



★ CAMP BLANDING ★ CAMP VAN DORN ★

Blood and Fire

63rd Division Association, Inc.

• ARDENNES / ALSACE • RHINELAND • CENTRAL EUROPE •



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RENSSELAER, IN 47978

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They Served With Honor . . . Let's Honor Them on November 11, 2012

The veterans of this nation deserve our attention and pride. They did the job of protecting and preserving our freedom through wars and peace, and they did it courageously.

We all owe them a debt of gratitude, so on this day let's say "Thank You" in the grandest way.

Honor your friends and family members on Veteran's Day, November 11th.



*to one
and all!*

Season's Greetings



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 2012 OFFICERS

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FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT ...

Edward F. Fowle, Jr.

Following is a summary of an impromptu discussion, which occurred on Saturday afternoon and evening, August 18th, 2012.

After the scheduled Board of Directors Meeting an impromptu discussion was held with Beverley and Milton Houghton, Al Diaz (63rd Division Association, Inc. Board of Directors as well as members and officers of the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR), several other 63rd Division Association, Inc. Board of Directors, association members, and myself.

The idea that grew throughout this discussion is as follows:

The members of the West Coast 63rd Infantry Division USAR, as well as the members of the 63rd Division Association, Inc., would combine to form a new 63rd Infantry Division organization. The suggestions coming from Al Diaz, and Bev & Milt Houghton were that after the merge, the combined 63rd organizations would eventually combine the *Blood & Fire* and *The Blade* papers to the *Blood & Fire* format. Members of the 63rd Division Association, Inc. as well as the members of the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR will send in articles, reports and activities to a designated person in each unit.

The *Blood & Fire* will follow the same format developed by Donna LaCasse. We will make a strong attempt to recruit an editor to replace Donna. Bev and Al insisted that Donna be appointed Editor Emeritus. We hope she will be able to occasionally add comments or an information column in future *Blood & Fire* publications. We will be searching for a volunteer editor. So, if you are so inclined, and if you are associate member, we encourage you to participate in this rewarding experience, please contact Edward F. Fowle, Jr.

Our members would continue to pay \$15 for the *Blood and Fire* subscription and the \$10 membership dues. Paying the membership and subscription dues are vital to keep the publication of the *Blood & Fire* going. In the past, three issues of the *Blood & Fire* have been sent out a year; it has been suggested we consider sending out 2 issues to lower costs. If the merge were approved, the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR unit would pay dues and the *Blood & Fire* subscription fee. There is also some consideration to following the

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Minutes of the 2012 Board of Director's meeting

The Board of Directors of the 63rd Division Association, Inc., met at the Embassy Suites Columbus – Airport Hotel, Columbus, Ohio on August 17th, 2012. The meeting was held during the IMOK Mini-Reunion from August 16th – 19th, 2012.

President Edw. Fowle called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. on Friday, August 17th, 2012 and offered prayer to all.

There was no roll call since there were only six board members not present for the meeting. Edw made note that Mike Jugan was registered to attend but passed away three weeks before the scheduled meeting. Board of Directors present were: William "Bill" Byrnes, Archie Kumasaka, Howard VanSchoor, Alfred M. Diaz, Al DeBliss, Thomas Chatham, Beverley Houghton, Jack Linscott, Mike Thomson, Gale Hammond, and Milton Houghton. Proxies were sent to Edw Fowle as voter for Herman Fabiani, David Montgomery, Kenneth Erickson, Marsh Allen, and Fred Clinton. Secretary/Treasurer Donna LaCosse was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. There was no correspondence from Robert Bennett as to his attendance at the annual meeting.

The officers present were as follows, Edw Fowle, Judith "Fowle" Schaefer, Jack Linscott, Mike Thomson, Karin Froberg-Marzano, and Mary Fran Collier. William "Bill" Scott and Frederick Clinton were not present. In Donna LaCosse's absence the 2011 meeting notes and financial reports were presented by association officers and voted on. The meeting notes were taken by Jackie Potts, Mary Fran Collier and Judith Schaefer; all notes to be transcribed and combined for typing and submitted to the association and published in the November 2012 *Blood & Fire*.

Judith Schaefer read the minutes for the 2011 Board of Directors Meeting. Al Diaz noted corrections that needed to be made to the minutes. The sixth paragraph should read, Al Diaz made a motion to strike out the word "that". The 11th paragraph there should be more detailed regarding what was sent to California, and more detail of where all the flags were sent. The 15th paragraph had no mention of the election of the new board members and their appointments.

The motion was made by Al Diaz and seconded by Al DeBliss the 2011 Board of Directors minutes with corrections be submitted and accepted. All were in favor and the motion carried. (We have conflicting names for the motion by Al DeBliss and second by Bill Byrnes.)

Prior to the Treasurer's Report being given, Edw Fowle discussed the health of Harold and Donna

LaCosse and the trials of keeping everything current. Donna is still planning to publish another *Blood & Fire* in November 2012.

The treasurer's report was handed out to all in attendance to read. Al Diaz made a motion to approve the report; Archie Kumasaka seconded it, all in favor and the motion carried.

Bill Scott's Historian Report was handed out to all in attendance to read. A motion to approve the report was made by Al DeBliss and seconded by Beverley Houghton, all in favor, motion carried. Edw Fowle also noted he has asked Bill Scott, with the help of Karen Froberg-Marzano, to close the account and move all historical information to the museums of the 63rd Infantry Division.

Mary Fran Collier gave the financial report from the 2011 Reunion and 2012 Reunion accounts. Mike Thomson made a motion to approve and it was seconded by Bill Byrnes, all in favor, motion carried.

Old Business:

Edw. Fowle asked Al Diaz to explain the information concerning the merger of the 63rd Division Association, Inc., with the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) [US Army Reserve]. Al Diaz explained that merger discussions began with Ed Bundick, Bob Capasso, Al Diaz, and several other board members during the last several national reunions. Al explained that the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) has quarterly board meetings and an annual meeting. They do not have big reunions lasting over three days. Their annual meeting is one day with a luncheon included. The 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) publishes a newsletter called "The Blade," which is not as expensive to print and mail as the "Blood & Fire." If we merge with the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR), they will keep the 63rd Infantry Division history, and elements of the "Blood & Fire" would be included in "The Blade" and mailed to the 63rd Division Association membership. Obviously, there will need to be more discussion and details to be worked out prior to the merger.

Al Diaz (current vice president of the 63rd Infantry Division Association [USAR], Beverley Houghton (current president of the 63rd Infantry Division Association [USAR]), and Milton Houghton, member of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) will be attending the next Board of Governors meeting of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) within the next two weeks and will present the merger for discussion at that time. They will get back to the 63rd

Corrections to the minutes of the 2011 63rd Division Association, Inc. Board Meeting

The 63rd reunion of the 63rd Division Association, Inc. met at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Indianapolis August 18,19, and 20, 2011.

Edw Fowle called the meeting to order at 9:00am on Friday, August 19, 2011 and the Lord's Prayer was repeated in unison.

John Downes, Gale Hammond, Bill Byrnes, Al Diaz, Tom Chatham, and Beverley Houghton answered roll call with proxy voters Robert Bennett, Milton Houghton and Harold LaCosse.

Officers present were Edw. Fowle-president, Donna LaCosse-secretary-treasurer, Bill Scott-historian, and Fred Clinton-Webmaster.

Harold LaCosse read minutes of the 2010 meeting. Motion to accept was made by Al Diaz, seconded by Bill Byrnes and carried.

The treasurer's report was read by Harold LaCosse. Al Diaz made a motion the treasurer's report be accepted after the corrections were made. Beverley Houghton seconded the motion and it carried.

Donna said she did not have a *Blood & Fire* report ready for this meeting but would have one ready for publication in the next issue of the *Blood and Fire*.

The treasurer reported she had listed the band fee twice and would correct that error before the report was printed in the November issue of the *Blood & Fire*.

Al Diaz reminded the treasurer that liquid assets should be used instead of total assets since computers and other materials are not included in the report.

Bill Scott's historian report was accepted by a motion made by Al Diaz, seconded by Bill Byrnes and carried.

Fred Clinton reported he sent a complete set of the 63rd Infantry Division Historical Files CDs to the 63rd Regional Support Command Museum in 2011 and the 63rd Division flag to the 63rd USAR Historian, Tom Christianson, to the 63rd Reserve at Moffitt Field on 13 Jan 11. He also reported that he has sent a 63rd Division Flag, 3 regimental flags, 7th Army Flag, and an American Flag to Ft. Benning, Georgia, the Home of the Infantry.

Board members decided keeping a record of members on index cards was not necessary since all information is posted elsewhere, along with the secretary, the historian and the Webmaster.

Al Diaz made a motion that the secretary shall keep a record of all members and delete what was written in the by-laws pertaining to keeping records on index cards. The motion was seconded by Gale Hammond and carried.

A discussion concerning the continuation of the reunions took place with board members deciding this 2011 reunion be the last one to be held. Al Diaz made a motion to have the *Blood and Fire* available to all people free via the website. Gale Hammond seconded the motion and it carried.

Al Diaz made a motion the publication to be changed to approximately November, February and May so that Donna has more flexibility. Seconded by Beverley Houghton, motion carried.

A discussion ensued concerning the associate and their eligibility to hold an office and/or have voting rights. Al Diaz made a motion that associate members have voting rights, seconded by Gale Hammond, carried.

Al Diaz made a motion that associate members be given the right to hold an office, Beverley Houghton seconded the motion and it carried.

Bill Scott was asked to continue keeping and making history items available to the members.

Fred Clinton reported he had inquired about the Association presenting a plaque at one of the museums and if the Association wants him to get further information to do this he will do so and report back to the Board.

Elections for Board Members were conducted during the meeting. Their term will end 2014, those members include: John "Jack" Linscott, Fred Clinton, Mike Thomson, Gale Hammond, Mike Jugan, and Milton Houghton, their terms will end August 2014. Appointments remained the same; they are William Scott - E254, Historian, and Karin Froberg-Marzano-Assistant Historian, Frederick Clinton - D254, Webmaster, and Michael Thomson-Assistant Webmaster. The elected 2012 Officers will remain the same as 2011: Edward Fowle - FA862, President; Judith Schaefer - Associate, First Vice President; John "Jack" R. Linscott - A253, Second Vice President; Donna LaCosse - National Secretary/Treasurer; and Mary Fran Collier - Associate, Reunion Treasurer.

