

45th Division News

January, 1991

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

THUNDERBIRD LEGENDS



WILLIAM J. JOHNSTON

William (Bill) J. Johnston was born on August 15, 1918 in Trenton, New Jersey to John and Mary (Wilson) Johnston. Throughout his life, he was known to many of his oldtime friends as "Jimmy."

On August 8, 1942, Johnston married his childhood sweetheart, Dorothy Clark, in Colchester, Connecticut. The marriage lasted for 48 years and four children were born to the union: William, Jr; Dorothy O'Meara; Diane Carragher; and Donna

Johnston. Bill and Dorothy Johnston also had six grandchildren.

Bill Johnston entered military service during World War II at Colchester, Connecticut and was eventually assigned to Company G, 180th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division.

Private First Class Johnston was awarded the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life while in combat with his unit at Padiglione, Italy, during the fighting on the Anzio Beachhead, on February 17-19, 1944. (See his citation in this newsletter). The Medal of Honor was presented to PFC William J. Johnston by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in September 1944.

After returning to civilian life, Bill Johnston worked for the Veterans Administration in Connecticut. He retired from the Connecticut Treasury Department, Veterans Bonus Division. He served as a commissioner of the Rocky Hill Veterans Home and Hospital.

He was active in Veterans of Foreign Wars, serving as Commander for many years. He was also very active with the American Legion, the Legion of Valor and the Disabled American Veterans. He was also a member of the Purple Heart Society and the Medal of Honor Society. He had served on both the Board of Selectmen and the Borough Board of Burgesses, was an active member of the Colchester Fish and Game Club and the St. Andrews Holy Name Society.

The (Colchester) Regional Standard, in an article about Bill Johnston on June 2, 1990, said of him: "He was an impressive man, yet without pretense, as he did not try to be anything more than he was - a rock-solid citizen of America. What made him the perfect hero was the fact that you did not have to know about him to respect him."

Ten days before his death, the Central Middle School in Colchester was renamed the William J. Johnston School and it was dedicated in his honor. Governor William A. O'Neil and MG John T. Gereski, the State Adjutant General, were speakers during the dedication ceremonies. An oil portrait of Johnston by local artist Susan Brown was unveiled. Also, a large banner with a new school logo designed by the art classes of teacher Paula Berglund and including a motto suggested by Johnston, "RESPECT TO ALL," was displayed. President Bush sent a letter commending Johnston on his contributions to the town and the nation.

William J. Johnston died on May 29, 1990 in the U.S. Veterans Medical Center, Newington. Funeral services were held on June 1, 1990 at St. Andrews Roman Catholic Church in Colchester and he was buried with full military honors in the Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown.

The Selectmen of the Town of Colchester honored Johnston with a proclamation declaring the seven days between May 30 and June 6, 1990 a period of mourning and that flags be flown at half mast in his honor.

William J. Johnston typifies the high standards and devotion to duty not only as a member of the "Thunderbirds," but also in his civilian life as a respected citizen in his town and state. He was a modest man who gallantry stood him in good stead in the fact of extreme danger and also as a citizen of high morals and great courage in his service to fellow man and his country.

50, 40 . . . and Now

by Louis Scott

Even though I watched it happening from close proximity, I am still amazed and in awe of the myriad of changes that have taken place in the U.S. Army over the last 50 years, but still so much remains the same, totally unchanged.

Fifty years ago, when the 45th Division, a National Guard outfit composed of units from Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona, was activated for Federal Service in September of 1940, the division was understrength, poorly equipped, and clothed in ill-fitting and outdated uniforms. The effects of severe budget constraints during the depression years and the mood of the Nation after World War I had reduced the size of the Regular Army to a small, tough, hardcore token force that was not large enough to effectively defend the U.S. by itself. But, even so, the National Guard was considered a step-child and small consideration was given to it being properly equipped or sufficiently trained to be of much assistance in immediate defense of our nation. Much of the equipment belonging to the Guard was hand-me-downs from the Regular Army and much of it was not only obsolete, but worn out.

When the 45th Division was activated 50 years ago, it was first stationed at Fort Sill, Oklahoma in an area of the post that had been used by the division for many years during summer encampment. Divisional units from Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona joined those from Oklahoma at Fort Sill and the old National Guard Cantonment area became extremely overcrowded. Since the area had been used mainly for summer training, it had not been built to properly house and protect troops from the elements during winter months. Some permanent mess halls and administrative buildings had been built and a few troops were housed in canvas pyramidal tents on concrete platforms, however, all Infantry and most Artillery elements were encamped on the bare ground under tentage, including administrative areas, mess halls and troop housing. Conical Civil War-type Sibley stoves were used to provide heat and the spark arrestors on top of the stove pipe running out through the center of the tent were often ineffective in preventing sparks from setting the tents afire. A flu epidemic in the division that winter severely hindered training.

