well.

I would like to see the day when I will be able to contact other amateur "Hams" in our Association so we can talk over things of mutual interest. There are several amateur nets on the Ham Bands in which I participate. Maybe a schedule could be set up on which active hams in our Association could get together.

OOPS! I GOOFED!!.....

In the May 2010 issue of the *Blood and Fire*, on page 12, there is a story written by Claude Laffabee. In typing the article, I left out the most important part of his story. Here now, is the rest of the story and is told in his own words: "I really did see six paratroopers jump out of that transport plane, about one mile from our position. Of all the men in A Company, it is hard to believe that I was the only one who saw them. I thought our Squad was sent out to find the paratroopers but Bradley said the orders were to report any enemy actions in the area. That was my mistake."

In the November 2010 issue, the *Blood and Fire* report on page 4 is the same report printed on page 11.

On pages 24 and 26, the same article concerning the web site was printed. No one needed to read those two articles twice and just think of the other things I could have put on those pages!!

I don't dare fire my proof reader – he might leave home and not take me with him!!

A tribute to our veterans

By Mike Habermann

D-Day is etched indelibly in America's memory. Films, TV programs, features, art works, all have made D-day and the subsequent fighting in Normandy a permanent part of our history.

The American Cemetery near the Omaha Beachhead is a moving witness to the valor and sacrifice of the young American soldiers who fought those battles.

In late April of 1984, I took one of my sons to France to visit the French side of his family and to visit the invasion beaches and the Normandy battle fields that I trod in July and August of 1944. I wanted him to understand and appreciate the conditions and the terrain over which the battles were fought. The summer of 1944 remains an important part of my formation. To understand me and the generation I am part of, this visit was an enlightening experience for my son.

My memories are of the rain, the surrounding hedgerows, and sickly sweet smell of death rising from the fields every evening, and the huge U.S. bombing attacks initiating the Cobra breakthrough. The sound of our artillery firing over our heads and the more frightening clap of the German 88's slamming into the nearby earth.

The sight of a B17 hit and tumbling from the sky and the terrifying descent of a damaged U.S. fighter plane just whizzing over my head to disintegrate in a shattering crash just a short distance away. The rows

of dead Germans, their dead horses, and the huge disorder of guns and equipment strewn along the roadsides after the breakout. These and the great destruction of French towns and the devastation of the countryside are the realities I live through.

My son and I walked along Utah Beach, and I tried to locate the area where I landed two weeks after D-Day. We then drove the route from Ste Mere Eglise to Monteboirg and Valognes after which we doubled back to the American Cemetery.

We walked between the rows of markers reading the names of the men buried beneath. I looked for, and found, many names from the Infantry Division in which I had served. We were standing before one of the crosses when a group of young French children gathered close to us. The youngest were from ten and twelve years old with blond Norman hair and milky-white innocent faces.

The group leader and teacher was a man in his late 30's or early 40's. My son and I both speak and understand French. We listened to the teacher who said to the children, "These young soldiers came all the way from L'amerique." He stretched out his hand and pointed west. "They came here to liberate you. These soldiers fought and died so that you could live free as you do today." He said these words and many more describing the history of the invasion. Then he read the names and dates on the crosses, making comments on

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

Changes to our regular web site notice

Visit the 63rd Infantry Division Website at <http://www.63rdinfdiv.com> to find a detailed history of the 63rd Infantry Division. Included in the over 580 pages of the website is a listing of unit awards, descriptions of battles, a listing of battle and non-battle deaths, a description and view of all 63rd Infantry Division memorials and many other items of interest.

There are also over 2800 pictures of 63rd Infantry Division soldiers in training, combat and on occupation duty.

You will also find a list of memorabilia items for sale, information about reunions and inquiries from members and relatives searching for information about members and buddies. There is also an alphabetical listing, by unit, of active 63rd Infantry Division Association members, a listing of related websites and other information of interest to veterans.

Webmaster, Fred Clinton (D 254th Inf.) is seeking photos and memorabilia images to be added to the website.

Send photos by e-mail to joyclint@comcast.net or by regular mail to:

Fred Clinton,
102 S. Jenkins Street
Alexandria, VA 22304.

Fred's phone number is 703-751-7548.

All items will be returned when processing has been completed.

Charles Miles shares a special event

Charles “Chuck” Miles presented a plaque that has a place of honor in the Mockmuhl, Germany cemetery where he and his fellow soldiers took refuge on April 7, 1945. The ceremony took place on April 10, 2010 when Wolfgang Schlauch made the presentation on behalf of Miles whose health prevented him from traveling to Germany.

Miles, 85, is co-author of the book, “Once enemies. Now Friends.” This is a story about two young soldiers, Miles and a German native, Felix Pfaeffle, who met as friends and neighbors in Las Cruces and realized they had been shooting at each other in an area in rural Germany many long years ago.

The book was translated in German and Miles, with others, have toured Germany and France together, making friends, signing books and sharing stories with others interested in history.

Miles, a member of the 63rd Infantry Division Association, is a retired textile manufacturer and life-long history buff. He has been the head of the Dona Ana County Historical Society and has donated five plaques in honor of local historical events and figures. It is his way of giving back to the community he loves.