If you would like to stay in touch with Donna
LaCosse, send your cards and letters to:
P.O. Box 86 - Morocco, IN 47963

President . . . - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

63rd Division Association, Inc.'s reunion format for their annual reunions. The 63rd Division Association, Inc. has been following the same format for the last 64 years and as you can tell has been very successful.

Beverley Houghton stated the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR is having a Board of Governor's meeting on August 25th. Beverley is the current President of the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR and plans to present the above outlined suggestions to the board at that meeting. Discussion and vote to merge the two organizations will be during their annual meeting in April 2013. Once a decision has been made, Beverley will inform the Board of Directors of the 63rd Division Association, Inc.

By joining the two units, Bev, Milt and Al feel the merge will reactivate their operation, which will create a new enthusiasm for their membership. Their membership ages are in the 60's, and as you know our membership is reaching into the late 80's. If they so desire, our associate members of the 63rd Division Association, Inc. could possibly become active members and the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR unit would hopefully take the same action to develop and bring in associate members. In doing so, we would be extending the history and the life of the 63rd Infantry Division and continue to be dedicated to preserving the "Spirit De Corp" of the outfit and the fallen members.

The above stated is roughly the discussion we had after the 63rd Division Association, Inc.'s August Board of Directors meeting. There seemed to be quite a bit of enthusiasm between the three 63rd Infantry Division USAR members, MG Michael Schweiger, and the participating 63rd Division Association, Inc.'s Board of Directors.

As an added note, which is addressed in the minutes taken during the annual Board of Directors meeting, it was voted on and passed that the 63rd Division Association, Inc. will enter into the merge with the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR. Everyone was very much in support of the merge and voted as stated. It is up to the 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR to agree and vote on consolidation, which should take place in April of 2013.

General Mike's speech on Saturday night included talk of "The Last Man Standing". During a break from dancing, General Mike invited all 63rd Division Association, Inc. veterans to join him on the floor. He brought two bottles of spirits to the meeting, and out of one, he made quite a toast. The other bottle is to be held by the 63rd Division Association, Inc. for the last man member standing from the WWII 63rd Infantry

Division Association, Inc. We had a lot of fun with it; I know that Mike enjoyed it as much as everyone in attendance. Many pictures were taken, which, will be shared at the next informal gathering. The next gathering will be announced later this year and will be published in the next issue of the *Blood & Fire* or through emails and the website. The gathering will not be held until after April 2013.

We will send updates and notices to the 63rd Division Association, Inc.'s Board of Directors, including 63rd Infantry Division USAR members Beverley Houghton, Al Diaz, and Milt Houghton, and including Major General Mike Schweiger.

Many thanks to Jackie Potts, Mary Fran Collier, and Judith Schaefer for stepping in to take minutes for Donna LaCosse.

Judith Schaefer and Mary Fran Collier will assemble the November Issue of the *Blood & Fire*, with assistance from Donna LaCosse, and edited/printed by Pam Barlow of Rensselaer Printco.

May God Bless you all,
Edward F. Fowle, Jr., President

A Memo from the Secretary Donna LaCosse

I would like to begin by thanking everyone for the prayers, messages and calls this past year. It has been a difficult year. I have not been myself. In August of 2011, I began to notice some physical changes and by the 2011 October IMOK Mini-Reunion in Winchester, Indiana everyone and everything seemed very strange. I lost the entire month of December and I could not make sense of things. Adding to all of this I had terrible nightmares and could not sleep. I was taken to the hospital and was diagnosed with very low oxygen levels. I was put in the intensive care unit for 5 days and was put on oxygen. Once my oxygen levels were up and stable I returned home to get stronger.

In May, again I returned to the hospital with low oxygen levels and stayed for a week to stabilize my condition. I returned home to recuperate. One week following my return home our grandson, Jaman Iseminger, was taken from us by a senseless act of murder.

In October, I have once again been hospitalized for a week with low oxygen levels. I have been moved to the Rensselaer Care Center in Rensselaer, Indiana to stabilize my condition and recuperate. I am on oxygen full time and hopefully this will help my condition.

As you know, I cannot see, so Harold reads all of your wonderful cards and letters. He has been my eyes and a great help to me. - Donna LaCosse

Minutes . . .

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Division Association, Inc., with comments from those discussions. The merger cannot be voted on or approved until their annual meeting, which will be held in April of 2013.

Al also explained that by merging with the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR), the memory and history of the 63rd Infantry Division would go on, and that all could continue to maintain individual chapters with meetings/reunions, as the constitution and bylaws of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) permit currently the formation and operation of chapters.

Open Discussion regarding merger:

Questions from the floor:

What is the alternative if we do not merge?

Answer: The 63rd Division Association, Inc., would be dissolved. Judith Schaefer read from the by-laws referring to the funds remaining after settlement of all liabilities will be disposed of as follows:

- (1) Thirty (30%) percent of remaining funds to the Camp Van Dorn Museum in Centreville, Mississippi.
- (2) Thirty (30%) percent of remaining funds to the Camp Blanding Museum, Camp Blanding, Florida to be used in the perpetuation of the 63rd Infantry Division Memorial in the Camp Blanding Memorial Park for as long as such funds shall last.
- (3) Thirty (30%) percent of remaining funds to the Army Museum currently planned for construction at the Fort Belvoir, Virginia.
- (4) Ten (10%) percent of remaining funds to The Freedom Foundation, Valley Forge, PA to be used in the perpetual care of the 63rd Infantry Division Memorial located on the grounds of The Freedom Foundation for as long as such funds shall last.

Edw Fowle explained that the reason for the merger would be to keep the memory of our fallen comrades alive.

Question about the dues:

- (1) A thought was that the dues should be sent to the combined association but this is a detail that will need to be worked out.
- (2) Some discussion to move Life Members into the merger enrollment without dues.

If we merge, what happens to current assets?

- (1) After this reunion, publishing the last *Blood & Fire* and paying for the postage to ship all of the Historical information, which Bill Scott will be shipping. (Quite possibly, there will be little left of the assets after all transactions are finalized.)

Again, these are details we will need to work out.

Edw said that the 63rd Infantry Division flag we have with us today will be sent to Camp Blanding Museum, Camp Blanding, Florida.

Karen Froberg-Marazano asked if members who are not present needed to vote for the merger? No reference to any such requirement could be found in the by-laws.

Gale Hammond made a motion to approve the merger after the details were worked out, Al DeBliss seconded the motion. Motion was tabled for further discussion.

Discussion took place regarding the details for the merger, with a hope it would be worked out at this reunion so a possible merge could be presented at the next board meeting of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR). After a discussion at both Board Meetings, a proposal will be developed for presentation at the annual meeting of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) in April 2013. We will keep in touch with Beverley and Milton Houghton and Al Diaz.

A new motion to merge was made by Al DeBliss and seconded by Bill Byrnes. All in favor, motion carried.

When all the details are worked out, the Board of Directors will be notified. All details will be reported in the *Blood and Fire*.

More open discussion about the merger.

Edw Fowle reminded everyone that this merger is to keep the memory and the history of the WWII 63rd Infantry Division alive in honor of all comrades. Since we are unable to continue with the 63rd Division Association's annual national reunions, by combining the two associations, we can continue to stay in touch with our comrades through the *Blood & Fire* - "The Blade" and our website will continue with the history and the posting of the *Blood & Fire* - "The Blade". The 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) will be the best caretakers to perpetuate the 63rd's memory.

Beverley Houghton explained that they have not been as socially involved as our Association. She feels it is important to keep lines of communication open. The

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only reason to accept any funds that might be left from our Association would be to publish and mail the newsletters, etc. The members of the 63rd Division Association, Inc., would send all of their information to 63rd USAR or Beverley and it would be published in *The Blade/Blood & Fire*. There are currently about 200 members in the 63rd USAR organization.

Questions were raised about associate members and are they going to be accepted as members.

Al Diaz explained that their constitution and bylaws would need to be amended to accept associate members. This would be worked out in the details of the merger.

Question: *Do we have a list of all life members of the 63rd Division Association, Inc.?* Someone will check into this to obtain the list of life members.

More information was requested regarding the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR). It was founded in 1960 and is based in Southern California. The headquarters of the 63rd Regional Support Command (USAR) is now based at Moffett Field, Mountain View, CA. The present 63rd Regional Support Command (USAR) has 250-300 personnel, with many civilians forming the bulk of the command.

The 63rd Infantry Division was reactivated in 1952 as an Army Reserve division, not on active duty. The division status was ended in 1965 when the 63rd Infantry Division (USAR) was inactivated. The 63rd as a numbered, two-star command was activated in 1967 as the 63rd Army Reserve Command (ARCOM). In 1995 the 63rd ARCOM was inactivated and the 63rd Regional Support Command (RSC) was activated. In 2002 the 63rd RSC underwent a name change to the 63rd Regional Readiness Command (RRC). Then in 2009 the 63rd RRC was inactivated and reactivated with the name of 63rd Regional Support Command (RSC). All through this history the members of the 63rd, whatever it was called, wore the "Flaming Blade" patch as their unit insignia.

Within its reserve period, 1952 and on, it was originally located in the Hazard Park Reserve Center in Los Angeles, CA. In 1981 it moved to Los Alamitos, CA and stayed there until it was inactivated in 2009. The reactivation of the 63rd RSC was done at Moffett Field, CA which is where the 63rd is located today.

Within the current structure of the 63rd, there are maybe 100 military persons in the headquarters and 123 personnel in three US Army Bands

subordinate to it. The whole of the 63rd today is around 400 people with close to half of them being civilians.

Question: *Has the merge been brought up to the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR)?*

We have three of their members on our board and they were waiting to present to the Board of Governors of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) based on our approval of the merger. Now that the 63rd Division Association, Inc., has approved the merger request, it can be presented during the next board meeting of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR).

Question: *Does the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) have a website?*

They have their own website. The website which Fred Clinton maintains for the 63rd Division Association, Inc., has a link to the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) website. Fred runs this site for us. But he is independent, doing it on behalf of the 63rd Division Association, Inc.