The influx of the first draftees in January 1941 created a severe shortage of uniforms and individual equipment. World War I style uniforms were issued not only to many Guardsmen but also to the new draftees, including wrap leggings, roll collar overcoats, and high neck blouses. Equipment was not much better. Plain old ingenuity, some imagination, and the desire by division troops to excel overcame many of the inequities.

The morale of the division was excellent and it didn't take long for the men to satisfactorily convert from citizen-soldiers to the role of full-time soldiers and fit into the daily routine that entailed. Training progressed at a rapid pace and it wasn't long before the hierarchy of the Army began taking note of the excellence of the 45th Division.

New equipment began to arrive. The M1 Garand rifle was one of the first new items to be issued. Then, the French 75-mm howitzers were replaced with the new 105-mm howitzers for the light artillery units; the 37-mm anti-tank gun came into the inventory; new 60-mm mortars were an exciting addition. It was like Christmas every day with new uniforms and equipment arriving on a daily basis.

The 45th Infantry Division was an outstanding organization back in those early days of mobilization and the tough training the division troops underwent under rigorous and difficult circumstances later proved in combat that it was one of the best, if not the best, combat division under American arms.

After World War II, the 45th Infantry Division was re-organized as an entity of the Oklahoma National Guard with all units of the division being stationed in Oklahoma. Many combat veterans of the division

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and other units joined the new Guard and training was excellent with the aid of the experienced personnel. Equipment was the best, newest, and of high quality. Morale was superb in the division with many old comrades being back in harness.

When the 45th Infantry Division was again recalled to active duty on that day 40 years ago, 1 September 1950, for service in the Korean Conflict, it was in much better shape materially and strength-wise than during those dark days of 1940.

It was a New Army, but still basically unchanged. Combat veterans provided much needed continuity and the newer men soon learned from them in an excellent training program. Morale of the division was exceptionally high. Training progressed rapidly and it was evident that the division would be ready for combat in much less time than it took during WW II.

Regardless of all of the massive changes and realignments that had taken place in the Army over a 10-year period, it basically remained the same. Rules and regulations had changed somewhat, and the weapons and equipment more modern, but the day-to-day routine of soldiering had changed little, if any at all.

Now, it is Today, 1990. Fifty years have passed since the 45th Infantry Division was first called into active Federal service for evenutal meritorious combat duty during World War II. Forty years ago the 45th Infantry Division was activated for the second time for outstanding service during the Korean Conflict. Today, fifty and forty years later, units of the Oklahoma National Guard are once again being mobilized for active Federal service during Operation Desert Shield. Several of these units were once part of the now disbanded 45th Infantry Division and served with distinction during their first and second callups.

And, how drastically things have changed in the course of these 50 years! National Guard units are now equipped with the newest and best of equipment, often even before Regular Army units. The previous attitude of considering National Guard troops to be merely citizens playing soldier has changed dramatically. National Guard units are considered to be a vital part of the first line of defense of the nation. Quality of training has improved decisively with the Regular Army doing everything it can to provide the best instruction possible. Housing and quality-of-life or activated National Guard units has improved a thousand-fold. No longer do Guard units have to undergo months and years of additional training and reoutfitting to be ready for combat. They are now near-ready upon mobilization and all they require is a minimum of refinement training and some minor reequipping.

It is truly a New Army with the National Guard being at the forefront of preparedness. But, in many familiar ways it still remains the same Good Ol' Army that many of us enjoyed 50 years ago.

The largest unit and the only combat outfit from the Oklahoma National Guard to be called up so far is the 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery, the only Reserve or National Guard unit in the nation to be designated and armed as a Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) unit. The battalion was activated on 21 November 1990 and moved to Fort Sill, Oklahoma on 24 November for further training and equipping.

The 158th Field Artillery Regiment was formed in 1923 as a direct support artillery unit of the 45th Division, Oklahoma National Guard. Its primary weapon was the French 75-mm Howitzer, horse-drawn. Upon activation of the 45th Infantry Division in 1940, the primary weapon became the 105-mm Howitzer, truck-drawn. In 1942, the 45th Infantry Division was restructured from a square division with a brigade of three artillery regiments to a triangular division that contained four artillery battalions. The First Battalion of the 158th Artillery Regiment was redesignated the 158th Field Artillery Battalion and remained an integral part of the division. The Second Battalion was redesignated the 207th Field Artillery Battalion, a separate battalion that was separated from the 45th Division and saw service in Panama, C.Z. and later in the ETO. The 158th Field Artillery Battalion served with distinction as a part of the 45th Infantry Division throughout combat in WWII.

IN 1950, the 158th was again activated as a member of the 45th Infantry Division and again served with distinction in Korea.