On April 5, 1945, a company of American

soldiers from the 63rd Infantry Division moved through Rogheim, Germany without the bothersome enemy being around, hoping their luck would continue, but that wasn't to be.

As squad leader, Miles was the first American soldier to enter the village of Rogheim that day. They charged through an orchard into the town cemetery and then fought from house to house, battling their way through the town and onto the next place of action.

Miles, who was wounded on April 20, 1945, does not want to talk about that. He would rather talk about the time he met Felix Pfaeffle when they were asked to talk to professor Donna Eichstaedt's history class at the Dona Ana Community College.

The men discovered they were neighbors in Las Cruces and had once been within two miles of each other in Germany in 1945, when they were teenage soldiers on opposite sides, shooting at each other.

Miles never forgot the cemetery or the town of Mockmuhl and in 2002 after writing a book about his war experiences he was invited by the local Historical Society for a visit. Wolfgang Schlauch, Chuck Miles, Felix Pfaeffle, Donna Eichstaedt and her husband, Carl traveled to Germany in 2002 and visited many of the villages where Chuck and the 63rd Infantry Division had fought. They were treated royally, gave talks and met a few German veterans.

He developed some warm friendships with the people in Mockmuhl. Especially with village historian, Dr. Karl Heinrich Kraft who later visited Miles in Las Cruces. Miles learned their historical society was contemplating a plaque to commemorate the Battle of Mockmuhl and the end of World War II by remembering both Americans and Germans who lost their lives during the battle.

With input from Mockmuhl Mayor, Ulrich Stammer, Dr. Kraft and Professor Schlauch, Miles decided to have a plaque made for the wall of honor in the village cemetery - the same cemetery he found himself in on that fateful day in 1945.

He had the plaque made and on April 10, friend Schlauch traveled to Mockmuhl, where it was presented to Mayor Stammer and the citizens of the village.

About 50 people attended the ceremony, including a few older citizens who remembered the very dark days of World War II.

Schlauch, an Eastern Illinois University Professor emeritus of history, is now an American citizen who has lived in the United States 45 years. He

A tribute to our veterans

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

the ages of the soldiers buried there. The young teacher expressed himself with great emotion and persuasiveness.

He and his group were now beside us. I could not resist thanking him for what he had said to his students. I told him that I was deeply moved because I had participated in the Normandy campaign and that many men from my Division were among those lying there. At these words he became highly excited and called to his group, “Oh, mes enfants, mes infants, come here. This man fought in the battle against the Germans. He helped to free us and to liberate France.”

I was so overwhelmed with emotion that tears came to my eyes. I could no longer control my emotion. I grabbed his hand, shook it hard and I thanked him. Then I dashed away to the wall overlooking the Channel and broke down sobbing.

I am still moved by this incident and the remarks of that teacher. I love France. The cathedrals, the countryside, the cottages buried in flowers, Paris and the Seine but above all, I cherish the memory of this unexpected wonderful tribute to the American soldiers who lie beneath the soil of Normandy.

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My basic training was at Camp Hood, Texas

By Calvin Prince, F 253

I entered the service from Minnesota on May 5, 1945, and took my basic training at Camp Hood, Texas.

After completing my training, I joined the 63rd Infantry Division in Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi. The first week of November I went to New York and left for overseas on November 25. We landed in Marseille, France on December 8.

I spent Christmas by the Rhine River and New Years near Sarregonies, France, entering Germany in February. We were part of the 7th Army and near Munich when the war ended.

We were supposed to be sent back to the states in early August and then to Japan, but the war ended in Japan so we were sent to La Harve and then to Belgium, ending in France near Valenciennes where we worked as labor supervisors.

While working there, I met my wife. We were married in July and I was sent back and forth from Belgium to Lyon, France.

We were made MPs and sent to Germany and I re-enlisted so I could be with my wife when our first child was born. I went to Paris in December and as I was entering the PX, I met Russell Dudley there and Paul Hecter of Iowa. We were all part of the wire section group.

I went to Bergen, Germany in March and in July, I was sent to the states and stationed in New Jersey. My wife and son flew in but I was having health problems and was sent to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania and in early January I was given a medical discharge.

The picture enclosed was taken in Fulda, Germany on May 8. We were all part of the wire section. In front, Sgt. Sayer, driver PPC Puch, PPC Prince, PPC Sullivan. In the back, PPC Christmas, Lt. Ryan, Sgt. Olberby and PPC Tillman.



John Morgan shares his service record

John J. Morgan was born April 24, 1924 and graduated from high school in Highland Park, Michigan in 1942. He entered the service on March 31, 1943 and received a discharge on December 3, 1945 at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas.

He served overseas with the 63rd Infantry Division for ten months in France and Germany. He disabled and removed anti-tank mines, road blocks and wire entanglements laid by the enemy.

He operated an electric mine detector to detect hidden and buried mines and he employed dynamite, T.N.T., and primer cord, to blow up bridges, roads, buildings and other obstacles.