Suggestions:

- (1) Name should be changed to the 63rd Division Association, Inc.
- (2) "The Blade" publication should include the name of the "Blood & Fire"
- (3) A card be sent to Donna and Harold LaCosse and signed by all in attendance
- (4) Judith Schaefer made a request that all in attendance sign a sheet with current name, address, telephone number and email address.
- (5) What are the next steps of our organization? For the time being and until all of the details are worked out, we need to carry on with what we have been doing.

Al Diaz moved to adjourn the meeting, Gale Hammond seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Judith Schaefer

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.

Merger Discussion following Board of Directors Meeting

August 17, 2012 – 10:30am

Organization:

63rd Infantry Division Association

- WWII 63rd Division Association, Inc., merging into 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR)
- Members from each organization will be equals
- WWII organization has a chapter structure. The chapters can continue to keep identity. The 63rd USAR currently has a provision that permits formation/operation of chapters.

63rd Infantry Division Association USAR will need to vote at its annual meeting in April 2013 for amendments to its constitution, including one to add associate members. This should help to expand the membership.

Al Diaz stated that amendments to the constitution of the 63rd USAR would be required, which should combine provisions of the constitutions of the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) and WW-II 63rd Division Association, Inc. [It is preferable not to create a totally new association that would incur costs of incorporation and a new ruling by the Internal Revenue Service of charitable or veteran's organization with tax-exempt status.]

Discussion regarding "The Blade" – "Blood & Fire"

The publication of the 63rd USAR, "The Blade," sends out about 250 newsletters for each mailing. It will be recommended that the 63rd USAR Blade, after a brief period of using both names, should become a combined publication called the "Blood & Fire."

Questions –

- What do we want in the newsletter?
- Should we use the "Blood & Fire" format or "The Blade" format?
- Do we have an updated mailing list for the WW-II 63rd Division Association, Inc.?
- The WW-II 63rd Division Association, Inc., will need to provide changes.

The merger process once it has been approved, could take at least a year to complete.

There will be many steps to hand off information:

- The secretary/treasurer (Donna LaCosse) will need to change signature cards for the banks.
- It will be recommended that Donna LaCosse be recognized as the Editor Emeritus
- Edw Fowle and Donna LaCosse will check

with the current printer of the "Blood & Fire" to see if they would like to continue to print the organization's "Blood & Fire/The Blade."

- Would like to use some of the WWII stories from back issues to put into future issues of the "Blood & Fire."
- Beverley Houghton will send information for the *Blood & Fire* regarding the merger discussion and vote by the 63rd UASR. Edw Fowle, Judith Schaefer, Mary Fran Collier and officers will continue to work with Al Diaz and Beverley and Milton Houghton toward the merger.

This meeting was attended by:

Beverley A. Houghton
Milton Houghton
Alfred M. Diaz
Edw Fowle
Judith Schaefer
Mary Fran Collier
Bill Byrnes
Al DeBliss
Tom Chatham
Jack Linscott
Mike Thomson
Howard Van Schoor
Mel Goebel
Gale Hammond

Report from the 63rd Infantry Division USAR Board of Governors on request for merger

By LTC Beverley Houghton USA (Ret)

Past President 63rd Infantry Division Association
USAR

The 63rd Infantry Division USAR Board met on 23 August 2012 and unanimously agreed to proceed with a process toward potential merging of the two organizations. This goal is important as an honor to those who served in WWII and to preserve the history. We will present a report seeking support on the progress of this to our whole membership at our annual meeting on 28 April 2013. In the meantime COL Alfred Diaz and LTC Beverley Houghton who serve on both boards and LTC Milton Houghton who serves on your board and is a member of the USAR association will work with members of your board to develop recommendations for a process that will be in the best interests of both organizations.

63rd Division Association, Inc. Historian's Financial Report to Council for 2011/2012

From 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2012 the following has been recorded

30 June 2011 Checking Account Balance	\$2,693.79
Orders for books, printouts, maps, patches, pins, CDs, DVDs, Plus included postage donations, new patches, refunds, and Reunion sales	\$1,683.26
Available cash	<u>\$4,377.05</u>
 Expenses:	
Post Office and UPS	\$ 451.93
Book and map copies	\$ 310.98
HP laptop computer, with review of old computer, Buying, and set-up of the new computer by expert	\$1,117.88
Office supplies such as paper, printer and copier cartridges, Envelopes, binders, and flash drives	\$ 240.24
Long distance phone calls	\$ 48.96
Travel to DeKalb, IL	<u>\$ 21.28</u>
Expenses total	<u>\$2,191.27</u>
 30 June 2012 Checkbook Balance	 <u>\$2,185.78</u>

William J. Scott, 3rd 63rd ID Association Historian
9 August 2012

Blood and Fire Report 2011/2012

November/February Issue (Printco)	\$2,222.38
Paper of Wabash (Mailing)	\$ 468.69
Morocco Post Office (Returns)	\$ 18.30
 May Issue (Printco)	 \$2,393.36
Paper of Wabash	\$ 466.48
Morocco Post Office (Returns)	<u>\$ 10.30</u>
 Blood and Fire Expenses	 \$5,579.51

Submitted by Donna LaCosse

63rd INFANTRY DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REPORT

INCOME

Registrations (23)	\$ 805.00
Meals	3,870.00
Donations	130.00
History Pins	90.00
Assoc Seed Money	2,765.47
Additional Money from Assoc	<u>7,000.00</u>
 TOTAL	 14,660.47

EXPENSES

Hospitality Room/Meals	7,448.39
Ventriloquist Show	500.00
Band	400.00
Color Guard	75.00
Server Tips, Name Tags, Shuttle To Museum, Memorial Program	340.05
Transfer Pin Money to Bill Scott	90.00
Bank Service Charges	<u>30.00</u>
 TOTAL	 \$ 8,883.44
 Balance as of Oct. 19, 2012	 <u>5,777.03</u>

World War II veteran shares forgiveness and camaraderie

By S. Derrickson Moore
DMOORE@LCSUN-NEWS.COM

(Editor's Note: The following article appeared in the May 31, 2010 issue of the Las Cruces Sun-News.)

LAS CRUCES – This Memorial Day (May 2010), Charles “Chuck” Miles is harboring no hard feelings for those who shot at him when he was a teen soldier in the last days of World War II. In fact, he has just presented a plaque that has a place of honor in the Möckmühl, Germany, cemetery where he and his fellow soldiers took refuge on April 7, 1945.

It’s the latest development in a story of forgiveness and synchronicity that stretches back through more than six decades of world history.

Miles, 84, also co-authored the 2002 book “Once Enemies, Now Friends”, which tells the story of two young World War II soldiers (Miles and German native Felix Pfaeffle) who met as friends and neighbors in Las Cruces and realized that long ago, they had been shooting at each other in a remote rural area of Germany. The book was translated into German and Miles and others have since toured Germany and France together, making friends, signing books and sharing stories with history buffs.

A plaque, dedicated in German and English “in memory of the American and German soldiers and civilians who died during the last days of the Second World War in Möckmühl” was presented in April 10 ceremonies by Wolfgang Schlauch of Mesilla Park on behalf of Miles, whose health prevented him from making the trip to Germany himself.

Historical plaques are important to Miles, a retired textile manufacturer and lifelong history buff. During his 20 years in Las Cruces, he has headed the Dona Ana County Historical Society and has personally donated five plaques in honor of local historical events and figures, now featured at sites from the Branigan Library to Las Cruces City Hall and Veterans Memorial Park.

“It’s my way of giving back to the community I love,” he said.

He figured a plaque would also be a fitting act of closure marking the 65th anniversary of a war that is still vivid in his memory.

“On the morning of April 5, 1945, a company of

American soldiers of the 63rd Infantry Division moved through Rogheim, Germany, meeting little resistance,” he said. “We hoped our luck would continue, but it was not meant to be.”

As squad leader that day, Miles was the first American soldier to enter the village of Möckmühl.

“We charged through an orchard into the town cemetery. Then bitter house-to-house fighting followed as we battled our way through the town on to our next objective.

On April 20, 1945, he was wounded, he said.

He dismissed it as “just a flesh wound,” rubbing the scar he still carries on his neck.

It’s clear that he’d rather talk about the recent friendships he’s made in Germany.

His personal post-war détente campaign started when Dona Ana Community College history professor Donna Eichstaedt invited Miles and Pfaeffle to speak to her history class.

“They’d never met, but discovered in the class that they were neighbors in Las Cruces and once had been within two miles of each other in Germany in 1945, two teenage soldiers on opposite sides, shooting at one another,” said Eichstaedt.

“Miles never forgot that cemetery or the town of Möckmühl and after writing a book about his war experiences in 2002, he was invited by the local historical society for a visit. Wolfgang Schlauch, Chuck Miles, Felix Pfaeffle, my husband Carl Eichstaedt and I traveled to Germany in 2002 and visited many of the villages where Chuck and his 63rd Infantry Division had fought. We were treated royally and gave talks and met a few German veterans,” she said.

“I developed some warm friendships with the people of Möckmühl, especially village historian Dr. Karl-Heinrich Kraft, who later visited me here in Las Cruces,” Miles said.

He learned their historical society was contemplating a plaque to commemorate the Battle of Möckmühl and the end of World War II by remembering those – both Americans and Germans – who lost their lives.

“With input from Möckmühl Mayor Ulrich Stammer, Dr. Kraft and Professor Schlauch, Miles decided to have a plaque made for the wall of honor in

On a personal note:

The Board of Directors meeting fell \$3,948.95 short of meeting expenses for the 2012 meeting/reunion. Participation dropped off 60% compared to last year. Participation at the Reunion/Board of Directors meeting has been falling off each year due to failing health, mobility issues and deaths of our veterans. This year was more of a drop off than the planning committee was anticipating; therefore our person charges were not enough to cover our minimum hotel charges. Trying to keep the per person cost of the reunions reasonable while trying to provide value has become quite the challenge. We are all finding this a sad reality of life.

The 63rd Infantry Division has been a very close knit outfit keeping up friendships and making new ones along with reminding the younger generation that war and its horrors are not the ideal way to solve our problems. Those of us in the younger generation have learned the importance of family and faith and how grateful the veterans are for the part their comrades played in their survival. As result of the reunions being a family affair we not only have good family memories, but many of us have made new friends. We are trying to come up with a way to at least keep our line of communications open and still be able to get together on a smaller scale than in the past. We still need to make the generations after us "Baby Boomers" aware of what was given up by others so that they could enjoy their freedom, all their creature comforts and their technology gadgets that they think they cannot live without today.