After Korea, the 158th underwent several redesignations and changes in primary weapon system. In 1968 the 45th Infantry Division was inactivated and the 158th Field Artillery became a part of the newly formed 45th Artillery Group, Oklahoma National Guard, and armament was changed to the 8-inch towed howitzer. Primary weapon was later changed to the 8-inch SP howitzer. On 1 September 1987, the 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery was federally recognized as a MLRS battalion.

The 1/158 FA is headquartered in Lawton, commanded by LTC Larry Haub of Weatherford with CSM Dale Spruill of Duncan, Battalion Sergeant Major. HHS Battery is located in Lawton, commanded by CPT Anthony Allen; A. Battery, Lawton, CPT William Freeman in command; B Battery, Duncan, 1LT Bennie Vaughan commanding; Det 1B, Walters, 1LT James Owens; C Battery, Chickasha, CPT Mark Williamson in command; Det 1C, Marlow, 1LT Robert Miller.

Other units of the Oklahoma National Guard that have been called into active service for Operations Desert Shield are: 2120th S&S Co., Wewoka and Konawa, commanded by **Captain Steve R. Payne**. Former 45th Inf Div unit, Hq Det 120th Medical Bn, Midwest City, CPT Charles W. Coffman in command; 145th Med Co, Broken Arrow, LTC John J. Keneney, Jr. commanding; 1045th Ord Det, Lawton, 1st Lt Scott J. Lamirand; 245th Medical Co., Midwest City, MAJ Larry G. Mobley commanding; 745th MP Co., Okla. City, CPT Thomas J. Sudduth commanding.

1245th Transportation Co., Madill and Tishomingo, CPT Paul A. Jay commanding; and 1345 Transportation Co., Ardmore, 1st Lt Carl L. Franks, Jr. commanding have been placed on "Alert" for call to active service.

When I look back at my more than 47 years of association with the U.S. Army, either as a member of the military or as an Army civilian, a touch of intense pride tugs at my heartstrings. The Army became my life when I joined the Oklahoma National Guard as a private in the rearmost ranks in 1938 and it remains today as a source of great personal pride and joy to have been an integral part of it. Soldiering is an art and a profession of the highest order. I can speak only for myself, but I am sure there are many others out there who feel as I do, who cherish their army years as some of the best of their lives and are proud to have been part of a great American heritage.

Sincere and heartfelt that best wishes go out to all of the men and women in our military services who are serving in Saudi Arabia and in other areas in conjunction with Operation Desert Shield. Their loyalty, patriotism, and dedication to service are exemplary and we wish them all Godspeed.

COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLIONS AVAILABLE IN GIFT SHOP

Commemorative medallions (coins and desk sets) in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of mobilization of the 45th Infantry Division for World War II are available for sale in the gift shop.

The medallion is priced at \$2.00 each and the desk set is \$6.00. The desk set displays the front and back of the medallion.

"PRICE LIST/ORDER FORM" for the 45th Division Gift Shop is reproduced herein in a reduced format for your convenience in ordering the medallions and/or other items from the gift shop.

The medallion is 1/8" thick and 1 1/2" in diameter. It is too small for use as a frisbee, and too large for use in marking your golf ball on the green.

LOOKING BACK TO 1944



Rene C. Levy, Lakehurst, New Jersey was named "Honorary Mayor" of his hometown of Hochfelder, Alsace while in service with the G-2 Section, Headquarters 45th Infantry Division in December 1944.

Rene left Hochfelder in 1929 to seek new opportunities in America. His family followed in 1939 because of German persecution of the Jews. His mother and sisters were aboard the French liner Normandie in her last Atlantic crossing before the outbreak of war in 1939.

LOOKING FOR BUDDIES

I would like very much to hear from any former members of Ambulance Company, 120th Medical Battalion during the Korean War (Sept 50 - Sept 52). WILLIAM O. POPE, 103 Poplar Street, Russellville, KY 42276.

Would appreciate hearing from any members of Company B or Service Company, 157th Infantry Regiment who remembers me. I would especially like to hear from anyone who participated in moving prisoners from Dachau Concentration Camp. P. DI PRIMA, 2690 S. Atlantic #2, Las Vegas, NV 89121.

I would like to purchase a copy of Alton B. Chamberlin's book about his experiences in Korea during 1952, entitled "Circle of Courage," when it becomes available in the 45th Division Gift Shop.

Although I have never attended a 45th reunion, I hope I am able to do so in the near future. Also, I would really like to hear from anyone who remembers me. JOHN A. CARUSO, 627 Warwick Avenue, Warwick, RI 02888.

SEEKING INFORMATION

I recently visited the grave site of my mother's first cousin at the United States Military Cemetery in Epinal, France.

He was "Killed-in-Action" 23 October 1944 while a member of the 180th Infantry, 45th Infantry Division. He was Private Frank Del Conte, Serial Number 33601624 and was from Pennsylvania.

