

# 45th Division News

February, 1996

Published in support of the 45th Division Association and 45th Division Museum.

## THUNDERBIRD LEGENDS

### JAMES TILDEN McLEROY



James Tilden McLeroy enlisted in Company B, 180th Infantry at Atoka, Oklahoma in 1936 while still a high school student. He was mobilized with the unit when the 45th Infantry Division was inducted into Federal Service in September 1940.

When the 45th Division made the assault on the island of Sicily, McLeroy was the First Sergeant of Company B, having been promoted through the ranks during almost three years of stateside training.

He was awarded the "Silver Star Medal" for gallantry in action on 10 July 1943, near Biscari, Sicily. The citation reads as follows: "When elements of his company were trapped by heavy enemy machine gun and sniper fire; in order to effect the withdrawal of his men toward more secure positions, First Sergeant McLeroy, armed with a Thompson sub-machine gun, advanced toward the enemy, keeping up such a heavy fire on the enemy positions that he caused their fire to temporarily cease. Not until all his men were safe did he crawl back and rejoin his men. The courage and complete disregard for personal safety displayed by First Sergeant McLeroy reflects the highest traditions of the armed forces."

On the morning of 21 September 1943, the 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry was leading the Regiment forward toward Oliveto, Italy on an unimproved road north of Highway 91, and occupied positions immediately south of the aqueduct. Under incoming artillery fire, an order was received to stop the advance. 1st Sergeant McLeroy was out front on a ridge attempting to locate the enemy with binoculars when a large concentration of enemy mortar and artillery fire was sustained by the unit. McLeroy was killed by this concentration of enemy fire.

McLeroy's fellow soldiers said, "He was always a leader." He was valedictorian of his high school class and was a four-sport letterman. He refused a battlefield commission because he would have been taken out of his unit. He wanted to stay with the same men all through the war. He was the kind of individual who would carry another soldier's pack just to keep him from falling out on a march.

Awards and decorations include; Silver Star, Bronze Star for Valor w/2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Purple Heart, American Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with Bronze Arrowhead (for amphibious landings) and two campaign stars and the Oklahoma Distinguished Service Medal (awarded posthumously).

## UNSUNG HEROINES

by Louis Scott

During World War II, many American women felt compelled to serve their country along with the American men. All of these women were volunteers. They all served their country with dignity and dedication; however, the American Red Cross Clubmobile ladies, commonly known as the "Doughnut Dollies," were the

epitome of those brave women who risked their lives to serve their country.

In October 1943, the Thunderbirds were the second division in Fifth Army to receive a Clubmobile unit. Just a few weeks after the 34th Infantry Division received their clubmobile, the 45th Infantry Division welcomed the outfit assigned to them and which remained with them until the end of World War II. The "Doughnut Dollies" were usually attached to a unit far enough forward to be in touch with all elements of the division, but far enough away from the front lines to be away from the actual combat. In the 45th Division, they were attached to the 700th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company.

When the unit arrived at the Ordnance company, the torrential rains had made the land a soggy mess and the mud was thick and goeey like clay. Vehicles had to be winched to firm ground which made living and working in such a quagmire almost impossible. The "Dollies" were welcomed, provided with a tent and made as comfortable as possible under the existing conditions.

A Clubmobile unit typically consisted of a male supervisor, usually classified as an assistant field director for recreation, and four clubmobile girls. Their equipment consisted of an Army ambulance used to transport doughnuts and coffee to the troops, a doughnut machine, and possibly a jeep. The Army contributed a generator for the doughnut machine. Rations, quarters, and medical care were also provided.

The personnel assigned to the 45th Infantry Division were Charles Petty, a college professor; Betty Jones, an Oklahoman; Sally Stauffer, a Pennsylvanian; Mimi Peters, an Ohioan; and Monica Wood, a New Yorker. Petty returned to the States when he was drafted into the Army. After Petty left, Betty Jones became the supervisor, remaining in that position until she also departed for the States in early 1945 to be married. At this time, the three remaining women continued performing their duties diligently.

The "Doughnut Dollies" were first-class troopers. They soon realized that "war was hell." They accepted their fate and struggled to keep up the morale of the men. In all kinds of weather and under all sorts of unusual combat situations, the "Dollies" served doughnuts and coffee to units close to the front lines, in addition to serving units in the rest areas. Especially rememberable was the bitterly cold Christmas Day of 1944 in Northern France. These brave and stalwart women braved the elements to serve coffee and doughnuts to front line troops throughout Christmas Day. When they returned to the unit that evening, their hands were scalded from the boiling hot coffee.