Thank you for letting me have a role in keeping the 63rd Infantry Division alive.

Mary Fran Collier

Celebration of Life

Leonard "Len" Zimmerman, C-263 SIG, Lansing, Michigan, died May 2012.

Michael "Mike" Jugan, MED 253, Pottstown, PA, died July 2012.

Ezalee Newman reported Wiley Newman died October 2012. He served with Co. A, 253, 63 at Camp Van Dorn and in combat. – Paul Vermillion.

It is with great sadness that I report the death of my Dad, James E. Graham of Decatur, Mississippi. He passed away on October 13, 2012. He was a life member of the division and was proud, as we all were, of his service with the 63rd ID, 353rd, Company K. – Jim Graham, his son, Kaiserslautern, Germany.

- Letters -

REGRETS MISSING COLUMBUS MEETING

9/29/12

Dear Super Chief Edward F. Fowle, President of "Blood and Fire",

This is Frank W. Marshall, a previous member of the 63rd Division, in 1947, when I was hit by an artillery fire in U.S. while I was a member of Col. Britt's field artillery.

I am writing this to admit to you that I had planned to attend your "Blood and Fire" meeting on August 16-19, 2012 in Columbus, Ohio.

My excuse is, I lost my wife just before, and I was really in trouble. She had picked up an infection with surgery and passed away in 2011.

It was necessary for me to cancel my trip to Columbus, much to my regret. I really would have enjoyed a "get together" with all my old friends.

Yours truly,

Frank W. Marshall

Happy Holidays!

WISHES TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE "BLOOD AND FIRE"

Since my husband's (Floyd Hornbacker, Sgt., 254 Inf.) passing, I wish to continue receiving "Blood and Fire", and also am sending a donation to help with the organization's expenses.

He and I both really enjoyed the 63rd Division news while he was still with us.

Our family really misses him. We had a beautiful memorial ceremony for him at the Veteran's Cemetery in Holly, Michigan in May, 2011.

When I pass on, I will be placed beside him. As we were together for over sixty-six years on earth, we shall continue to be together in the hereafter.

He was so proud to have served our country, and our family continues to be proud of him.

Best wishes to all his buddies and friends in the 63rd.
Anna Hornbacker and family

ENJOYS READING "BLOOD AND FIRE"

I enjoy reading the *Blood and Fire* but have been unable to attend the last of the reunions.

My next trip will be the big one.
Richard W. Scott

SERVED TOGETHER NOW LIVING NEAR EACH OTHER

I'm now 93-years-old. I joined in February 1945 - 3rd Squad Second Platoon.

In this squad was a boy, 18, at the time from my hometown in Iowa and a Sgt. Tom Lucas.

We served together until the end of the war. After the war, Peter Hauer, who knew my younger sister, married in Iowa in 1946.

Tim went on and Pete moved to Arizona in 1960. I moved to Arizona in 1980.

We live about 20 miles apart. About 10 years ago Tom Lucas called me and he had moved to Arizona and lives about 50 miles from me in Mesa.

We call on occasion, but are all retired now in Arizona.

Howard P. Miller
Col. 254, Pfc.

A Top Shelf Event!

At the Columbus, OH board meeting and mini reunion banquet the Commanding General of the 63rd Regional Support Command, MG Michael Schweiger, presented reunion President Ed Fowle a bottle of “Makers Mark” Kentucky Whiskey. The signed bottle by the General has an accompanying note which reads: “To whoever shall possess this bottle: This bottle with my signature is reserved exclusively for the Last Man of the 63rd Infantry Division...”

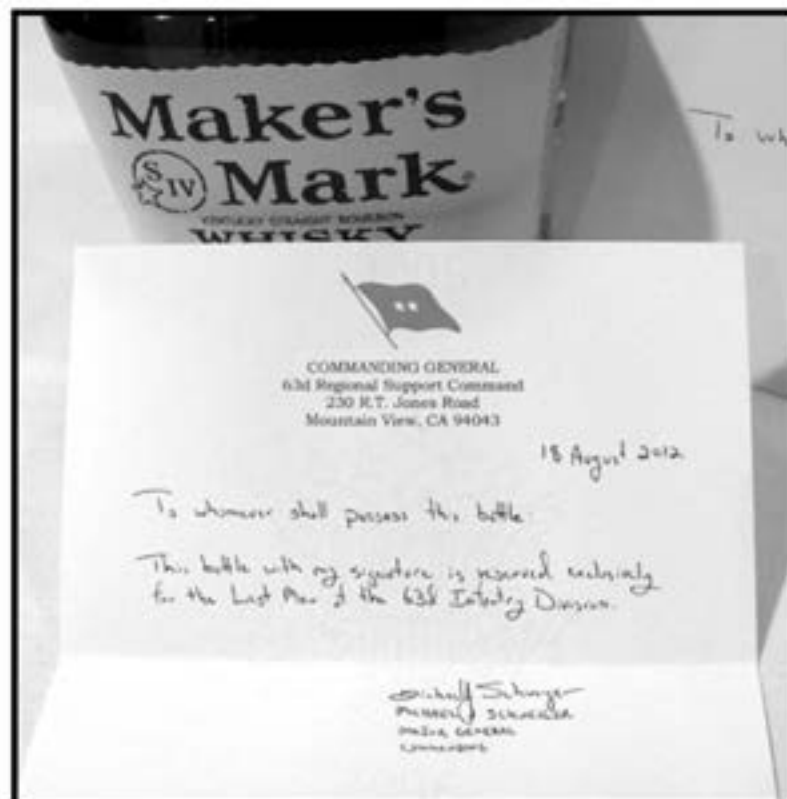
The General graciously and “wisely” brought a second bottle with him – which was used to toast the members present of the WWII 63rd Infantry Division Association, our fallen brothers in arms

and those who have gone

before us. Once the veterans completed the initial toast all present participated in making additional toasts including the ladies. Peggy von Pentz said it “literally took my breath away!”



submitted by Mike Thomson





BLOOD AND FIRE PHOTO GALLERY

Engaging in friendly conversations . . .



Last call for the 63rd

Editor's note: CNN Contributor Bob Greene is a best-selling author whose 25 books include "Duty: A Father, His Son, and the Man Who Won the War" and "Once Upon a Town: The Miracle of the North Platte Canteen."

I would see them in the elevators; I introduced myself, and found out that this was the annual reunion of the 63rd Infantry Division that, in World War II, had fought its way through France and Germany. Fifteen-thousand American soldiers in that division had



(CNN)—And then there were 10.

"I think this is probably our last reunion," said Howard Van Schoor, 86, of Mentor, Ohio. "I wish it could continue, but we're getting shorter in numbers."

At a hotel where I was staying near an Ohio interstate highway exit, I had seen a small group of elderly men having breakfast together each morning. In front of the little area that had been reserved for them was a placard with a military insignia and the words: "Blood and Fire."

crossed the ocean to Europe; the men I spoke with said that some 1,100 had been killed in combat, with many thousands more injured, some grievously.

The ones who were lucky enough to make it home after the war began having reunions in 1947. They were large events during the 1950s and into the 1960s; 500 or 600 veterans of the 63rd Infantry would convene for regional gatherings, and would bring their families. Sometimes, the men told me, there would be thousands of people at the get-togethers.

Ten soldiers were well enough to come to the national reunion this year.

Infantry Division?

by Bob Greene, CNN Contributor

“They would love to hold onto it,” said Mary Fran Collier, the daughter of former infantry sergeant Bill Byrnes, whom she had accompanied to the reunion. “But this will almost certainly be the final time. With so few of the men who are still alive and able to attend, we don’t even have a large enough group to get a good rate at hotels.”

Her dad – 86, a retired carpenter who lives in Oak Lawn, Illinois – said he was 18 when he went into the service. Fighting in Europe, he said, “You had to depend on one another for whether you lived or not. When you lost one, it was like losing a brother.”

That is why the reunions have always meant so much to him: “We went through the same things, and we’re the only ones who can understand that. When you’re getting shelled together ... the lucky ones who made it through, it’s just so good to see each other every year. You’re just so glad to see them.”

They were riflemen and artillerymen and mortarmen during the European campaign; they slept out in the open when the temperatures were below zero and when the temperatures were 80 degrees, they sometimes had to go weeks without bathing, they dug foxholes for shelter and ate cold rations and dreamed of home. They encountered, and helped to liberate, Nazi concentration camps and, the indelible horror fresh in their eyes and in their minds, they fought on. Young men then, they often feared that they would never have the chance to see their families again.

At the dinnertime banquets at the three-day reunion this year, even with family members and an honor guard present, there were only around 35 people in the room. A ventriloquist entertained the old soldiers one night; at one meal there was a combo playing songs from the 1940s.

In the weeks since the reunion, I have kept in touch with some of the men and have spoken with them some more. They told me that the motto of their division – that “Blood and Fire” line – derived from a wartime speech by Winston Churchill, in which he said that the Axis powers would “bleed and burn in expiation of their crimes against humanity.”

The men know that very few people remain who recall the duty of the 63rd. But their pride in their combat remains fierce.

“This division accomplished everything it was asked to do,” said Edward F. Fowle, 88, of Springfield, Ohio, who was 19 when he went in. “Never gave up an inch of ground, literally or figuratively.”

The men said they hope that American military men and women who are serving around the world right now will someday find the same comfort and warmth, when, 50 or 60 years in the future, their own surviving numbers grow small, and they are able to get together with those who fought beside them: with the people who know best what they went through, who shared such an arduous and defining part of their young lives.

“The feeling is still there,” said Dr. Jack Linscott, 86, a retired family physician in Marysville, Ohio, who enlisted when he was 17. “We have something in common. We counted on each other then, and we still do. It helps to know that there is someone who will watch your back.”

At the hotel, the men sat and talked quietly. Some walked slowly; other guests at the hotel either waited patiently, or hurriedly walked around them, intent to get where they were going without delay.

“My eyesight isn’t too good anymore,” said Howard Van Schoor. “But I like seeing these friends every year. They protected me, and I am grateful for that.”