We know very little about his service and/or his death. His brothers and sisters were younger than Frank and are still alive, but were too young at the time to remember very much. We would very much appreciate hearing from anyone who knew Frank Del Conte and can furnish any information concerning his service and/or the circumstances of his death. RICHARD MILLER, 520 Hillsdale Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13206.

While reading the August issue of the VFW Magazine, I was surprised to see my father's patch, the "Thunderbird of the 45th Infantry Division."

My father served in the 45th Division in World War II. His name was CLIFFORD VAN ORDEN, with the nickname of "Dutch" or "Old Man." He lived in Riverdale, New Jersey although his military records reflected his home as Riverdale, New York.

We would like to hear from anyone who remembers him and can furnish information as to his specific unit of assignment and/or information about his service that would be of interest to his family. JOHN VAN ORDEN, 8501 King William, Cordova, TN 38018.

I am writing this letter seeking help in proving that I was, in fact, a member of the U.S. Army during the period 13 October 1952 - 12 October 1955. I have been advised by the U.S. Army Personnel Center that my records were destroyed in a fire and they cannot verify my service.

I participated in basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO and then was transferred to Fort Lewis, WA and shipped overseas from there.

I was assigned to the 45th Infantry Division while they were on the East coast in the vicinity of Yanggu. I was a rifleman assigned to Company M. When the 45th rotated back to the States I was transferred to an Artillery outfit. EARL M. TAPP (RA16428343), 516 Putnam Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46808.

(Editors note: I have written to obtain his organization of assignment, but have received no response).

REUNION NOTICES

45th Infantry Division Association - 22-24 August 1991

Hilton Inn West, I40 and Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK

Reunion forms will be furnished by a separate mailing on or about 1 June 1991.

Company G, 180th Infantry: 3-5 May 1991

Holiday Inn, McAlester, Oklahoma

Contact Jim Phipps, PO Box 347, Clarcona, FL 32710

REUNION REPORTS

COMPANY M, 179th INFANTRY (KOREA). Twenty six members who served with the unit in Korea, wives of three deceased members, wives and other guests of members and Sun K Pang a retired Master Sergeant (US Army) living in Seoul, who was a 12 year old Korean orphan at the time the unit was in that country, participated in a reunion in early October in Oklahoma City.

The unit was called to active duty in 1950 with six officers and 56 enlisted members from Kingfisher County. Thirteen of the original members still reside in the County, nine are deceased, including the Commanding Officer during their active duty period Captain Terrence S. "Huck" Rice.

The following wives of deceased members were recognized - Mrs. Terrence S. (Gladys) Rice, Mrs. Jim (Mona) Uhlenhake and Mrs. Delbert (Betty) Yoder. Mrs. Rice was honored by Sun K Pang by presentation of a U.S. Flag which had been flown in the demilitarized zone of Korea on 8 August 1990. Terry Rice made an acceptance speech on behalf of his mother.

Harvey Brown of Dallas, TX presented Pang a camcorder as a gift from the group. He also noted that although he was Pang's platoon sergeant, it was George Payne (now of Guthrie) who took care of Pang while he was with Company M.

Reunion committee members included Charles Hill, Harvey L. Brown, George B. Payne, Joseph "Jake" Ruhl, George Cerney and George Brownlee.

COMPANY G, 179th INFANTRY (KOREA). When the decision was made to hold a reunion of Company G on the 40th anniversary of the 1950 mobilization, much work had to be done. Very few addresses from the last reunion in 1960 were still good. Several months of research resulted in sending 120 letters to members in 25 states.

The organizing committee was delighted when 47 members from 13 states came to Oklahoma City for the 23-24 August 1990 reunion. There were 24 from Oklahoma, 6 from Wisconsin, 3 each from Kansas and Texas, 2 each from California and Utah and one each from Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico and Virginia. 26 wives came along to verify those 40 year old war stories.

Slides and a video tape were shown from Camp Polk, aboard ship, Japan and Korea. Many members were greatly impressed by their first visit to the 45th Infantry Division Museum.

During the banquet, speakers from the company membership retold experiences ranging from the trip to Camp Polk to Hill 200. A memorial service paid tribute to the 38 deceased members.

Friends who in many cases had not been together for almost 40 years took up where they left off without missing a beat as the years melted away quickly. All had such a great time that it was decided to schedule to meet again in 1992 in Wisconsin. COMPANY G, 179th INFANTRY ASSOCIATION, 728 N.W. 46th, Lawton, OK 73505.

COMPANY A, 120th ENGINEER BATTALION (WW II). The annual reunion of Company A, 120 Engr Bn (WWII) was held at the Sheraton Old Town in Albuquerque, NM on Saturday October 27, 1990. For the fourth straight year, the reunion was coordinated by former platoon sergeant Ambrose V. Chavez. The company originated in Albuquerque as Company D 2d Bn 120 Engr Regt. It became Co A in February 1942 and was at all times attached to the 157th IRCT during operations. Many of the original members were at the reunion, with people from Nebraska, Texas and the majority from New Mexico. A farewell brunch was well-attended at the Marriott Hotel Sunday October 28. The reunion coordinator for 1991 will be former platoon sergeant George Leavitt, Jr.