This is only one among the many examples of their dedication. They not only represented the best qualities of American women, but they also exemplified the true spirit of the Thunderbirds. Not a soul could even come close to estimating how many gallons of coffee they brewed or how many dozens of doughnuts they prepared while serving in this capacity. They accomplished miracles when most of the world had stopped believing in miracles. They brought hope and encouragement to the many Thunderbirds who were fighting to keep their country free from tyranny.



## DONUT DOLLIES CAPTURE A "JERRY"

(by Sarah Ann "Sally" Stauffer)



One morning Donut Dollies Monica (Woods) and Jo (Betty Jones) took a jeep loaded with doughnuts for a run to a company just pulled back into a 2nd position. Near to the company, the girls rode into a forest and suddenly a "German Soldier" jumped out holding his hands up. Fortunately they put the "Jerry" on the radiator and drove into the company area with their capture. You can imagine what happened--that two Donut Dollies could capture a "POW."

The above photograph of Monica and Jo standing by their prisoner on the radiator proves that the Donut Dollies helped our men in the 45th Division during World War II.

(Editor's Note: The current "Donut Dolly" display within the 45th Infantry Division Museum has been updated within the last 60 days with additional clothing and insignia items furnished by Sally Stauffer).

## ANZIO:

### DISASTROUS PLOY OR BRILLIANT MANEUVER?

By Louis Scott

The decision to launch Operation Shingle, the end-around amphibious invasion at Anzio on the Italian west coast was an on-again, off-again situation. It was a political football from its very inception and ended up being a four-month display of human heroics and tenacity.

By the end of November, 1943, the Allies were doing badly in Italy. After hard struggles and great loss of life they had reached the well-prepared German defenses in the hills of Italy, called the Winter Line. The enemy could not be dislodged, and for every yard of real estate the Allies gained, they lost two. It was a hard struggle that was going nowhere.

It had been proposed that an amphibious landing along the west coast of Italy be undertaken in the vicinity of Anzio-Nettuno, where there was a sheltered port. The open terrain of the low coastal plain favored maneuver, and good roads led to the Alban Hills, about twenty miles inland. The British saw the amphibious force driving to the Alban Hills, General Clark envisaged the beachhead forces as contributing to an advance by the units on the main army front, moving from Frosinone to capture the Alban Hills.

The thought was interesting but impractical. First, Frosinone was twenty-five miles north of Cassino and the Allies had not yet taken Cassino. Second, Frosinone was over twenty miles inland from Anzio making it almost impossible for the landing forces to reach Frosinone and hold the terrain until the main Fifth Army forces caught up.

In early December everyone felt that the project was doomed

to indefinite postponement. German resistance in the mountainous terrain forward of the Gustav Line so slowed the Fifth Army that there was no immediate hope of getting to Frosinone and within supporting distance of Anzio. This did not deter General Clark. He suggested on December 10 that the amphibious assault nevertheless be executed.

Most of the assault ships (LSTs, LCIs) were scheduled to be sent to England early in January in preparation for Operation Overlord. General Clark recommended on December 18 that the Anzio operation be cancelled.

Two events led to the restoration of the operation. The first was the change of Allied command in the Mediterranean Theater. General Eisenhower was to leave in early January to assume command as Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, in England to command Operation Overlord that was planned to commence in the Spring of 1944. Command of the Mediterranean Theater passed to British General Sir Henry Maitland "Jumbo" Wilson. British General Alexander remained as 15th Army Group commander. General Clark was slated to become Seventh Army commander and begin planning for the invasion of Southern France (Operation Anvil, later renamed Operation Dragoon). Thus the command of the theater passed from American to British control.

The second event was the illness of Winston Churchill. Churchill had been miffed with the lack of progress in Italy and desired to save his pet project in some manner. His return to England after the Tehran Conference was delayed because of fatigue and a bout with pneumonia. This gave him an opportunity to consult with General Alexander, who thoroughly believed in the success of an Anzio operation. Churchill was convinced by his British leaders. President Roosevelt granted permission for the assault landing craft to remain in the theater for an additional three weeks. On Christmas Day, 1943, Churchill made his decision to launch the Anzio operation. It was essentially his decision, alone.