He also used a Bangalore torpedo to clear wire entanglements and other obstacles and he laid anti-tank mines and booby traps in event of an enemy

advance. He used time fuses, electric and non-electric firing caps, and different explosive materials.

He received the Bronze Star Medal on September 1943.

John now lives in Northville, Michigan.

Charles Miles shares . . .

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

was born in the German village of Bachlingen, just a few miles from where Chuck Miles was shot. At that time he was a lad of nine years.

Since Miles could not attend the ceremony, Schlauch brought back pictures, newspaper articles and a special message from Mayor Stammer, to share with Miles.

In Memoriam

Vernon Altberg

Vernon Altberg, C 253, died January 18, 2011, after suffering several months with Parkinsons. He was 85 years old.

He was wounded during World War II and received the Purple Heart.

Vern is survived by his wife, Donnis; three children, Greg (Penny) Altberg, Linda Pavalko and Debbie Sorensen; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren and one brother.

Frederick J. Consolmagno

Fred Consolmagno, M 254, died January 25, 2011. He was 89 years old.

While serving in Germany, he was awarded the Bronze Star.

After returning home, he was employed by the Springfield Newspapers as a compositor.

Surviving is his wife, Audrey of 61 years; four children, Barbara Consolmagno, Laura Michaelian and husband Richard, Mark Consolmagno and wife Lynn, Michael Consolmagno and wife Lisa, and seven grandchildren.

Richard L. Dooley

Richard "Dick" Dooley, HQ 861, died December 12, 2010 at the age of 93.

Survivors include his wife, Alice; daughter Dr. Janet Castellini, son Col. Joseph Dooley, daughter Kathleen Hielt and daughter Dr. Marihelen Dooley; 14 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren

Floyd Hornbacker

Floyd P. Hornbacker, SV 254, died December 9, 2010. He was 86 years old.

As a decorated war veteran, he received the American Theatre Ribbon, WWII Victory Medal, two Bronze Stars, the European and Middle Eastern Campaign Medal and a Meritorious Unit Citation while in combat.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Anna; three sons, Floyd Jr., Bob and wife Terri, Scott and six grandchildren.

Norman Rappaport

Norman Rappaport, K 254, died March 26, 2008. He was the recipient of the Purple Heart and was buried in Arlington Cemetery.

He served on the Pentagon Federal Credit Union Board of Directors for more than 30 years.

Norm earned his Bachelors Degree from the University of Michigan and completed his Masters Degree from George Washington University. He worked in the Federal Government for more than four decades.

Surviving are his wife, Yvonne and five children, Michael, Laura, Hillary, Stephen and Jocelyn; four grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Robert J. Stahlman

Robert "Bobby" Stahlman, H and M 253, died January 2, 2006 at the age of 82.

During the war, he was awarded numerous awards including the Silver Star.

He graduated from San Jacinto High School in Houston and after the war was over, he graduated from Texas A&M. Before retiring he was President of Stahlman Lumber Company in Houston.

Surviving are his wife Betty. His son Alan and wife Suzanne, daughter Connie Hudson and husband Rex, daughter Carol and husband Bing Cosby, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Albert D. La Vecchia

Albert D. La Vecchia, E 253, died January 3, 2011 at Community Medical Center in Toms River, New Jersey. He was 86 years old.

Following his discharge from the Army, he was a realtor with Century 21 Merola for many years.

He will always be remembered for his incredible sense of humor and his zest for life.

He is survived by his wife Helen of 62 years, a daughter Deborah La Vecchia and her husband Eric Rose, daughter-in-law Julie, two grandchildren and one great-grandson. His son Richard preceded him in death.

Celebration of Life



Vernon Altberg, C 253, Life Member 780, died January 18, 2011. His widow, Donniss, lives at 289 W. Jamison Cir. #5, Littleton, CO 80120.

Ralph Altman, K 255, Life Member 863 died December 12, 2010. No further information was available.

Harry S. Antink, E 253, died in 1999. His niece Karen reported his death.

Norman Bromley is reported as having died in 2005. No further information was available.

Frederick J. Consolmagno, M 254, died January 25, 2011. His widow, Audrey lives at 210 Blisswood Village Dr., Ludlow, MA 01056-2376.

Richard Dooley, HQ 861, Life Member 259, died December 12, 2010. He and his wife, Alice lived in an assisted living facility in Cincinnati, Ohio at the time of his death.

Henry M. Greenberg, F 254, died January 26, 2004. No further information was available.

Joseph S. Guello, H 255, Life Member 1043, died November 12, 2010. His widow Patricia lives at 1733 N. 73rd Ave., Elmwood Park, Illinois 60707.

William Hankinson, A 254, Life Member 1840 has been reported as deceased but no other information was given.

Leamon Harvey, CN & H 254, died December 9, 2006. No further information was available.

Eslie Howell, B 254, Life Member 1462, died December 27, 2010. Joyce Marquis reported his death.

Floyd Hornbacker, SV 254. Died December 9, 2010. His widow Anna lives at 920 John R. Road, # 514, Troy, MI 48083.

Edward Karcheski, B 254, died May 10, 2010. He was 90 years old. His wife Edith of 70 years lives at 800 Mitchell Ave, King, WI 54946.