COMPANY B, 179th INFANTRY. Twenty members met 22 August 1990 in Pawnee, Ok in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the mobilization for World War II.

Captain Rex E. Duncan current commander of Company B, 179th Infantry in the Oklahoma Army National Guard was present as well as four previous commanders from the World War II era, Major General Teddy Sanford, Colonel Glenn Lyon, Captain Harold Weishuhn and Captain Lee Kaplan. Most attendees participated in the 45th Division annual reunion in Oklahoma City.

ANZIO BEACHHEAD VETERANS. Many former Thunderbirds attended the Anzio Beachhead Veterans of World War II reunion conducted 8-10 November 1990 in Mobile, Alabama.

REUNION REPORTS continued from page 3

My wife and I attended, and had the pleasure of having dinner with Paul Cundiff and his wife, Mary. Paul was the division historian and authored the book "45th Infantry CP." We also had the pleasure of visiting with Felix Sparks from Colorado. Felix was a commander in the 157th Infantry throughout World War II. He commanded a unit at Anzio and later in France was commander of the Third Battalion. Hearing him relate his experiences from some of those days of long ago was very enjoyable.

Fifteen buses were required to transport us to Pascagula, Mississippi on Saturday 10 November to participate in the christening of the Aegis Cruiser USS ANZIO at Ingalls Shipbuilding. The U.S. Navy plans to commission this cruiser during April 1992 at Norfolk, Virginia. Captain Howard and the cadre crew of the Aegis were introduced during the ceremony.

LTG William P. Yarborough was one of several speakers during the christening. He commanded the 509th Parachute Battalion at Anzio. JAMES R. BIRD, 57 Bella Road, Medford, NJ 08055.



120th ENGINEER BATTALION. Raymond Emde's widow presents the Korean Battle Streamers of the battalion to 45th Division Museum representative Herbert O'Neil at the Biennial Reunion of the 120th Engineer Battalion held in Oklahoma City 22 August 1990.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I am an eighty two year old veteran who saw service in the 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Division from October 1944 to the end of World War II. I was sent overseas as a casual and assigned as a replacement to this great division at Epinal, France. I was awarded the Bronze Star for Meritorious Achievement in combat in January 1945. GEORGE L. COHEN, 2 Park Place Apt 10C, Hartford, CT 06106.

I joined the 45th Division as replacement in Korea. After receiving my discharge from the Army I spent several years in the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard while I was working as a salesman. I later joined the Postal Service where I am currently employed. I was a member of the 179th Infantry Regiment in Korea. JOHN J. WEEKS, 1002 Kings Grant Road, Wilmington, NC 28405.

It was a great to read your letter to the VFW Magazine concerning their oversight in leaving the most famous patch off the cover of the special "Korea" issue of their magazine. It did my heart good to see the "Thunderbird" in the August issue.

I am prejudiced, but I say our division was the #1 army unit in any War. I joined the division as a replacement at Anzio in May 1944 and was assigned to Company K, 180th Infantry. I remained with the division until June 1945 and was then assigned to the 9th Division for "Army of Occupation" duty.

Jack Treadwell was my platoon leader on the Southern France invasion. He was a wonderful leader and one of the finest officers that I had the pleasure to know.

I was a member of the New York chapter for several years, but have lost contact with them.

I was and always will be a "Thunderbird." WALTER J. CASEY, 65 Longfellow Drive, Colonia, NJ 07067.

I was drafted in early 1942 and on 23 February 1942 started my basic training at Fort McClellan, Alabama. I had surgery during basic training and had to take a 30 day furlough and drop back to the next class. I took Advanced Training at Fort Rucker, AL and then was transferred to Newport News, VA for overseas deployment as a casual.

During our ocean voyage an announcement was made that Italy had surrendered. I was assigned as a replacement to Company C., 179th Infantry. I was wounded by a sniper in November 1943 and never returned to the 45th Division.

I hope to be physically able to attend a reunion someday. CHARLES B. ARCHIBALD, Route 2, Box 4068, Jennison, AL 35085.

My wife and I attended our first 45th reunion and it was wonderful. My wife wanted to let you know what a great job the ladies did on the luncheon. The motel accommodations were perfect as was the whole reunion. Thanks for a very good time. We will be back next year for sure.

I would like to know the whereabouts of Joe Pfeffen, a member of Anti-Tank Company, 180th Infantry during World War II. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who knows his address. TOM STAUFFACHER, 1911-14th Avenue, Monroe, WI 53566.

The association has completed another great reunion. Each reunion seems better than the previous ones. It takes many hours of hard work to make sure it happens. A Big "THANKS" to all the workers.