During the war, Bill Byrnes said, when a member of the 63rd would die in combat, replacement troops would be brought in. “After a while, we learned not to get too friendly, in a way,” he said. “Because we knew that it would be breaking up your heart again when one of them goes, too.”

The end of the reunions is something the men say they know they will have to accept. “We don’t cry on each others’ shoulders about it,” Jack Linscott told me. “The feeling is that it has come to this, and there’s nothing we can do about it.”

They understand that in the end, as at the beginning, they have each other.

“The kinship is not something that you set out to form,” said Edward Fowle. “It’s just something that happens.”

“There is a bond between infantrymen.”

(This article was originally published on CNN and is being re-printed courtesy of Bob Greene and of CNN.)



BLOOD AND FIRE PHOTO GALLERY

Dancing the night away ! . . .





BLOOD AND FIRE PHOTO GALLERY



World War II - P.O.W.

Following are the true experiences as told by Roland H. Hiles, Jr.

[The following article is a continuation from the May 2012 issue of the *Blood and Fire*.]

PRISON CAMP - STALAG IV B

We faced the dreaded train again. The conditions hadn't changed a bit. Only this time, the men in the car were told not to grab the five gallon can -- it was for water. As we loaded on the train, I looked over toward a grocery. There was a Coca-Cola sign hanging out in front of the store, just like back home. I thought, *what a small world it really is.*

Another hot ride! Except this trip didn't take as long. Still it seemed like a long time before we finally arrived at our next camp, Stalag IV B, located at Muhlberg on the Elbe River. There were some Poles, Russians, French, and Italians at this camp. The barracks we were assigned to had a British sergeant in charge. My uniform was torn and ragged. The British gave me a shirt and pair of pants. The British uniform was heavier than my U.S. issue, and a wool and scratchy.

The English respected rank. They would salute a German officer the same as theirs. The Americans were just not bred that way. We respected rank of our own, but could never bring ourselves to salute any German. The following day a British Sergeant Major gave us a talk about life in the prison camp and what was expected of us. They had a store of sorts set up in this camp, you could buy any number of things, if you had the cigarettes to do so -- sweaters, shoes, pants and shirts, plus food of all kinds. We were also told you could barter with the German guards for a loaf of bread, the price was fifteen cigarettes. Salt was impossible to get and sugar was rare to find. The British had everything so regimented it was just like being in the Army, not in a prison camp. The Americans, as usual, would start bidding for a loaf of bread from a German Guard. Before you knew it, the price had been driven to eighty cigarettes a loaf. The British just about had a hemorrhage.

I had lost quite a bit of weight and I was getting weak. I knew I had to keep my muscle tone, what little was left. As a non-commissioned officer I didn't have

to work, but the fellows who did go out to work in the fields were able to get potatoes and some other vegetables. I started walking each day around the compound, increasing the distance day by day until I gradually began to gain some strength back.

The days were long and time seemed to stand still. It would have been a lot worse if I hadn't had my little New Testament. Each day I would read it over and over. I gained so much strength and inspiration. It also helped keep my mind more alert, plus gave me hope that the war would someday be over. After all, I had a lot to go back home to!

Each morning we had to line up in rows of five. A German officer would walk along counting the rows of five, ten, fifteen, and so forth. We would line up five, then six, the next row maybe three, then seven. He would start counting, then come to the uneven numbers. He would stop, then would start, "*Five, five, five.*" We would line up all over again until he would grow tired of our little game. Then we had to stand there for two or three hours. He would finally come back and ask if we wanted to cooperate. If not, no bread ration that day! If he counted fifty men that meant we would get five loaves of bread to be shared ten men to a loaf.

The English had a short wave radio concealed in the camp. Each morning a German officer would come to each barracks to read a news bulletin. The news would be disheartening. He would say the Americans were driven back to the sea and before long would be wiped out. After he left, the English would post a man at each door, then they would read the latest news bulletin as broadcast by the BBC; the Americans and British had actually advanced, the Germans were gradually being driven back to Germany. This sure helped perk up everyone. We also had a little deal going with the German guards. You had to be very careful, as the guard dogs would patrol the compound after dark and were really mean. We would trade our instant coffee for bread. The guard would wet his finger, then dip it into the coffee to taste it. What the guard did not know was that we would fill the can half full of ashes then put instant coffee on top.

The latrine was a building with about fifteen holes in a long board over a concrete pit. Each day the Germans would pump the hole. In Europe they use human waste

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- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

to fertilize their fields. The waste is pumped in a large drum (we called the Shizen cart, or s--t cart). A Russian drove the cart which is pulled by an old oxen. He would get the oxen up to a trot as he went down the street. The wagon would start rocking back and forth as the contents would slosh out onto the ground. When the Russian came back to camp, he would smuggle in a loaf of bread enclosed in a gunny sack hung down inside the cart. If you were able to trade for the bread, the thought never occurred what might be on the crust, especially since the sack would smell like -- you know what!

I traded cigarettes for a piece of hard tack. Hard tack is about four inches square and impossible to eat. One of the British fellows finally told me how to fix the hard tack. He said to soak it in water all night. The next morning it was about eight inches square and about an inch thick. I then fried the hard tack, it was really good. The British are quite innovative. They would take a powdered milk can and make a pot with a shute attached to a fan driven by hand. You could put any material that would burn in the pot, light it, turn on the fan, and it would boil water in about five minutes. I gave five cigarettes for one of these, then two cigarettes for a pot to cook in. The pot I had was about ten inches high and five inches wide. The Russian I got this pot from had taken a nail and scribbled a flower-like design on the side. The pot served not only to cook with, but also as your eating utensil. We continued to trade instant coffee (half ashes with a layer of coffee on top) for bread. They finally wised up and would stir it a little to see if they were getting coffee. One particular night, I slipped outside to try to trade instant coffee for bread. The guard was superstitious to begin with. I held the tin of coffee out to him. He held the bread while he tasted the coffee. He dropped the bread and yelled as he got a good taste of ashes. I took off as I knew the noise would bring the dogs. I was running as fast as I could when everything came to a halt. A wheel barrow was lying along the fence. I fell into and on top of it, driving my knee into a metal band. I crawled along the ground as fast as I could. I could hear the dogs barking. I just got to the barracks, crawled inside, when the dogs started snapping at my heels. I was deathly sick to my stomach from the pain. I later found out I fractured my knee cap. The next morning I couldn't get out of my bunk. My leg was swollen about twice its size. A German guard came in and threw me out of my bunk, then started kicking and yelling at me to get outside. The pain was so intense, I couldn't make it. He left me

there on the floor. The worst thing was that I didn't get any bread ration that day. I had to get myself up to at least be counted the next day so I wouldn't lose my ration another day. A buddy found a piece of a tree limb which I could use as a crutch. I was able to hobble around to at least get my ration of bread and ersatz (coffee). We also got either cabbage soup or pumpkin stewed water. Once every other week we also got rutabaga, which we ate fried, stewed, or even raw.

I had a double edge razor blade which I would "strap" on my shoe to sharpen it so I could shave. Sometimes it seemed like it pulled my whiskers out by the roots!

It is August and the Germans have a problem. The Poles have risen against the retreating German Army. They fought against overwhelming odds for sixty one days before being beaten down. The Russian Army wasn't too far away, but they offered no help. After the uprising by the Polish people, a train load of women were brought into our camp. I asked a German officer about the women being taken prisoners by the Germany army. He told me they had fought against the fatherland so they were considered soldiers. They were all lined up in an open compound. They had their clothes removed, then stood there in the hot sun while their clothes were being deloused in gas ovens. We could see the women at a distance, they were outside for about six hours before they were given their clothes back. Word reached us that the Polish people were really slaughtered. We couldn't get used to seeing women in our camp. Soon they were lined up and taken out to work on nearby farms.

In this camp we have a tall, slender German guard whose name is Von Slimmer. We call him Slim, he responds each morning, "Gut morgan," meaning "Good morning." He was on the Russian front until he was badly wounded. He hates the Russians with a passion. Every time he gets a chance he kicks the Russian prisoners in the rear end. The sharp pointed boots the Germans wear are excellent to drive your tail bone up between your shoulder blades.

Each morning the Italians and French line up outside their barracks and march off to work in the German factories and on the farms. We line up and boo the French and Italian for collaborating with the Germans.

The only water we get is for drinking. Oh, what a good hot shower would feel like. The days pass by, the hunger pangs never leave. We sit around and dream of

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

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all kinds of exotic foods. Each week, on Friday, each barrack gets a ration of peat briquets to burn in the stove. The Germans charge us twenty cigarettes for the small basket of peat. Two or three of us would go with an old guard who's called Pops. He couldn't speak English so we called him all kinds of names, all the time patting him on the back and smiling. He would nod his head in agreement. If he only knew what he was being called, there wouldn't be any grin, I'm sure. As one man would load the peat in the basket, we would take turns getting old Pop's attention, all the time, stuffing as much peat as possible inside our shirts and also stuffing our pockets full. We would then go back to the barracks where we stashed the peat above the ceiling. We were trying to get as much as possible for the Christmas holidays.

The days were getting colder as winter approached and the barracks, with their dirt floors and brick walls, were also cold and damp. We only had one stove for the whole barracks. The fellows near the stove got some benefit from the heat, but the fellows on each end felt only the cold. Some glass was missing from some of the windows, but we did manage to find some cardboard to keep the air from blowing through.

The double bunks we slept in only had five or six slats on which to place our gunny sack mattresses, which were stuffed with straw. The slats slide often so you had to be careful to keep from falling on the floor. If you had the upper bunk, you would wind up on top of the fellow below.

A British outfit had been captured in North Africa. They were part of a divisional band, and for some unknown reason, the Germans permitted them to keep their musical instruments.

Each Saturday night we were allowed to have a jam session with one bass fiddle, an accordion, and a clarinet. We played all the popular songs and it sure helped boost our morale.

One morning about four o'clock, sirens were blaring and S.S. Troops were yelling and rousing us out in the snow. We stood there for about two hours, huddled together, each man with his blanket around him. The S.S. Troops just about turned the barracks upside down. They were looking for the radio. (I had two small cookies hidden in my bunk for which I traded two cigarettes with one of the English fellows. He had received the cookies from home.) When we were finally able to return to the barracks it was in shambles. Each bunk had been overturned and my

two cookies were gone! The radio wasn't found! The British had hidden it in the bass fiddle.