The problems of an amphibious operation at Anzio were grave. Acute shortages of shipping, the weakened forces that would be left on the main front, the distance separating Anzio and the main Fifth Army front, and the considerable German strength in Italy made the venture hazardous.

General Clark was so delighted with the possibility of capturing Rome quickly that he asked to be relieved of the responsibility of planning for the invasion of Southern France. He felt that he might redeem his faltering career if he gained Rome and that to be placed in a planning capacity for an invasion that might never occur could be disastrous for him. His enormous ego would not permit it.

The VI U.S. Corps was selected as the invading force, commanded by Major General John Lucas, which would consist of the U.S. 3rd Division, the British 1 Division, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, British Commandos, and U.S. Ranger Battalions. The 45th Infantry Division and the 1st Armored Division were held in reserve and would be included as soon as the assault boats could return to Naples, be loaded and returned to Anzio.

The planned air drop of the Parachute Infantry was cancelled because of fear of prematurely warning the German forces; they landed from boats instead. For the same reason, a Naval bombardment and an air saturation were not used.

The invasion went off as planned, with hardly a shot fired and without any enemy resistance or opposition. The Germans were taken completely by surprise, although there had not been any great Allied attempt to conceal preparations for a landing. The invading troops advanced to a perimeter far short of the Alban Hills and stopped, digging in for a long stay on General Lucas' orders.

General Lucas has been charged with inactivity and timidity in not being more aggressive after the unopposed landing. Let's look at the facts: first, his orders from General Clark were ambiguous.



He directed VI Corps: "a) To seize and secure a beachhead in the vicinity of Anzio. b) Advance on Colli Laziali (Alban Hills)." This caused a dilemma for General Lucas: Was he to advance toward the Alban Hills or to them? The General had been informed by Fifth Army G-3, General Brann, when he asked about the vague wording of the order, that General Clark only expected him to seize and secure a beachhead. Now, was General Lucas' decision an act of timidity or one of following orders?

General Lucas was hindered in several respects. He was never allowed to attend any of the planning sessions for Operation Shingle. Also, he undoubtedly had a "Salerno complex." General Clark told General Lucas, "Don't stick your neck out, Johnny. I did at Salerno and got into trouble." At one point, Clark even told Lucas, "You can forget this God damned Rome business." Furthermore, VI Corps did not have enough troops to expand the beachhead and drive toward the Alban Hills. To extend the beachhead any further would stretch the lines so thin they would be easy to decimate. General Lucas later wrote, "I felt like a lamb being led to slaughter." He also felt "this whole affair had a strong odor of Gallipoli (Churchill's fatal blunder as a military strategist during World War I) and apparently the same amateur was still on the coach's bench." After Lucas was relieved of his command on February 23, he returned to the States, his career intact, and was eventually given command of the Fourth Army. His replacement was Major General Lucian Truscott, the tough, aggressive commander of the 3rd Division. In spite of all his abilities, Truscott was hampered, too, in that he did not have enough troops to decisively expand the beachhead.

The Allies also did not take into consideration the vast strength of the veteran German forces in Italy. Neither did they consider the wily, resourceful, and highly intelligent commander of all German forces in Italy, Feldmarshal Albert Kesselring. It took the German commander only hours after the landing to reinforce the troops surrounding Anzio. Within 48 hours he had over 48,000 troops facing the Allies, who numbered a mere 36,000. Eventually, the German strength would reach over 70,000 veteran combat troops facing a much lesser amount of Allied troops. After the war, Kesselring stated that he was completely taken by surprise by the Allied landing. He also said that, "if it had been Patton (leading the invasion) he would have dined in Rome that night."

Winston Churchill was the first to disavow Operation Shingle. Only much later would Churchill admit that "Anzio was my worst moment of the war. I had the most to do with it."

Operation Shingle, the invasion at Anzio, was to become a four-month bloody and violent struggle, the worst battlefield of the entire war. Valiant heroic efforts were rendered on the part of everyone involved, friend and enemy alike.

The Allies fought their way into Rome on June 4, 1944. The next day General Mark Clark made his triumphal entry, his enormous ego intact. It was, however, a hollow victory.

Clark made another tremendous blunder by choosing fleeting glory over a golden opportunity to trap and destroy the retreating German 10th Army, and thereby hasten the end of the war in Italy. Military historian Carlo D'Este in *Fatal Decision* calls Clark's decision "one of the most misguided blunders made by any Allied commander during World War II." It was to haunt him the rest of his life.