Battery C, 171 FA, World War II, meets at the same time and place. This year we had forty-six Thunderbirds and wives present. These Thunderbirds come from all across the U.S. for this event. They come out of love for their "BUDDIES" and COUNTRY. NOEL R. JAMES, 1414 N. Wyandotte, Dewey, OK 74029.

My introduction to military service occurred in 1937 when I enlisted in the Second Battalion, 189th Field Artillery Regiment, 45th Division located in Tonkawa, OK. I lived in Ponca City about 11 miles away. We met weekly in the armory at night and sometimes we did a little close order drill. I severed my relations with this fine group in 1938 when I enlisted in the First Battalion, 1st FA Regiment, School Troops, at Fort Sill, Lawton, OK.

In 1939 I transferred to the Army Air Corps and was commissioned in 1943. I served in China during World War II and remained in the service after 1945 as a regular officer. I served combat duty in Korea and Vietnam with the USAF and retired in 1970 with over 32 years service. PHILLIP A. DICKEY, JR, 1375 North Acacia Avenue, Rialto, CA 92376.

Upon reviewing the October issue of the 45th Division News, I was disappointed to find nothing about our reunion of the 245 Tank Battalion that was held 21-23 June 1990 in Altus, OK. We had about 80 members present for the reunion and 115 for the dinner/dance. I had an enjoyable time meeting old friends. We had representatives from 15 states.

I may be a Virginian born and bred, but I am an "Okie" by adoption and a tanker and Thunderbird forever. GARLAND E. HONAKER, 319 Rockland Ave., Charlottesville, VA 22901.

(Editors note: We edit and print what we receive).

I was a member of Company D, 180th Infantry during World War II and was just wondering if any members of my old unit attended the August 1990 reunion. I attended the 180th Infantry reunion in 1989 at McAlester, OK, but to my disappointment there weren't any Company D old timers there.

I joined the 180th Infantry at Camp Pickett, VA in 1943 and stayed with Company D until early 1945 in Germany when I was wounded for the second time and sent back to the United States.

I hope to attend the 1991 reunion, but I sure would like to know if any of my old buddies will be there. ADRIAN BROEKHUIZEN, 107 Sargent Lane, Liverpool, NY 13088.

I was in Company A, 120th Engineer Battalion from Wetumka, Ok when we mobilized in 1940. After the triangularization of the Division at Camp Berkeley, TX was transferred to Company B, 120th Engineer BN.

Our unit was part of the 179th Regimental Combat Team and we supported them throughout the war.

During "Operation Husky" we participated in the capture of Comiso Airport which I understand is now a U.S. Air Force Cruise Missile Base. The crew on my Half Track were Lt. Towser, Sgt. Torres, Pfc. Drape, Pfc. Fennel and driver from Kentucky. BILLY R. CONLEY, 155 Temelec Circle, Sonoma, CA 95476.

My home village of Lamanon, France is preparing for celebration of the 50th Anniversary of their liberation by the American Army during World War II. I was twelve years old in September 1944 when my hometown at that time, Nancy, Lorraine was liberated by the 35th Division. Upon retirement I moved to Lamanon.

We have been celebrating the liberation of our village for three years and our mayor gave me the mission of finding a U.S. veteran who

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participated in the liberation of Lamanon on 23 August 1944. Our town is located 7 kilometers north of Salon de Provence.

We are not sure which U.S. Army division liberated our town, it was either the 3rd, 36th or the 45th. We will appreciate any information you can furnish concerning this matter. PIERRE KAUFFMANN, Les Barres, 54, allée de la Citronnelle, F-13113 LAMANON.

(Editor's Note: Condensed from a two page letter. The best I can determine we were in the vicinity of Grenoble on 23 August 1944. Please respond direct to Pierre Kaufmann)

I served in Medical Company, 180th Infantry from the time I was assigned at Camp Polk in October 1950 until July 1952. While in Korea I was assigned to Headquarters Company as a light truck and "litter jeep" driver for "White Pill" Aid Station.

I have lost track of most of my buddies and I am interested in hearing from any of them. I have a photograph taken at Camp Strong in Hokkaido, Japan in front of Tent #13 of Patrick Sbarra, Earl Groves, Jack Few, McCurdy, Henry Ford, Currins and Coffin.

I would like to hear from any of the medics that attended the mini-reunion this past summer in New York. (Article and photograph in October issue of 45th Division News). DONALD J. HANSEN, PO Box 68, Davenport, NE 68335.

I was a member of Company A, 120th Engineer Battalion during World War II. On 1 October 1944, somewhere in France, I was wounded by a "Teller Mine." I was released from O'Reilly General Hospital, Springfield, MO and discharged from the Army in August 1945.

I am 100% disabled and have a great deal of time on my hands. It would give me great pleasure to contact and correspond with some of my friends from World War II.