One day, while walking past the barracks of the French, I could smell a rabbit cooking on the stove. My buddy and I thought, "Man, would that taste good!" He stood by the door, switched off the light as I grabbed the rabbit and took off. I stuck the rabbit inside my short . . . it was HOT! We shared the rabbit and boy, did it taste good. Our stomachs weren't used to such food so we were both sick, but it was worth it. The next day the German officer had a discussion about stealing from fellow prisoners. I did burn my stomach, but the rabbit sure did taste good.

The British found out the Germans were going to make a surprise inspection. Someone put a large turd in a tin can. Then they ran a piece of wire along the outside of the barracks wall and buried the can at the end of the barracks. A little guard saw the wire and called for another guard to show him what he had found. The German officer pushed him aside, dug down to the can, grabbed it and stuck his hand in the can. You should have seen the look on his face. He turned red with anger. He started kicking the little guard in the rear end. We last saw him running ahead. Each time he was kicked he yelled and tried to run a little faster. We never saw him again. We all thought he was probably sent to the Russian front.

We got pumpkin about once a week. The fellows would cut the pumpkin up after it was peeled, then throw the seeds and membrane outside. The Russian prisoners would be there grabbing handfuls of the seeds and stuffing them in their mouths. We would boil, fry, and stew the pumpkin. Salt, pepper, and sugar were items not available. The only spice you could get was paprika, which wasn't much except for color.

One day a wagon hauling cabbage in the camp passed by the Russian compound. A Russian grabbed a head of cabbage and took off. Unfortunately, a German officer happened to see him and took off in pursuit. He rounded a corner, tossed the cabbage to a buddy then fell as he was struck by the German. Another Russian was sweeping the street with a crudely made broom, consisting of a stick with twigs tied on the end. The German officer grabbed the broom and started to flail away on the poor Russian. All the time the poor guy was getting beaten, his buddy would point to the head of cabbage he had hidden under his coat. The Russian fell to the ground as the German gave him one more mighty hit on his head. The officer was exhausted and out of breath. He left on his bicycle. A couple of Russians

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

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picked their man up and carried him into the Russian compound. Later we heard he had died, but the Russians probably didn't report his death right away. When one of their men died, they would hold him in the standing position to be counted so they could get extra bread allotment. When he began to smell, they would turn his body over to the Germans for burial.

It is December and the first snow has begun to fall. It is getting colder and Christmas is coming. We decided that if everyone hoarded as many prunes, raisins and flour as they could, and what little sugar we had received in Red Cross packages, I would attempt a special holiday fruit cake (pudding). Using coffee cans, I planned to cook this, very slow, over a fire, using the peat we had been storing. However, all of this peat finally was too much for the ceiling to hold and the ceiling collapsed. We started a good fire in the stove and had it going for three days and nights. I baked my concoction for twenty four hours. It still wasn't completely done. It was uncooked in the middle and was so heavy you couldn't eat much at one time. Also, our stomachs couldn't handle the richness of the fruit.

We were awakened again about four o'clock in the morning with sirens screaming. The S.S. Troops, this time assisted by the Gestapo, again raided the barracks still hunting for the radio. This time it was snowing. We were huddled together with our blankets wrapped around us. The snow is about six inches deep and really coming down. Our feet were nearly frozen when they finally let us return to the barracks. Again, they failed to find the radio. This time it was hidden in the accordion.

Tension is running high between the English and Americans. One of my buddies got angry at me and called me a son of a bitch. I said, "Don't ever call me that again." He cussed me again, then hit me a glancing blow aside my head. I hit him before I thought. He had a broken nose, a black eye, and a swollen lip. Just as soon as it started, it was over. We were both sorry. What the heck were we fighting for? The British Sergeant Major in charge of the barracks had me thrown into solitary confinement. He told me he had to turn me in as they wouldn't have fighting. After two days in solitary I was brought back to the barracks and was immediately confronted by the British Sergeant Major. I sat there and explained to him how I had been brought up by my father to defend myself. I was finally able to convince him, although he still was not happy.

PRISON CAMP -- STALAG III B

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We were told we were going to be transferred to another camp. Another train ride! Only this time we had to fight the cold instead of the heat. Our only hope was to huddle together. We arrived at our next camp which was east of Berlin near the Polish border. This camp was formerly a training camp for the S.S. Troops. These barracks were also brick with concrete floors. This was also cold, especially when you would track snow in the barracks, and it would still be there the next morning. The weather had really turned cold in this section of Germany. We no longer had the latest radio reports we had been receiving each day.

Anything the Germans had to say, we didn't have any way of knowing if it was the truck or not.

The days passed by very slowly. The food we got here was only one piece of bread a day and the ersatz. We were taken over to the big shower one day where we got our first bath in months. We had no soap, but the water felt good, even though it was cold.

One morning we heard what sounded like thunder in the distance. It wasn't thunder, but Russian artillery. They were advancing up the Oder River. For the first time, excitement was going through the camp. *Surely the end couldn't be too far away.* The guards were quite nervous and seemed to be more tolerant toward us.

PRISON CAMP -- STALAG III A

We were again informed we would be moving to another camp. This time we traveled by foot. The snow was really coming down. As we left the camp there was about eight to ten inches of snow on the ground and it was still coming down. We were moving in a half circle to a camp south of Berlin. As we made our way through the snow, it became increasingly difficult to make your way, as the wind had caused the snow to drift in some places over knee deep. One of the fellows had stopped and sat down. A guard came along and said he would shoot anyone who stopped. My buddy and I also had thought about stopping. Just then a shot rang out. The guy who had stopped was shot between the eyes. That halted any thoughts we had of stopping as we plodded along. We walked all day until it was nearly dark.

We came to a large farm. The men had crowded into a big barn. Three of us opened a door as three or four fellows tumbled out. They started yelling at us, "*There isn't room for anymore in here.*" We helped get the guys back in the barn then had to find a place to sleep ourselves. At one end of the barn was a little roof

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extending out from the barn. We each had a blanket, so we placed one blanket on the ground then huddled together with the other blankets over us and drifted off to sleep. I had taken my shoes off, and was sure glad I did! The next morning the shoes were frozen stiff. My feet had survived the night in fairly good shape and I managed to get them into my shoes. The shoes slowly began to thaw as we resumed walking.

At the farm we managed to steal a few potatoes which we ate raw. The snow finally stopped, but it was bitter cold as we continued on our way.

We reached a small town which was nearly demolished. I learned it was a Jewish settlement which was used to train young S.S. Troops. They not only ruined the whole town, but had annihilated everyone in the village. There were a few houses still standing, but they were riddled with shell holes and bullet holes. We stopped there for the night. We watched a German cut off a piece of sausage and eat it while we got a piece of bread and the usual ersatz. They had parked a truck near a building we were in. I looked out the window and couldn't believe my eyes. The truck was full of bread and on top of the bread were rings of sausage. I asked several of the fellows to give me their shoe laces. I tied the shoe laces together and fastened a very large safety pin to the long string of laces. I bent the pin like the shape of a fish hook. It was starting to get dark, so I had to work fast. I leaned out the window and slowly lowered the hook toward the sausage. I could just taste the sausage, boy, were we going to have a feast tonight! One of the guys uttered something to me and I told him to be still. I just snagged one of the sausages.

Slowly, I started to bring the sausage towards me when I was kicked hard. I almost fell out of the window. I lost the sausage, and the book with all those shoe laces went flying! I managed to grab the window frame. My buddy had been trying to warn me that the German guard was slipping up on me. I fell back in the room. The guard was still trying to get in a few more kicks. I not only lost the sausage, but the safety pin and the shoe laces. The guys were really ticked off. How to keep their shoes on was their problem. The next day a German officer gave me another speech about stealing food.

We resumed walking the next day, stopping only for a short rest then taking off again. It had stopped snowing, but it was still cold. The wind blew, making it seem colder. We were on the road for five days before we reached our next camp.

This camp was Stalag IIIA at Lukenwalde, about

thirty miles south of Berlin. We were assigned to large tents, each one holding about one hundred men. We had about a foot of straw to lie on with our one blanket, and with that many men, keeping warm wasn't too much of a problem. We did have one problem -- body lice. Each morning we would wake up and each man would check his body for bites. They loved to infest any area of the body which was hairy. We slept in our clothes and each morning could see a line around your body, under your belt line of numerous bites. Talk about itch, you could hardly sleep! We would be taken over to a site on the camp where you would take all your clothes off. A Russian sitting on a stool, had a small mop and bucket. You would step up in front of him and raise your arms. He would then swab the mop between your legs, rub it across your chest, and also give you a swipe under each arm. We would then proceed to a shower room where we would rinse the solution off. It burned like the devil so you didn't waste any time rinsing it off. There was no hot water so the water was cold -- ice cold! We did this once a week and each time we entered the shower you wondered if it might be your last. *The reason we thought this might be our last shower was because we had heard about the showers the Jews would take, only the water would go off and the poison gas would be injected into the shower room.*

One particular time the water went off before we could rinse the solution off. Men were yelling and lying on the floor. You couldn't get away from the stuff. We were all burned with an ugly red patch of blisters on each area where we were swabbed. Meanwhile, your clothes and shoes were put on big steel cars and pushed into a big oven. You can imagine the mad dash of men as they left the shower running out into the snow, trying to find their clothes. I guess we never got the same socks, shirts, or pants, and sometimes you had a problem finding your own shoes. The buttons would be so hot they would burn your body wherever they would touch. In the meantime, they would spray the straw in the tent and you would get a good night's sleep. However, we had one major problem, the eggs were never affected. They would hatch and we would start the mad cycle all over again. The first thing we did each morning when we awakened was to try to count the bites around your waist under your belt. One thing, the body lice never got on your head.

The days passed by ever so slowly. We heard rumors of the war getting better for Allies, although the Germans would constantly move through the camp,

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telling how bad the war was going for the American and British forces – they were taking a beating. We had no radio in this camp so sometimes it would be disheartening to hear any kind of news.