Elgin Lemmon, B 862, Life Member 1739, died January 4, 2011. Family members live at 335 New York Road, Smithville, NJ 08205.

Anthony Mucciolo, SIG 863, Life Member 1661, died January 11, 2009. His son Michael reported his death. His widow Josephine lives at 419 University Ave., Burbank, CA 91504.

Frank Padula, A 253, Life Member 1318, died December 3, 2010. His widow, Carrie lives at 1820 R# 197, Woodstock, CT 06281.

Harry Pepler, HQ 253, Life Member 1757,

died in 2009. His widow Joan lives at 1003 E. 71st Place, South Holland, Illinois 60473.

Arnold Perko, F 254, died August 10, 2010. His daughter reported his death.

Arthur Pinkham, MED 363, died May 10, 2010. His widow Margaret lives at 106 Colts Pond Rd, Oxford, CT 06278.

Nicholas Piazza, M 254, died November 20, 2010. His widow Brenda lives at 2528 Settlers Bay, Las Vegas, NV 89134.

Norman L. Rappaport, K 254 died March 26, 2008. His widow Yvonne lives at 3225 Atlanta St., Fairfax, VA 22030.

Pasquale "Pat" Scorzelli, A 255, died July 3, 2010. His widow Beryl lives at 52 Center Street, Ronkonko, NY 11779.

Fred C. Sein, Rifleman Company, died August 17, 2010 at age 83. No further information was available.

Raymond H. Sitter, FA 863, Life Member 934 has died. His widow Helen reported his death but not the date of death. She lives at 110 Kensington Dr., Florence, AL 35630.

Robert J. Stahlman, H & M 253, died January 2, 2006. His friend, Ed Merritt, reported his death.

Albert La Vecchia, E 253, Life Member 806, died January 3, 2011. His daughter, Deborah reported his death.

William Whitten, A 255, Life Member 864, died November 9, 2010. His widow Robbie lives at 935 Southerland Rd., Hoirton, AL 35980.

DEATH OF SPOUSES

Lucille Estermyer, wife of Charlie Estermyer, died July 1, 2010.

Reva Kloostra, widow of Chris Kloostra, died October 9, 2010. Chris was in H 255 and Life Member 777. Daughter Judy reported her death.

Vertalee Pillsbury, widow of William Pillsbury, HQ 63, died November 7, 2010. Daughter Teresa reported her death.

The War Time Journey of James E. Merritt

submitted by Ed Merritt

Headquarters 63rd Infantry Division US Army, 9, May, 1945.

*By direction of the president, under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, the Silver Star is awarded by the Commanding General to the following: **James E. Merritt, Jr.** 0556854, second Lieutenant, Infantry. Company "M" 253rd Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on February 8, 1945 in the vicinity of Kleinblittersdorf, Germany during an enemy counter-attack and when mortar fire was impossible because of poor visibility and infiltration, Lieutenant Merritt, forward mortar observer, without regard for his personal safety, took charge of approximately 25 rifle troops and personally led them against the enemy, repulsing the counter-attack, taking 70 prisoners and killing 30 of the enemy. The magnificent courage and outstanding gallantry under fire of Lieutenant Merritt reflect the highest credit upon himself and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Armed Forces of the United States. Entered military service from Clarksdale, Mississippi.*

From the time I was old enough to sit on the pot and look at the Encyclopedia I wanted to go to France, Germany, and all of the rest of Europe. Of course, the pictures of World War I were the most fascinating. I would listen to my Uncle Poustian and Uncle Ruban about their experiences while in the Army in Europe.

My grandmother told me about Grand daddy and his experiences in the Civil War. It was a great thrill to imagine these things and a great desire to see Europe and the old villages and places that I had read about.

Daddy's friends, Bob Bobo, Bouldin Marley, and Chuck Bolden, called him Mare. I at first thought this was a slight but it was a compliment. Apparently daddy was very strong and tough. According to Chuck, however, they never looked for fights. Daddy was in the band and played 1st chair baritone. Apparently he was good. He never played football but played some basketball where he got his front tooth knocked out.

He was on the rifle team at Ole Miss, a member of the Cardinal club (with Bob Bobo and Chuck Boldin) and he was in the Ole Miss band. Daddy could

also swim well. When I was little we would go to the big pool by the high school. It was really wide. Daddy would ride me on his back. He told me to pinch him when I needed air. He could go over and back with me on his back in one breath. When Amanda and Jay were little he would do the same thing at his pool at 903 Lynn. It would seem like daddy would go under water and eventually, what seemed like a long time, would come up for air. I have never seen anything like it, maybe from blowing that baritone!

I would imagine that for the first 18 years of my life was about like everybody else's life. I did all sorts of normal things like trying to learn to play the piano, getting into fights, going on band trips, hunting, fishing, going to college, trips to Atlanta to see Ann and the most nervous time in my whole life was when I married Ann.