Sorry I couldn't make the 45th Annual Reunion, but I was in the hospital having eye surgery. BENNIE S. CASSARO, 3 Annapolis Drive, Hazlet, NJ 07730.

I read your article in the VFW Magazine (August 1990). It was sure good to see the "Thunderbird" patch of the 45th Division again. I do not think you were "forgotten," maybe in some ways, but not by the men who served with them and in adjacent units during World War II in the ETO. Also, the 45th Infantry Division was very highly respected by the German Army.

I was a member of a Tank Battalion in the 10th Armored Division. After the war was over my unit was deactivated and I was assigned to the 45th Division to return to the United States for discharge. ROBERT H. EVES, PO Box 184, Millville, PA 17846.

I had heard about the 45th Museum, but last Saturday, I decided to see it. The equipment on display rekindled memories of my youth of twenty-five years ago. The Army equipment poised in magnificent retreat caused a big lump to somehow form in my throat which stayed there until I left Oklahoma City. Weapons of war staging a last salute to a bygone era was like a time capsule which had suddenly been opened before my eyes.

Even the Museum building itself held a special meaning, because back in 1967, I spent four weeks there going through an NCO academy. My visit to the museum last Saturday marked the first time I had been inside in twenty-three years. It looked different, maybe even a little strange, but I could still remember the ghostly sounds of fatigue-clad Thunderbirds who once dwelled in the rock walls.

To have been a member of the mighty 45th is something I will always cherish. KENNETH R. CUNNINGHAM, 6814 S.W. Bainbridge, Lawton, OK 73505.

LIFE MEMBERS

Since Last Newsletter

Stanley C. T. Ajirogi
Eugene F. Caudill

Walter J. Clark
James Townley

NEW MEMBERS

Since Last Newsletter

10-Year

Onias L. Acevedo
Robert E. Allgaier
John H. Bannister
James E. Bell
Marlin H. Dohner
Arlis D. Foster

Gary Gene Garner
Kenneth W. Russell
Leonard Shelepecz
Donald G. Suyat
Frederick A. Teed

4-Year

Frank B. Anderson
Alfred A. Aniello
S. Gene Boyer
George Brownlee
John W. Burfiend
Walter J. Casey
John A. Christopher
Vincel Ray Cordry, Sr.
Clyde R. Ferguson
C. E. (Swamp) Floyd
R. Charles Gutknecht
Yuji Katano
Charles F. Lane
William McDougal

Harold E. Momsen
John E. Naramore
Harvard E. Olinger
Vincent Oliveri
James E. Sahi
Surry G. Shaffer, Jr.
Robert Walter Simpson
Pat Sisto
Thomas Spence
Joseph C. Thomas
Robert J. Thompson
Dr. Ignatius J. Turnes
John L. Wilson
Franklin J. Wiram, Sr.

★ ★																				
★																				
										TAPS										★
★										Joe T. Alsip										★
★										Henry (Hank) R. Andrews										★
★										John F. Fesler										★
★										Estle H. Hallmark										★
★										Reford J. Kelley										★
★										Minnie Lemaster										★
★										Reece L. McGee										★
★										Robert Metzger										★
★										Eddie L. Morris										★
★										C. L. Oglesbee										★
★										Edward J. Palmer										★
★										Richard (Dick) Purvis										★
★										Wallace D. Spade										★
★										Foster G. Steinbeck										★
★										Billy G. Taylor										★
★										Elmer J. Walters										★
★										Jack Webb										★
★										Thomas L. Wittmann										★
★ ★																				

LOST ADDRESSES

Life Members

William T. Bresnahan, St. Augustine, FL
Harold S. Dallam, Del City, OK
M. D. Gilbert, Reno, NV
George B. LaRoche, Sacramento, CA
Charles M. McCracken, Ft. Hood, TX
David B. Mosby, Muskogee, OK
James O. Pridgen, Decatur, GA
Henry P. Roberson, APO NY, NY
Clay Routh, Chicago, IL
Robert Brescia, Norfolk, VA

★ 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.

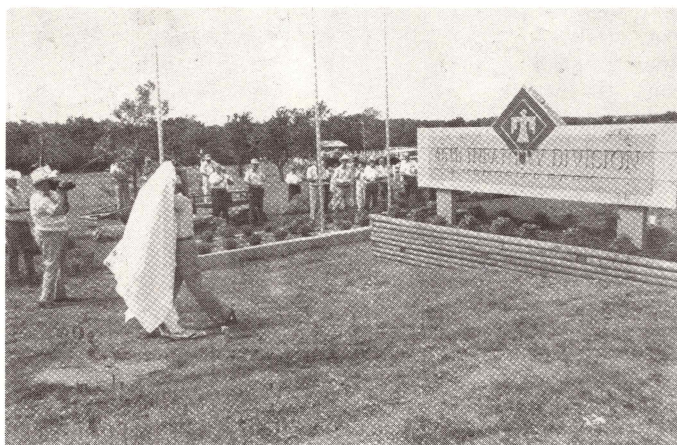
Christopher Bills	President
Wm. Rex Wilson	Secretary/Editor
Louis A. Scott	Associate Editor
Herman Wilson	Publisher
Eva Lou Moon	Volunteer Staff
Noma Jo Strickland	Volunteer Staff

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

DO NOT SEND ITEMS THAT MUST BE RETURNED!