We did have some well worn playing cards, so this helped pass time away. We were able to obtain some candles and although it was dangerous to have one lit with all the straw, we would have a card game going at night. One night, one of the guys slipped out of the tent and worked his way along the side of the tent where we were. He then tried to sound like one of the guards. He called out, "*Out mit der lite.*" We quickly put out the flame, as we thought he really was a guard. He then raised the side of the tent, laughing like mad until all of the sudden he let out a yell. A guard had slipped up behind him and gave him a swift kick in the rear and as he bent over to try and make us think he was a guard. He took quite a ribbing over that episode.

The latrine consisted of a hole about ten feet long, three feet wide, and about six feet deep. Over this put was a log supported at each end by two logs in the form of an "x". To use this was quite a chore, keeping yourself from falling in. This happened to one poor fellow. No one would let him in the tent until he had taken off all his clothes and thrown them away. He was able to get an extra pair of pants and a shirt, plus socks, but no shoes. Although it was still cold, the number of men in the tent, plus the straw, it wasn't too bad. If it had been hot weather, the opposite would have been true, we would have really suffered from the heat.

The diarrhea started again due to the diet of grass soup. Sometimes it seemed like you just passed pure blood when you had a bowel movement.

We began to hear rumors that the Russians were approaching first on one front, and the Americans on the other. The guards seemed to change their attitude toward us. We had a visitor one day, a big fellow who came to camp. He turned out to be Max Schmeling, the former heavyweight boxing champion of the world. One of the fellows from New York City used to hang around the gym where the fighters worked out and recognized him and Schmeling knew him also. He said, "*Max, have you had a good steak lately?*" Schmeling said, "*I haven't even had a good hamburger.*" His visit seemed to be another way to try and feel us out, another sign the war wasn't going their way. The bombing of Berlin increased every day. It seemed like the ground would shake each time the planes made their bombing runs.

One day while standing outside the tent, I heard the sound of thunder. We were able to see a plane streaking

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across the sky far ahead of the sound. It was a German jet plane, flying far faster than anything we had in the air. *Was this the secret weapon that Hitler had promised he had? Would Germany be able to stem the tide and turn the war around?* This didn't help our morale any. Surely the end couldn't be too far away.

This particular camp contained prisoners from Yugoslavia, Holland, England, Poland and Russia. One night I thought I heard thunder in the distance, but the sky was clear. I realized it was the sound of artillery. The guards became extremely nervous and we knew the end must be near. Most of the German officers could speak excellent English and one such officer would tour the camp asking us about our feelings toward Germany. You can imagine the reception he received from us. He had lived in Dallas, Texas and had attended Harvard Law School. He returned home to visit his parents when Hitler grabbed him and forced him to join the army, or so he said. Of course we were fighting for our country and he for his, but there still was a cool attitude toward any and all the Germans.

LIBERATION IN SIGHT!

One morning we awoke, there was a strange quiet over the camp. No roll call, no sign of any guards, then it hit us! We were free at last!! Everyone started yelling and shouting, "*It's over, It's over.*" We tore down one of the guard towers and started a big bonfire. All of the sudden, thundering hooves came pounding on us. Before we knew it, we were surrounded by S.S. Troops.

Their officers said that if anything else was destroyed everyone would be shot. After much confusion and milling around, they left as quickly as they had come. We had to contain ourselves as we didn't want to bring the wrath of the S.S. Troops upon us again. Just then we heard the roar of tanks as they came rumbling down the road and crashing through the barbed wire fence. The Russians had arrived. One tank set its tread, spun around, then came to a stop. A Russian appeared in the turret, climbed down, and started barking orders to the Russian soldiers. We finally realized the Russian was a woman with a pistol strapped on her side. I said, "*Fellows, there's a real Pistol Packin' Momma.*" The Russians were running around, some had a bottle of vodka in one hand, their rifle in the other. They seemed to lack any form of discipline. They were hanging onto the tanks yelling, "*Berlin, Berlin.*" We were only about twenty-five miles south of Berlin, so they didn't have far to go.

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Russian officers came around and tried to set up some sort of rules in camp. From what I could see, they weren't really good at organizing anything that we weren't able to do ourselves. The second day the Russians were there, we didn't get any bread ration. The Russians informed us that there had been a confrontation with the German baker. He was shot and later died as a result of his wound. The next day, still no bread. I said, "*Fellows, we aren't any better off than we were with the Germans.*"

We had been able to organize some form of order in camp. The Russians proposed the highest ranking officer in the camp to be in charge. He happened to be a Norwegian general. Although he seemed alright, the Americans rebelled against anyone other than our own being over us. The Russians also informed us that no one was to leave the camp. They said any arrangements to return to Allied control would be made by them. They wanted to send us to Odessa on the Black Sea. I thought *why would we want to go that way while our own American forces were just west of us?* I just didn't trust them any further than I could throw a bull by his tail. They also told us that they had instructed their troops to shoot anyone trying to leave camp. One of my buddies was shot in the leg as he climbed through the fence. The highest ranking American officer protested the shooting and after much arguing, we were finally allowed to go to town. We were near the town of Lukenwalde. As we visited the town, gunfire broke out and a tank blew a hole in one of the buildings. The Russians were running all over town. Several women were attacked and every home was ransacked. A warehouse on the outskirts of town was completely cleaned out, except for a box of chocolate . . . which we devoured. The people in the town appealed to the Russians to leave the women alone, but to no avail. From what I saw, the Russians were barbaric beyond any stretch of the imagination.

My Polish buddy, who could also speak a little Russian, and I decided we would try to flee the Russians. Things weren't going too good, we hadn't had any bread for two days, and scant little of anything else. He had some wire cutters, so early the one morning we went to the far end of the camp, cut a hole in the fence, and headed west. As we approached the small town of Coswig, we heard machine gun fire. We headed for a small house near the middle of town. I could hear gunfire getting closer. We hugged the floor as bullets hit the walls, splintering windows, and showering glass everywhere. What seemed like an hour was probably only five minutes, then the gunfire

moved away. I ventured a peek out of the windows. A large field across the road from the house was the target. We could see what appeared to be Germans, running then hitting the ground. As they would get up, machine gunfire would break out again. I thought, *we've come this far, being freed, then get killed or wounded.* As we sat there pondering what to do, we made up our minds we weren't going back. We slowly made our way through town and saw no one. It really seemed eerie. As we left the town we came across several farm houses where we saw people trying to get something to eat. They seemed about as bad off as we were. We slowly continued on our way, hungry and almost exhausted. We decided to get some rest than face the next day, hoping it would be better than we had fared so far. We awoke about daybreak feeling a little better. We started out again. We later found out American troops had been in that area. As we traveled about ten to twelve miles a day, the American troops would pull back twenty to twenty-five miles. *We found out later they were going to let the advancing Russians occupy the territory to the Elbe River.*

The next town we approached was Juterbog, where they had an underground air field. We met some Russian troops and my buddy told them, in his crude Russian language, we were hungry. There was a small bakery in town and the Russians pounded on the door, but no one answered. The Russian troops then backed up and fired machine guns through the windows of the bakery. The door flew open, the Russians went inside. When they came out, they handed each of us a loaf of bread and a block of margarine. We sat there on the curb, tore off a piece of bread and smeared some margarine on it. I must say it tasted like nothing I had ever had before. This was a life saver, as we would have started our third day without any food. We found another barn where we bedded down, finally able to sleep without gnawing pangs of hunger that keep you from getting any rest. We found some cider which quenched our thirst. We had to be careful not to eat too much as our stomachs could only tolerate so much anyway.

We faced the next day with a whole new outlook. The weather had been pretty good, although the nights were quite cold. It was surprising how much strength a little bread and drink gave us as we trudged along. I had found a box of beautiful silverware, but after carrying it for several days, it became a burden. I don't know why, but buried it along the road in a small woods.

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Years later I read that some silverware was found in that area that had belonged to Queen Wilhelmina of Holland. *They placed the value at about sixty thousand dollars. It always haunted me that it could have been the silverware I had buried.*

Four days had passed and we still saw no signs of American Troops. We came upon a man and woman along the road. The woman was pushing a cart loaded down with all kinds of stuff. The man was riding a bicycle and yelling at her as she labored to push the cart up a long grade. I guess the months of frustration came out of me as I grabbed the man by his jacket and punched him as hard as I could. He flew off his bike then pointed to his leg. I felt a little sheepish, as he had a wooden leg. But I still made him take the woman's place, pushing the cart. We took the bike and took turns riding it until the rear tire went flat. We took a couple of rocks and pounded the tire until we could get it off. We were still able to ride it, but we were on cobblestones. It was a round and bumpy ride. Just as we approached the next town the wheel collapsed.

We were in Whittenberg, where Martin Luther had nailed his proclamation on the door of the church in town. The church was situated on a square with a monument in the center. I found a German motorcycle and thought, *What a break! We could really make some time now, or so I thought.* A Russian soldier persuaded me to hand over the cycle, and I didn't argue with him since he happened to have a machine gun. German cycles would start by pushing them, then you jumped on and continued on your way. The square at Whittenberg was paved with brick. This Russian, who had taken the cycle from me, proceeded to ride around and around the square like a mad man. It was raining and the bricks were slick. As he ran around the square, he would skid and fall, sliding all over the place only to get up and try again. I think he might have had a little too much vodka to drink! Anyway, we left him with his new toy. We found a hotel where some Russians were staying. Again, through my buddy's ability to converse with them, we were able to sleep in a nice bed for the first time in many months. The beds were comfortable and we were tired. It felt so good to relax, and we were asleep in no time.

We were awakened by gunfire and tanks rumbling through the streets. I looked out the window and could see much activity going on in the street. We found out later that the Germans had counter attacked. If they had succeeded in recapturing the part of the city we

were in and found us in the hotel, we probably would have both been killed. The noise died down. We tumbled back in bed, but we didn't rest too well.