When I went to Ole Miss I joined the ROTC and that helped quite a bit in the next few years. I went to the Army June 18, 1943 at Hattiesburg and life began to change. I could never believe that Army life could be so terrible. I made the mistake of saying no one was coming to see me the second day I was at Camp Shelby and spent three days in the mess hall peeling potatoes. For two days we spent moving beds from one barracks to the other. When we got orders to leave Camp Shelby, I thought that was the most wonderful thing in the world, but it really wasn't.

We rode into Fort McClellan and the first thing I saw were soldiers practicing with the bayonet. From then on until we got out, it was 12 to 14 hours a day. After we left Basic Training we went to Ole Miss for a couple of months waiting to get into OCS. It was far less physical compared to Basic Training. I was also high man with the rifle which I think helped me get through. I had more gigs on that rifle than anybody. It was impossible to clean.

After I got out of OCS, Ann and I were married on September 7 (or 11), 1944. I can never get it straight. In my whole life I have never trembled so much. She is the best thing that ever happened to me, although she gets mad at me sometimes.

We went to Memphis for our honeymoon and saw General Forrest's statute. He was who my granddaddy rode with. After that short three days, we

The wartime journey . . .

went to Van Dorn for about a month. Ann found out from the Colonel's wife where we were being shipped and met me in New York. After seeing Ann and my mother, I made it back to camp and tried to catch up on some rest with another officer. The Colonel came in and saw us sleeping. I was officer of the Mess Hall from then on so I couldn't get back out to see Ann. The only good thing about the Mess Hall was it was warm and I had plenty to eat.

After we left camp, we got on trains and went to the harbor, got on a ferry, and went down to a pier to our ship. I saw the Statue of Liberty that night on the way down to the ship. The Salvation Army was giving donuts.

The trip over on the Sea Robbin was very uneventful and I wrote Ann every day, but I think all my letters were the same. One night as we were going through the straits of Gibraltar the Colonel asked me if I would like to be back in Tennessee. I told him I was from Mississippi and that was a terrible mistake. He turned and walked away.

We landed in Marseilles on December 8, 1944 and it was a great thrill to me to put my feet on French soil. The civilians were leaning out windows and handing bottles of wine to us. I didn't drink but a lot did.

We made it to a barren stone hill outside of town and tried to put up our tents. That night German planes came over and bombed our ship. The sky lit up like the Fourth of July. We had to put a platoon of men on guard at all times to keep other company's from stealing our guns and radios, etc. Nobody had enough radios or ammo at that time.

We finally got to where we were going that night and got our trucks and jeeps. We rode all night through the mountains with our windshields down in the snow and cold and I said to myself if I ever get back to Moon Lake I'll do my best to never get cold again. We rode all night and all day and ended up at some big old buildings with all the windows blown out.

Of course I developed a case of diarrhea. That night a Lieutenant came running in and said the Germans had broken through and everybody got ready to move out. This was the beginning of what was to be the Battle of the Bulge.

I'll have to admit I've never seen so much shooting and artillery fire in my life. The sky stayed lit up all night and all day. I wrote Ann that we were still training so it wouldn't worry her. After we left there we went out into the country. I could see our troops in a line going across the snow-covered fields and it was

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a sight I'll never forget.

After waiting awhile, a soldier found some apples in a house and I got a couple. We finally went on down into the village and started digging holes in cold ground and snow. All the time the sky was lit up with artillery and machine gun fire. The ground really shook and dirt flew everywhere. During the night some riflemen drifted through and told us the enemy was coming so we decided we better move back to the reserve line which was supposed to be in back of us. There were no reserves so we kept moving back through the snow.

The men kept throwing away their equipment and their coats until I made them keep them.

One man shot himself in the foot but it only slowed things up. We made it back to a blown-up village and stayed in a church with only the walls standing. We found out the Colonel was in this place, so I went and told him the situation. Our commander, Captain Oldeern, went out to see and got shot. We got something to eat and rested a while.

From there we kept going through the mountains and past bunkers and other fortified places. We went into one village and the Germans had scattered leaflets all over the ground with the 63rd Division emblem saying that our wives and girl friends were going with the 4Fs and we should be at home with them. The Germans knew better than us where we were because I didn't have any idea. We walked all that night and all along the way, tanks were trying to get on top of hills where they could fire. The ice and snow kept them sliding back down.

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Need to replace your DD 214?

A website has been established to provide veterans information on how to replace lost, destroyed, or never-issued DD 214's.

The website is:

www.members.aol.com/forvets/dd214.htm.

RECEIVED TWO COPIES?

If you received two copies of this issue of the *Blood and Fire*, please notify the editor as soon as possible. You don't need two copies and we don't need the added expense.

Thank you so much.

Donna LaCosse

Welcome To Indianapolis

Elevate Your Getaway!

The Circle City has it all, take a look....

You might already know that Indy hosts the largest single-day sporting event in the world, and that our zoo is ranked Top 10 nationally. You might even know that our legendary children's museum is the world's largest. But did you know that there are over 200 restaurants, Circle Centre Mall and the beautiful Central Canal within walking distance once you are downtown?