On May 26, with the VI Corps troops about to drive through the Valmontone Gap, a key point on the escape route of the Germans, Clark ordered three infantry divisions to veer northward toward Rome. This left only the 3rd Infantry Division and the First Special Force to stop the fleeing enemy. Major General Truscott, VI Corps commander, was dumbfounded. He refused

to obey the order without first talking to General Clark. He was informed the General was unavailable. Truscott reluctantly carried out the orders he personally deplored.

Clark had deliberately disobeyed his commander, General Alexander, who later wrote "If he (Clark) had succeeded in carrying out my plan, the disaster to the enemy would have been much greater; indeed, most of the German forces south of Rome would have been destroyed. ...I can only assume that the immediate lure of Rome for its publicity value persuaded him to switch the direction of his advance."

So much for Operation Shingle and the bloody battles of Anzio. The Allies were victorious, eventually reaching their goal, but at a terrible price in lives in an operation that may or may not have been necessary. Was it a brilliant maneuver or a disastrous ploy? You decide.

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## MUSEUM NEEDS WHEELCHAIR

The 45th Infantry Division Museum is in dire need of a Wheelchair for use by incapacitated visitors. If you are in possession of such an item, you can qualify for a "tax write off" by making a donation to the museum. Contact person at the museum is Michael Gonzales, museum curator. (405/424-5313).

★★★★★★★★★

## INJE RIVER DISASTER

by Louis P Horyza

Many stories will be told of combat on the line in Korea, but I felt this story of tragedy in the reserve area should be told and not forgotten.

During August 1952 heavy rains were falling in the reserve area of Tank Company, 279th Infantry Regiment, which was located along the Inje River. On this day, a platoon of infantry was marching across an upstream bridge and a 3/4 ton truck full of troops was crossing the ford below the bridge about 1/2 mile above our reserve area.

Suddenly, a wall of water estimated at 10 feet high came down the river and took out the bridge and troops. We heard the men screaming and immediately formed a human chain to try to grab the men as they were washed downstream. There were six men in our chain and several others were formed. Some men threw ropes into the water in an attempt to save the troops. None of the rescue teams were able to save a man. Twenty seven troops were washed downstream and lost.

For several days we patrolled the banks of the river and four bodies were recovered. Combat was bad enough but to lose many members of your own troops in this fashion was really tough.

★★★★★★★★★

## THE LONE TANK

by Ernest T Fachan

I joined the army in 1941 and was assigned to Company A, 180th Infantry, 45th Infantry Division. I was in the 1st platoon when we made the landing in Sicily. My platoon Sergeant, Sgt Boatright, was killed in the landing and I was appointed to take his place. I remained in that assignment through all the combat in Sicily and Italy, including Anzio and the liberation of Rome.

One of my most memorable experiences was in Italy when a lone tank was firing at our position. The company commander, Clovis D Hurd, directed me to take the bazooka man, Alfonzo Laudato, and sneak behind the tank and try to knock it out. We

(The Lone Tank Cont'd on page 4)



*(The Lone Tank cont'd from page 3)*

obtained some extra ammunition and worked our way to within 25-30 feet of the tank, without them knowing where we were.

Laudato stood up and fired his bazooka, hitting the side of the tank, on top of the turret, however, it ricocheted and did no damage. The tank operator swung the gun around and fired one round hitting Laudato's left leg below the knee. He was screaming bloody murder and bleeding profusely.

I laid down my weapon and went to his aid, hoping they would think I was a medic. In addition to the loss of his leg, the shell had inflicted severe burns to his body.

The tank crew had been watching us the entire time. I looked up at the tank and could see the driver giving us a hand salute. That was a shock to me, but I returned the salute.

Two medics came to our aid and helped get Laudato ready to move. Laudato said, "I want my foot", so we laid it in his lap and went to the rear. The Germans sat there during the whole time we were getting him ready, but never fired another round.

★★★★★★★★★

### THUNDERBIRD TIDBITS

Dedication of the World War II Memorial Site was conducted 11 November 1995 in Washington, DC. Introductory remarks included a statement that the individual was proud to introduce the principal speaker on behalf of all World War II Veterans including veterans of the 45th Infantry "Thunderbird" Division. The individual's name is Miguel Encinias.