Early the next morning, again, thanks to my buddy's ability to understand a little Russian, he could make out that they were talking about sending us back to the prison camp. We climbed out the window, crawled across the roof, and slid down the drain pipe. It was still dark, but our next problem was trying to avoid the Russians and at the same time, hoping not to run into German Troops. If we did, we would have another problem trying to make them understand that we were Americans only trying to reach American control. As we made our way through the countryside, we were glad it was Spring, although the nights were still quite chilly -- but days were warm. We stopped at several farm houses to get a drink of water. The German people seemed afraid of us although we tried to assure them we meant them no harm. We finally reached the Elbe River at the town of Magdeburg. A German had a ferry boat for which he charged two cigarettes for fare. He pulled the rope to transport us across the river. As we reached the other side, I grabbed him by his shirt, then I swung a wild right hand, hitting him on the jaw, knocking him down. I realized that here again, I was taking out my frustrations on the poor guy. I stood there looking at him lying on the ground. He was afraid I was going to tag him again. Just then I saw a jeep coming down the road. Two G.I.'s were in it. As I approached them one said, "*Are you a Limey?*" I said, "*No, I'm a Yank!*" I showed them my dog tags. Because I was wearing a British uniform, I guess I took on the look of a British soldier.

AMERICAN CONTROL

At last we're back in American control. We climbed in the back of the jeep. As we approached American lines, a lump came up in my throat as I saw the American flag waving in the distance. What a sight! We were taken to an aid station, checked out, then on to the kitchen.

I'll never forget my first meal; roast beef with mashed potatoes and gravy, creamed corn, cottage cheese with pineapple slice, and a slice of white bread, plus a good cup of coffee. A British soldier, who had also made it to our lines, sat there and looked at our food. He said, "*No, buddy, that's not cake, that's old American*

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white bread!" We ate like it would be our last meal and what a mistake! Everything was too rich for our weak and shrunken stomachs, man did we get sick. This taught us a lesson . . . take it easy, eat a little at a time and don't overload your stomach.

We were flown back to Le Harve, France, to a hospital called Camp Lucky Strike. There, we underwent a strict routine of diet and drink. After we were given a complete physical examination, we were assigned to tents. We were restricted for a week before we were able to go outside the camp. Our steady diet consisted of tuna fish (and not much of it). The Army engineers had constructed an escalator which would take you from the hospital area all the way down the main part of town. The only problem was you had to walk all the way back, which was quite a hike up in the hills.

Each day, names were published, and lists of names were posted on a bulletin board to go home. Each day, everyone would scan the board. My name finally came up and the trip home began.

Our ship was an American troop ship and what a difference. Open air movies on the deck and best of all, the sea was calm. Our trip back home lasted ten days. When we sighted land, everyone let out a yell. We docked at Camp Miles Standish, Boston.

As I came down the gang plank and stepped off on American soil, I knelt down and kissed the ground. There is no place on earth like our Country.

We were taken to the Army barracks where we were debriefed by Army personnel. I was asked if there was anything to report of collaborating of any American with the enemy. I said I sure did. I filed a report against the Sergeant (Keating) in Stalag XIII A. He smiled, and said I was only the five hundredth man who had filed such a report, but not to worry, he had been taken care of. I later found out what had happened. *Near the end of the war an older American sergeant was made to pick up pieces of straw and paper. He finally refused and was held by two men while Sergeant Keating punched and beat him up. As American troops advanced on the camp, the old Sergeant grabbed a guard, took his pistol from him, then hunted his tormenter. He found him and made him kneel down and beg for his life. After seeing him grovel before him, he said, "Meet your maker." He shot him six times, then laid the pistol down and walked away.* I guess he got his just dues, but I wonder if that was too good for him.

HOME AT LAST!!

The train ride from Camp Miles Standish, Boston, to Indianapolis seemed like a dream. Indianapolis at last! What a welcome sight! I caught a cab and was on my way home at last! My Dad answered the door at about 2:00 a.m. that June morning. He called to my Mother, saying, "*It's our boy!*" Mother literally rolled out of bed and the commotion awakened my three sisters. Dad's black hair had grayed and I'm sure there was more gray in Mother's. My sisters, ages 17, 11, and 8, had changed so much. My, how they had grown! But of course, I had been gone for two years. What a middle-of-the night reunion that was! One that none of us would ever forget.

My old iron bed sure felt good. I weighed only about one hundred pounds, and by this time was standing at 5' 11", but at last, I was back to my Mom's great cookin'! However, my stomach had shrunken so that I just couldn't tolerate normal size meals, so I couldn't eat much. Nevertheless, I had a wonderful time being home, but as always, all good things must come to an end. I still have to report back to the Army.

I reported to Miami, Florida for a complete physical and rest. The Army has taken over all of the hotels on the beach and we have two glorious weeks to just relax and bask in the sun. My leg is still bothering me, so I was admitted into the Army Hospital in Coral Gables, Florida. There I was operated on, then I started a long program to get back in shape. While a stretcher patient, I was able to go to the Orange Bowl to see Georgia Tech play Florida in a football game. I asked my therapist if walking on the golf course would be good therapy and he said he thought that was a good idea. Man, if the Army would be that way, I'd join and stay until I could retire. Up every morning, out to the golf course, play eighteen holes of golf, then shower, eat, and off to town. Every day the same thing, what a life! But, again, all good things must come to an end. My leg had healed and I was ready for orders. I was sent to Ft. Olgethrope, Georgia. The weather there isn't too bad, in the 40's. But after being in Florida where it was hot, this sure seemed a lot cooler. We had nothing to do except visit Lookout Mountain every day. We were only five miles from Nashville, Tennessee.

I finally received my orders to be sent to Camp Atterbury, Indiana. This is the last leg of my journey. I arrived at Camp Atterbury where I received a final physical, then the next thing, -- I was eagerly

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anticipating my discharge papers. That day (December 7, 1945) arrived as we lined up and names were called. The officer called my name, then whispered something to the officer next to him. My heart jumped into my throat! *Several fellows had their names called, only to find some error on their papers, so they had to start the processing all over. I thought, what could happen next?* The officer smiled, then said, "Soldier, congratulations. You are the five hundred thousandth man to be discharged at Camp Atterbury." I approached the stand, saluted, and received my discharge papers. I then dashed to the bus lines. There were no buses until one o'clock in the morning. I finally boarded a bus and arrived in Indianapolis at four o'clock in the morning. There was eight inches of snow on the ground and it was ten below zero. But I was home, and the warmth of the home takes away the cold.

The war is over and this ends the story of my life in the service. I wouldn't take a million dollars for my experiences and opportunity to serve my country, but I wouldn't give a dime for another like it!

The End

September, 1995

It is exactly 52 years from the onset of my war experiences. As I finish reading over this biography of my life in the service, I reflect back to those days and think of my comrades who were left in graves on foreign soil. I pray their lives were not lost in vain.

I am so thankful that I had a praying Mother and was brought up in a home with Christian standards which sustained me throughout my war experience. Without God, I would not be here today.

I have had a good full life, the years God subscribed to man; threescore years and ten (ref. Psalms 90, vs. 10). The eyes have somewhat dimmed, the step not quite as brisk, but I still look forward to each day.

On the brighter side of life, God gave me a wonderful wife, Marge, who has been my helpmate for almost 43 years. We raised three sons, Roland Lee, Larry, and Steve, and one daughter, Lisa. From them we have ten grandchildren and from them, eight great-grandchildren.

So life goes on until the day when our Maker calls us home and we return to the dust from whence we came.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to my nephew's wife, Patti Kivett, who was able to decipher my handwriting to make the

original rough draft of this book, and my heartfelt thanks to my sister, Martha Hiles Kivett, for the finished product, and also for her great job of designing the cover.

Update: December 2005

The years have passed quickly since I first wrote of my experiences. On June 25, 2005, I was fortunate to celebrate my 80th birthday. I am still able to play golf and enjoy life although I have annoying knee and other joint pain. Marjorie had a heart valve replacement in September of 2002 and is doing fine. In the spring of 2003 we had a great time celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary with a party given us by our daughter.

The only real tragedy of our family is the illness of our son, Roland Lee. He was stricken with Transverse Myelitis in July of 2002 and is paralyzed with only the use of his right arm. He now resides in the Indiana Veterans Home in Lafayette, IN. He had retained a good outlook on life in the face of his adversity. For that we thank God!

We now have 21 great-grandchildren from our 10 grandchildren and expecting the 22nd one in February of 2006. One grandson is in the Army and currently serving in Iraq.

I am sure they will carry on the legacy we have given them. We pray that we have been a good example and that their lives will be lived pleasing to our Lord.

Roland Hiles



*Season's
Greeting
to all of
our 63rd
families*

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.

World War II veteran . . .

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the village cemetery – the same cemetery he found himself in on that fateful day in 1945,” Eichstaedt said.

“I had the plaque made by Trophy County in Las Cruces and on April 10, my good friend Wolfgang (Schlauch) traveled to Möckmühl and presented it to the mayor and citizens of the town,” Miles said.

“There were about 50 people there from the town and the reaction was very positive. It was a very somber presentation. There were some old people there who remembered the very dark days of World War II. They thought it was a very generous gesture of Charles Miles, commemorating the war and also a way to think of peace that would hopefully last,” said Schlauch, 75, an Eastern Illinois University professor emeritus of history who now makes his home in Mesilla Park.

Schlauch, now an American citizen who has lived in the U.S. for 45 years, was born in the German village of Bachlingen.

“Chuck was shot just a few miles from my village. I was about 9 then,” said Schlauch, who has surprisingly fond memories of the post-war American occupation forces.

“I loved the American soldiers. I remember the first soldiers we met were black and they were very kind to the children. They gave us chocolate and we spent whole days with them.”

Schlauch brought back photos, newspaper articles and a special message to Miles from Möckmühl’s Mayor Ulrich Stammer.

“All citizens here in Möckmühl have enclosed him in their hearts. When former enemies reconcile and send such a signal, this then means something very special. This should be a challenge to all of us to constantly search for reconciliation,” Stammer said.

In the photo – During a 2002 trip to Möckmühl, Germany, Chuck Miles visits a memorial listing Germans killed in fierce battles during the last weeks of World War II, when he led an American squad fighting in the area.

(Permission to re-print the above article and photo was granted by the Las Cruces Sun-News Editor, Jim Lawitz and by Brenda Masengill. - The photo was a courtesy photo printed in the Las Cruces Sun-News.)



63rd Division Association, Inc. Historian

William “Bill” Scott has stepped down as the 63rd Division Association, Inc.’s Historian. Fred Clinton has graciously offered to answer 63rd History questions and/or receive 63rd Historical information you may have to continue the legacy of the 63rd Infantry Division.

You can contact Fred Clinton at:
102 S. Jenkins Street
Alexandria, VA 22304
(703)751-7548

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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.