To elaborate: Two downtown landmarks, Monument Circle (The Soldiers and Sailors Monument) and Indiana War Memorial Plaza are great urban spaces. The 24 acre plaza, like Washington, D.C.'s National Mall, gives Indy the distinction of devoting more acreage to honoring veterans than any other city ... it's second to D.C. in number of war memorials. In the Civil War, 75 percent of eligible men from Indiana joined the Union, second only to Delaware per capita ... And since then, Indiana's war casualties have numbered double the national average. So, please ... visit the Plaza!

Downtown boasts three remarkable pro-sports venues: The Lucas Oil Stadium is home to the Indianapolis Colts, Super Bowl champs in 2007; Consecration Field House is home to NBA's Indiana Pacers and WNBA's Indiana Fever. The Indianapolis Indians play AAA baseball at Victory Field, our beautiful new stadium. Nearby also visit NCAA Hall of Champions, The National Collegiate Athletic Museum.

See in close proximity, our triple accredited zoo, exhibiting exotic animals within 5 different living habitats. Also the aquarium there with the world's only underwater dolphin viewing dome!! Then just next door inside, see the Hilbert Conservatory and be amazed by free-flying butterflies each summer.

Next you might want to try out the White River Junction Train Ride ... a 10 minute ride winding all around the zoo, where you will see animals of many kinds and the other facilities that keep the zoo running.

Perhaps you'd rather enjoy the 1 1/2 mile riverside promenade along the canal, or better still, rent a paddleboat and see the city from the water, OR visit the IMAX theater which delivers 2D and 3D films to a six and a half story screen!!

Next door to the Park grounds are the Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art a wonderful museum, and be sure to climb into an authentic stage coach on the lower level before leaving.

Want to shop? Circle Centre Mall is just a block or two east where you can visit Nordstrom's and Carson Pirie Scott department stores as well as many specialty shops.

Hungry? If you don't want to eat in Champs or the Food Court at Circle Centre, just step outside and take advantage of the many wonderful restaurants Indy has to offer.

Feeling tired? Then take a carriage ride around the city offered by Blue Ribbon Carriage Co. and Yellow Rose Carriage.

How about taking the kids to the World's Biggest and Best Children's Museum! This is not just for kids see 100,000 artifacts and get this! ... a 27 foot tall water clock. The 43 foot tall Fireworks of Glass Tower will blow you away! Also, a great Dinosphere exhibit. See for yourself by going to childrensmuseum.org

If you are inclined to get out of the city a little way, how about visiting The Indianapolis Museum of Art? The main building contains changing and permanent exhibitions ranging from ancient artifacts to contemporary masterpieces.

Don't leave the Indianapolis area without visiting the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Capital of the World! In the Hall of Fame Museum you will see one of the most diversified collections of antique classic passenger autos and racing cars in the world! Take a look at the famous 500 mile track.

Of course, there are many more places to visit, such as Connor Prairie, a "hands on" pioneer village where families of today explore and discover what it was like to live and play in Indiana's past.

We have much, much more to offer, so please come and check us out!

**DEADLINE FOR
THE
MAY 2011
ISSUE OF THE
BLOOD AND FIRE
IS ON OR BEFORE
APRIL 1, 2011**

The wartime journey . . .

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We got to a village by day break and I sat down in a hole in a stone wall and went to sleep. The men went into a barn and when I woke up, no one was in sight and I didn't know what happened. I went into the barn, saw our men and was really relieved! I picked up a German rifle all covered with blood and somehow, even brought it home.

By February we were finally at Saarguemines when we went across the Sarre into Germany. We had artillery lined up for miles to cover our crossing. The day before we went across, we went back of the line to try and rest till about 2:00 a.m. the next morning but that was impossible. We finally got in line and walked the rest of the night and got to the river where we crossed with no opposition.

All day we walked until we reached some woods in the vicinity of Kleinbittersdorf and started digging in along with some other officers. I was walking through the woods and saw a German soldier jump up and run. One of the officers said, "Shoot him, Merritt," but I couldn't do that. I'll never know whether or not he reported our position. Later on we went back to the other men and I started digging a hole up front with the other men when my radio man and Lieutenant Bobby J. Stahlman said to come over and dig with them. That was the best thing I ever did as it turned out to be o.k. My radio man and another soldier dug in right in front of our hole where Stahlman and I were together. As it turned out the Germans came in that night and killed everybody in front of me except my radioman.

A Lieutenant woke me up and said the Germans were on us. I rose up and tried to fire my rifle but it was a little wet and wouldn't shoot. Finally I got it to work and I saw Germans all over the place. I started shooting at them and don't think I missed very many. There were about ten or twelve behind a log about 30 yards in front of me. I kept shooting at them beside all the others running around. I thought I was missing until it was all over. During the shooting I told my radio man to stick his rifle out the hole and shoot at the Germans so he could tell his children how he shot at the enemy.

After it seemed like hours, other soldiers came up and I shouted at them to shoot like crazy! All of a sudden the firing stopped and the Germans gave up. We walked over to where they were and I looked back of that log and everyone was hit right in the head. There were two officers and some enlisted men I had killed and we got their pistols, radios, etc. We could pick up our airplanes with their radios. Our other men had dug in several hundred yards in front

of me all through the woods. After everything was over, I walked over and looked in the fox holes. They had all been killed.