A review of our membership roster revealed that Miguel Encinias is a current member of the association. He was a member of the 120th Combat Engineer Battalion during World War II and currently resides in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

★★★★★★★★★

On 10 December 1995, the television program "Biography This Week" featured Newt Gingrich, current Speaker of the House of Representatives. One of the facts disclosed was that Newt's father was retired from the military. An accompanying photograph of his father revealed that he was a member of the US Army and his shoulder patch a "Thunderbird" indicated that he had been a member of the 45th Division. Comments revealed that he served in the 45th Division during the Korean War.

★★★★★★★★★

### LOOKING FOR BUDDIES

I am attempting to find anyone that I served with in Korea from spring of 1952 to fall of 1953. I was a member of the 4th Platoon, Company D, 279th Infantry Regiment. Your help is needed in correcting military records.

Anyone who may be able to help please contact me by telephone or correspondence as indicated below. I plan to attend the 1996 reunion.

**LONNIE C CHITWOOD**, 245 Sunset Circle, Hartwell, GA 30643. 706/376-5852.

★★★★★★★★★

I was a member of a rifle squad in the 1st Platoon, Company A, 279th Infantry in Korea from December 1951 to November 1952 and would like to hear from anyone with whom I served.

**JERRY HAMEL**, 7522 East Sitka Court, Port Orchard, WA 98366.

★★★★★★★★★

I joined Tank Company, 179th Infantry in July 1952 as a Private and rose in ranks to Sergeant First Class as a Platoon Sergeant in June 1953. On 27 July 1953, the date of the official cease fire, I boarded a ship for the US. I served two tours in

Germany and one in Vietnam prior to being assigned as Advisor to the 279th Infantry Regiment with duty station in Perry, OK. I retired from the military in 1972.

**VERLON R BISHOP**, 4502 Jackie Lane, Paragould, AR 72450-3855.

★★★★★★★★★

I would like to hear from anyone who served with Heavy Mortar Company, 279th Infantry Regiment in Korea from July 1952 to July 1953.

**ROLAND C CHAGNON**, Rt 1 BOX 283, Farmington, NH 03835.

★★★★★★★★★

After 42 years plus, I had a reunion with my buddy, William C Louthier in Brooklyn, NY over the 1995 Labor Day weekend. Bill and I served with Battery C, 171 Field Artillery in Korea during 1952 and 1953. I returned to the US 25 May 1953 and Bill left 25 July 1953. We would welcome hearing from any former members of Battery C who may remember us.

**JOHN A CARUSO**, 90 Pocahontas Drive, Warwick, RI 02888, 401/463-8059

**WILLIAM LOUTHER**, 894 Brooklyn Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203, 718/284-6896.

★★★★★★★★★

I am trying to locate Robert M "Duke" Johnson who served with me in Battery B, 160th Field Artillery BN in Japan and Korea from July 1951 to November 1952. I would also like to hear from anyone who served with us in Battery B during this period.

**MARVIN PLUTZER**, 103 East 2nd Street # 1, New York, NY 10009.

### REUNION NOTICES

**45TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION**: 19-21 September 1996, The Radisson Inn, 401 South Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK 73108. POC National Secretary, 2145 NE 36th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73111.

★★★★★★★★★

**COMPANY L, 179TH INFANTRY (KOREA)**: 19-21 September 1996, in conjunction with the 45th Infantry Division Association 51st Annual Reunion at the Radisson Inn, I-40 at Meridian, (401 South Meridian), Oklahoma City, OK 73108. POC Mansell R Garrett Jr, 1051 Linden Street NE, Leeds, Alabama, 35094, 205/699-7342.

★★★★★★★★★

**ANZIO BEACHHEAD VETERANS OF WW II**: 9-12 May 1996, Holiday Inn Executive Center, Virginia Beach, VA 23462. POC John W Hole, 2633 Loretto Road, Jacksonville, FL 32223-1318.

★★★★★★★★★

**1ST BATTALION, 157TH INFANTRY REGIMENT**: 13-17 May 1996 at Carter Caves State Resort Park, Olive Hill, Kentucky. This is an annual event which draws over 100 people. All C Company folks are, of course, invited to attend. POC Tom and Martha Ross, 2628 Country Club Court, Ashland, KY 41101-3949, 606/324-5609.

★★★★★★★★★

**189TH FA AND 645 TD Association**, 24-27 April 1996 at the Ramada Inn Northwest, Oklahoma City, OK. Veterans of WW II and Korea welcome. POC Art Corley, 2601 NE Easy Street, Claremore, OK 74017.



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I retired as First Sergeant from the US Army in 1970 after 22 years of service. During that time I served in Korea with Company B, 180th Infantry Regiment as a BAR man, Squad Leader and Platoon Sergeant from April to October 1952.

Considering all of my service, I am most proud of my stint as a "Thunderbird". I would especially like to contact my ex-First Sergeant Wolfchief whom I last saw on line when he was hit by a Chinese sniper and evacuated thru Medical channels in August or September 1952.

Currently I am an active member of VFW Post 7462 here in Piermont, NY. After the Oklahoma City disaster our Post raised \$7,500 that we donated as a contribution for relief of the victims.

Lastly, I would like to thank Leonard Rose (Co K, 180th Infantry, WW II) for giving me the address of the association.

**CHARLES R WRIGHT, PO Box 375, Piermont, NY 10968-1038.**

★★★★★★★★★★

I was a member of the first combat unit removed from Korea in early 1954. We docked in New York City the day before Easter Sunday, carrying with us the Colors of the 45th Infantry Division. We were honored by a standing ovation at Yankee Stadium on Easter Sunday and four days later marched in a huge "Ticker Tape Parade" down Fifth Avenue.

I presently farm and ranch in Southern Nebraska and have been the Commander of the local American Legion Post for the past two years.

**HARLAN H SIEBRASS, RR 1 BOX 50, BLUE HILL, NE 68930.**

★★★★★★★★★★

My father is 76 years of age, in good health, but naturally in the twilight of his life. A few weeks ago, during a TV program of the 50th Anniversary of the landings in Normandy he said, "I wonder if those five Americans I pulled out of that Tank Destroyer lived". I have now decided to "get off my butt" and do something about it.

Portions of General Release Number 2365, Headquarters United Kingdom Base, APO 413 US Army, 19 July 1945 read as follows: In awarding the "Bronze Star" decoration to Sergeant Kenneth Treadwell, of Pontardawe, Swansea, Wales, General E F Koenig, Commanding General, United Kingdom Base, said:

"We have won this war by an unprecedented combination of two nations working in unison. Never in history have two countries bled and died for each other as ours have. Your gallantry is probably one of the outstanding examples where a man gallantly risked his life and gave of his flesh and blood that a member of one of his brother nations might live".

"I think you are a far greater hero than those who have died, because you risked your life to save a man of another country. This medal we are giving you is only a decoration. We can never adequately express our feelings and gratitude which the American nation feels for men like you".

"Sergeant Treadwell was serving with an anti-aircraft regiment on the Anzio Beachhead when a shell from an intense enemy barrage set fire to an American Tank Destroyer from the

U S Army's 45th Infantry Division. He left the shelter of his dugout and dashed across the exposed fire-swept terrain to evacuate the men from the burning vehicle. This gallant action caused partial loss of the use of his left arm".

Would it be possible to trace any or all of these soldiers through your organization? I appreciate the enormity of the task I offer you, but with my experience of American Soldiers

during my peace time service in the British Army and two visits to your country in the last two years, I am sure the task is not beyond your organization's ability.

**L.K.TREADWELL, 39, GWYRDDGOED, Pontardawe Swansea W. Glam. S.WALES, SA84NH, UNITED KINGDOM.**

I am seeking information from anyone who knew or may have served with Pvt William J Acre, Company M, 179th Infantry during the period 4 October 1943-26 April 1944. He was Killed-in-Action during the Anzio, Italy Campaign.

**JIM ACRE, 7788 Davis Road, Buckley, MI 49620, 616/263-7125.**

★★★★★★★★★★

I was assigned to Company H, 179th Infantry as a replacement in September 1944. I served throughout the remainder of WW II and was released from active duty in November

1945. I retired from my civilian job with J&L Steel in 1990 and my current hobby is drag racing and working on race car engines. I would enjoy hearing from anyone who remembers me.

**DALE SNOOK, 1104 Del Air Drive NW, North Canton, OH 44720-2206.**

★★★★★★★★★★

Most of us who served in Company C, 157th Infantry during the final months of the war in Europe joined the unit on or after 21 January 1945. We were either transferred from other Seventh Army divisions or from replacement depots. Regardless of how we got there, the occasion for this rebuilding was the virtual destruction of Companies C, G, I, K, L and M of the 157th Infantry Regiment in fierce fighting during 14-20 January 1945 near Reipertswiller, France. This tragic battle is described by Felix Sparks in Monograph # 9 published by the 45th Division Museum and is available for sale in the Gift Shop for \$2.00 plus S&H. Gift Shop Mail Order forms will be mailed to you upon request.