We stayed in those woods another day or two while the Germans dropped shells on us. With the rain and fog and wet holes, it was pretty miserable.

Another Lieutenant, another Sergeant and I decided to look at where we were going next. Across a 100-yard open space was another stand of woods and we were sitting on the edge on our side looking over, when what sounded like a bee went through my head. The Germans were shooting at us! We jumped up and ran through a field covered with mines and wire. We never touched one, and the Germans started shooting at us after we had crossed the field.

Daddy had mentioned this but Chuck Bolden told me the story. At one point all of my superior officers had been killed or wounded, and I was Company Commander for a short while. When we got back to our group I reported to the commanding officer. He asked me where my Captain was and I told him they were all dead. I thought I would get a promotion but they decided to get another Captain to take over. I was disappointed. Chuck said part of my problem was that I always wanted to be in the front directing fire. He said a commander should not be in the front because he was responsible for the whole group.

We got back to our own men and some time during the day, I saw the Colonel. My friend, the Lieutenant, wanted me to go with him the next morning but the Colonel said I had better go with my own men. It was probably just as well because he died early the next morning.

I was very nervous the next morning while waiting to go forward. When we finally started it was a relief even though we passed boots and broken bodies and all that kind of thing. The Germans had just put shoe mines all over the place. We told the Colonel but I guess he forgot.

We got into the woods and all hell broke loose. Since I was the forward observer, I was running around trying to see where I could fire the mortars and the bullets were flying everywhere. When I stopped by one soldier. He had been hit in the helmet and one bullet had gone all around the helmet. I think I fired up the whole Division's supply of 8-mm mortar shells. It always sounded strange to me that all the other officers were in the big hole in the ground. I had to holler in the hole to tell them what was going on. We ended that battle and captured a few Germans. Then we went down in the

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The wartime journey . . .

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valley to a village and then my Sergeant got hit in the head, but not bad. His helmet stopped a piece of shrapnel and it only went about a half-inch in his head.

We went to another village where I captured a German mortar crew and got several pistols and mortars. There I used what little German I knew to get them to come out. Somewhere along the line I was at a quarry where everybody got shot up. They had some beautiful caves that overlooked the valleys. They had some good maps in the caves, too.

In one little village I had just received some cookies and candy from Ann and we had our mortars set up in the back yard while we were inside eating. Shells started dropping on us and we left everything and headed for the cellar. In between the shells, I crawled back upstairs to get my cookies!

We slept in a building in the center of town. Two of us slept in the cellar on some potatoes and all of the civilians were on the ground floor. During the night the Germans started shooting 88's and one hit between the window where the civilians were and I was below, which was only a yard. It sounded like a herd of buffalo running over us when that thing hit.

We found out one night that we were supposed to take a town the next morning. The jump off point was on a hill overlooking the little village we were to take. Another Lieutenant, a Sergeant and I were in a jeep looking down on the village and, being in a mortar company, thought it would be a good idea if we rode on into town so we could pick out the best house and back yard where we could put up our mortars. There was a full moon and it was blood red, which later made me think of a blood red moon as meaning disaster.

We rode down into the valley to the village and as we rode we noticed all the bodies lying on the side covered with sheets. I had never seen that before and it kind of un-nerved me. About a hundred yards into town we saw a tank with our markings and I told the driver to let me off at a pretty good looking house and to take the Lieutenant down to see about the tank. The Sergeant and I got out of the jeep and went into a house, out into the back yard and into the barn. All of a sudden shells started to fall all around us and I jumped under a wagon for a second, then I told the Sergeant "let's run!" I ran through several fences and finally made it to the front of the house where the driver and Lieutenant were waiting for us. We jumped in and took off. It turned out that the tank was knocked out and, we found out later, there was no one in town except Germans. It took two days to capture that place.

By this time it was finally spring time and the Germans were retreating. One day my Sergeant and I

were riding down a road when we came across a walled area. I remember it was really big and the walls were tall. As we rode by the entrance the gate opened and out came people who were skin and bones. I have never seen anybody like that before. I asked a man in a ragged uniform, I believe he was a French soldier, what this area was and he said it was a concentration camp. I think it was Dachau because we ended the war near the foot of the Alps near Munich. All I remember is that the people that came out were skin and bones and there were wagons with other people stacked up like cord wood. I had never heard of a concentration camp and did not really know anything else until the War Crimes Trials began.

Time Line

February 17, 1945: Crossed the Saare into Germany.

March 15-21, 1945: Two belts of the Siegfried Line cracked wide open for the armor. First break in the line Seventh Army front.

March 30, 1945: 63rd expands bridgehead attacking South through Heidelberg and Mannheim. Then turning east.

April 8, 1945: 17th SS Division ripped to ribbons by 253rd Infantry. Southeast of Heidelberg.

April 8, 1945: 254th Infantry on outside of the Whefl. Fights for 15 miles a day. Division on 30 mile front.

April 10, 1945: 255th Infantry drives across the Kocher. Puts 10th armored across Heilbronn. Line falls.