Those of you interested in placing the Reipertswiller action in a larger context will enjoy reading "Winter Storm" by Lise M Pommois (Turner Publishing Co 1991). This book can be ordered from a Barnes & Noble bookstore at a discounted price of about \$20.00.

I am delighted to report that I have found another comrade from the Second Platoon, which means there are now fourteen of us who have been found alive. The new found member is Joseph J Sweeny, Rt 2, BOX 86-A, McHerrin, VA 23954, 804/736-8275. Joe joined my squad when C Company was reorganized in January 1945 and was wounded sometime after the

Siegfried Line and never returned to the platoon. He has a very good recollection of that period.

**DAN P DOUGHERTY, 3 Mann Drive, Kentfield CA 94904, 415/454-2454.**

★★★★★★★★★★

I was assigned to Headquarters Company, 179th Infantry Regiment at Fort Devens, MA on 10 May 1942 and served with the 45th Infantry Division until the Anzio breakout late May-early June 1944.

When I saw the article about COL Darby, I remembered when the Rangers were wiped out at the Mussolini Canal. Shortly afterwards, COL Darby became our Regimental Commander.

We all liked listening to "Axis Sally". She came on the radio about 8 PM and we could pick her up on our field radios. If too many earphones were hooked up it would cut some off. Ours got cut off one night and I and a buddy went out and found one to cut off and "low and behold" we cut off COL Darby's generator. The sparks sure flew after that.

I am 75 years old now, but those memories are like yesterday. Anzio was the only place in the war that nobody wanted to go to the rear.

**JOSEPH BECKERS, 826 Perimeter Park Circle, St Augustine, FL 32095.**

★★★★★★★★★★

I am sending you a brochure concerning our Dallas-Fort Worth National Veterans Cemetery. Land acquisition funding was provided in fiscal year 1994. Provided follow on construction funding

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is furnished, Phase I could open in 1997.

There are several former Thunderbirds in this area, and the cemetery could also be of interest to veterans in Southern Oklahoma.

I was mobilized 16 September 1940 with Battery B, 160th FA at McAlester, OK and departed the 45th Division for flight training in March 1942.

**LEWIS R EDEN, 4132 Shannon Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76116-8042, 817/738-2860.**

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I recently returned from a Revisit Korea trip. It was my first visit back since April 1953 when I served in the 120th Medical Battalion of the 45th Infantry Division. I spent 32 years in the Army Reserve and retired in 1989. During my military career, I was always asking my instructors why they never mentioned the Korean War when they discussed military actions. It was always WWII or Vietnam. They never gave me a satisfactory answer.

Several years ago when I visited a special Korean War exhibit at the Truman Presidential Library, there was no mention of the 45th anywhere in the exhibit. I wrote the Museum Director who said that there wasn't enough space to include the 45th. There was plenty of space for all of the other units.

Finally I got some satisfaction when I visited the Incheon Landing site in Korea. There prominently displayed in the main hall was an exhibit of a typical army uniform proudly showing the Thunderbird Insignia. I am enclosing a snap shot of this display.

I enjoy getting the 45th Division News and recommend any Korean Veteran to take advantage of the Revisit Korea Program. On many occasions while we were there, people came up to us and thanked us for saving their country. It is a very moving experience. My tour was through Olympus Travel in Los Angeles.

**ROGER F WILLETTE, 719 North Adams Street, St Croix Falls, WI 54024.**

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Many have said that friendships you make in time of war are friendships that endure for a life time. While members of the 45th Infantry Division in World War II, six comrades formed a friendship that was to last for over fifty years.

These guys were D C McWhorter, Hereford, Texas; Allen Janes, Arcadia, California; John Braubach, San Antonio, Texas; James "Poncho" Goddard, Center, Texas; Pat McClearnon, Mesilla Park, New Mexico and Odell T Shaw, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The "Warriors", as the wives named them, kept in touch through the years and in 1976 held their first reunion. Yearly meetings were scheduled until recently. War stories were told so many times that the wives could recite them word for word and make corrections if

necessary.

A bond existed that never grew old, when they met they were the same as when they first knew one another, reliving only the "fun" times they had.

On 15 November 1995, D C "Mac" McWhorter passed away in Hereford, Texas and now there are five.

**VIRGINIA SHAW (wife of Odell).**

\*\*\*\*\*

I was made aware of the 45th Division Association at the dedication of the Korean War Memorial in Washington, DC. I am glad to become a member and look forward to receiving the 45th Division News.

I served under Captain Goodfellow and Captain Wiley Mangum in Company H, 179th Infantry during the period November 1952 - July 1953. I arrived in Korea as a PFC and departed as a Sergeant First Class.

When I arrived the unit was at "Luke's Castle" in machine gun bunkers. When I departed we were at "Heartbreak Ridge." Due to the rapid rotation of personnel and the passage of time, I have forgotten the names of most of my comrades.

I retired from the building trades as a sheet metal worker and am enjoying every moment.

**LEONARD A BREURE, 5 Burma Road, Wyckoff, NJ 07481-3314.**

\*\*\*\*\*

I have recently been made aware of the 45th Infantry Division Association. Please accept my application for membership. I have not served with the 45th, but I do have a sincere interest in the division's history.

My uncle, PFC James Howard Jarboe served with Company F, 180th Infantry from early October 1944 until 19 April 1945. He was fatally wounded during the battle for Nurnberg.

I have been researching his record of service for two years and am continuing to do so. Hopefully, I can gain additional information through the 45th Division News. I have been fortunate enough to locate one former comrade thus far.

**JEFFERY H. JARBOE, RR 2, 193A Jarboe Rd, Hardinsburg, KY 40143-9802.**

\*\*\*\*\*

When General W W Eagles was wounded in action on 30 November 1944 in the vicinity of Strasbourg, France which necessitated hospitalization for an extensive period of time, I was Admissions Officer at Brooke General Hospital, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. When he arrived at the Army Airport in San Antonio I met him and took him in a staff car to the Hospital Center. He was very happy to be back in the United States.

**RICHARD O HUNTER, 2500 Candlewood Court, Austin, TX 78741.**



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I wish to be a member of the 45th Infantry Division Association. I enclose my dues for:

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$75.00 for a Life Membership  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$35.00 for a 10-year Membership  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 for a 4-year Membership  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 5.00 for a 1- year Membership

SEND TO:  
45th Infantry Division Association  
2145 NE 36th Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Your Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Street or P.O. Box) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Former or Present Thunderbird Unit \_\_\_\_\_

World War II \_\_\_\_\_ Korean War \_\_\_\_\_ Post Korean War \_\_\_\_\_

(SPECIAL NOTE: You are invited to submit a paragraph of current information or news item about yourself or another former or present Thunderbird for possible use in 45th Division News. Please submit it on a separate sheet of paper identifying each person mentioned by present location and former Thunderbird unit.)

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(IF THERE IS A CHOICE, CIRCLE THE ITEM DESIRED)

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

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**BOOKS**

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# IT IS DUES PAYING TIME

If your mailing label on this **NEWSLETTER** indicates **EXP: 1995**, the above heading pertains to you. This indicates that your dues to the 45th Infantry Division Association **EXPIRED 31 December 1995**.

If you are in this category and do not renew your membership prior to **31 MARCH 1996**, you will be dropped from the membership roll of the association.



## 45th Division News

Published four times yearly by the 45th Infantry Division Association to support the work of the association and the 45th Division Museum.

**Lonnie M. Bray** ..... **President**

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Address news contributions and other correspondence to Editor, 45th Infantry Division Association, 2145 N.E. 36th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73111.

**DO NOT SEND ITEMS THAT MUST BE RETURNED!**

45th Infantry Division Association  
 2145 N.E. 36th Street  
 Oklahoma City, OK 73111

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

### MEMBERSHIPS SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

<b>LIFE</b>		
John A Caruso	John H Cheek	John Gordon Nix Jr Allen R Schindler
<b>TEN YEAR</b>		
Lewis F Barnette Leonard A Breure Billy F Brown Charles L Butler Clinton P Charles Ray Detert Alfred A Di Iorio John G Erwin	David L Fisk Joe L Garrett Gilbert E Leggett Andrew G Nelson James E Nimon Otto Owen Earl R Owens Roy E Pope	Ronald R Rechtenbach Bobby A Roberts Jerry L Smith Douglas M Watland Larry White Charles W Willett Leroy F Williams
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