April 18, 1945: Road blocks and delaying actions.

April 22-25, 1945: 253rd and 254th Rat race to the Danube.

April 25, 1945: Fight across the Danube.

April 30, 1945: At wars end the 254th and 255th reach their furthest southern point against the Alps where they crossed the Ivertach and Lech Rivers and capture Landsberg.

The war was finally over for us though we thought we would have to help out in Japan. Luckily the war ended in Japan in August 1945 and the war was over.

I took leave and went to Rome in December 1945 where I called Ann. Britty had just been born on June 18, 1945 and would not make any noise, so Ann pricked her with a pin to make her cry! It was exciting and made me want to go home. I also went through Italy to find out where my cousin Walter Ligon had been shot down. I found an area some folks there told

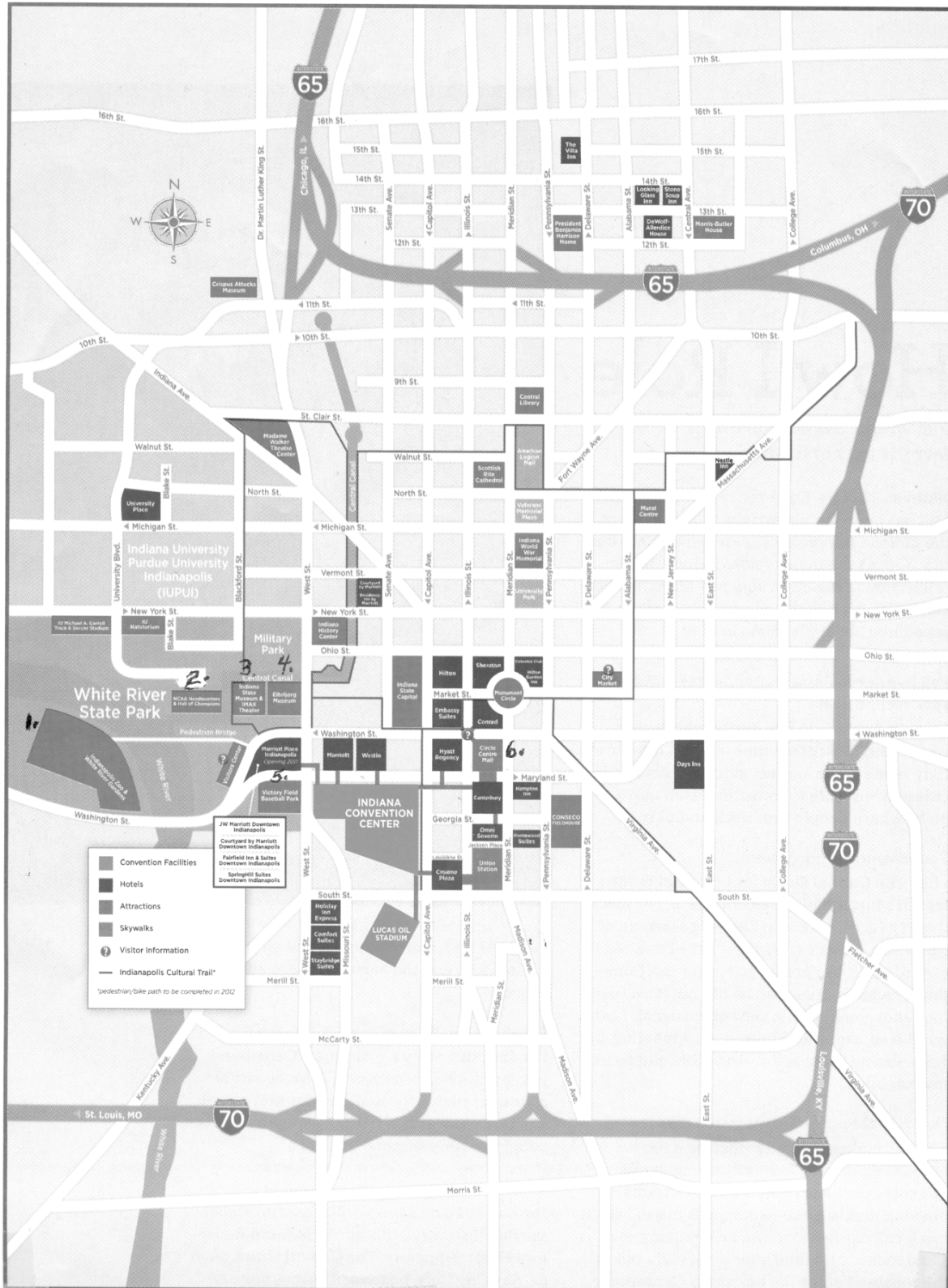
- CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

surrounding indianapolis



1. Airport 2..Indianapolis Motor Speedway 3. Indianapolis Museum of Art 4. Children's Museum
 5. Indiana Fair Grounds * CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL

downtown indianapolis



1. Indianapolis Zoo 2..NCAA Hall of Champions 3.Indiana State Museum--IMAX theater 4.Eiteljorg Museum

5. Victory Field 6. Circle Centre Mall


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