★ ★

ATOKA RENAMES PARK IN HONOR OF 45th DIVISION



Dedication ceremonies renaming the former Penny Park in Atoka, Oklahoma as 45th INFANTRY DIVISION MEMORIAL PARK were held Saturday 15 September 1990 with several former members of the division in attendance. Sidney Camp former Thunderbird was master of ceremonies for the event. Colors were presented by Leo Camp, invocation by Perry Ray, pledge of allegiance led by Roy Smith. A history of Company B, 180th Infantry was given by Major Bob Cates retired former Thunderbird who was instrumental in accomplishing renaming of the park. Unveiling of the "Thunderbird" sign was performed by Olen Curry a former member of Company B.

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY CONDUCTED AT 45th DIVISION MUSEUM

Veterans Day was observed at 2:00 p.m., Sunday 11 November 1990 with a ceremony held outside the 45th Infantry Division Museum. Master of Ceremonies was Colonel James L. Farmer.

Gun salute with the Hotchkiss Mountain Gun was conducted by Gene Church and crew. Music was provided by the 145th Army Band. A wreath in memory of those who gave their lives for their country was presented by three Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, Ernest Childers, Jack Montgomery and John R. Crews.

The principal speaker was Major General William P. Bowden, retired Commander of the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center at Tinker Air Force Base.

A Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) was on site at the Veterans Day Ceremony. The MLRS is a free flight system with movement controlled by computer and is one of the newest weapons systems used by the field Artillery.

Posting and retirement of the colors was performed by the Governor's Honor Guard.

Tours of the 45th Infantry Division Museum and serving of refreshments followed the ceremony.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The following committee appointments were made by President Christopher Bills during the quarterly Board of Directors meeting conducted 16 October 1990:

Budget-Neal Dodds
Resolutions-Walter Larsen
Entertainment-Bill Wilson
Public Relations-John Greiner
Audit-Bob Henthorn
Time and Place-
Mike Jackson

Physical Arrangements-
Danny Marler
Transportation-Tom Myers
Nominating-Bill Evans
Welcoming-Jimmy Jones
Membership-Raul Trevino
Ladies Activities-Lois Batey

Resolutions committee chairman Walter Larsen requests that members desiring to submit resolutions for consideration by the membership at the next annual reunion do so at an early date. Resolutions should be submitted in draft form, typed and double spaced.

279th INFANTRY ASSOCIATION TOUR HOKKAIDO***KOREA***HONOLULU

The 279th Infantry Association is sponsoring a tour in conjunction with Galaxy Tours.

The tour departs Los Angeles, CA 29 May 1991 and returns 11 June 1991.

Detailed information and required forms are available from GALAXY TOURS, PO Box 234, Wayne, PA 19087-0234, (800) 523-7287 or (215) 964-8010, Facsimile: (215) 964-8220.

(Editor's note: This tour is not sponsored by the 45th Division Association. Please forward your inquiries to Galaxy Tours).

ANOTHER "LATE CALL" FOR KOREAN VETERANS

PUBLIC LAW 101-315 - JUNE 28, 1990

JOINT RESOLUTION

(To designate June 25, 1990, as "Korean War Remembrance Day")

Whereas on June 25, 1950, the army of the Communist government of North Korea initiated the Korean War by invading South Korea;

Whereas the United Nations Military Command created to respond to the attack is the only example of such a command in the history of the United Nations;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces of the United States exerted executive authority over and were the primary participants in the command;

Whereas in addition to the United States and South Korea, 20 other member nations of the United Nations provided military forces to serve under the United Nations military command;

Whereas after three years of active hostilities, the territorial integrity of South Korea was restored, primarily through the efforts of the Armed Forces of the United States;

Whereas the people of South Korea remain free and independent to this day;

Whereas more than 5,700,000 United States servicemen and servicewomen were directly or indirectly involved in the war;

Whereas this Nation's casualties from the war included 54,246 dead, of which 33,629 were battle deaths, 103,284 wounded, 8,177 listed as missing or prisoners of war, and 328 prisoners of war still unaccounted for;

Whereas, although the Korean war has been called this Nation's "FORGOTTEN WAR," the war has not been forgotten by those who served or by the families of those who served;

Whereas this Nation must never forget the sacrifices made by the servicemen and servicewomen who served, fought, were injured, and died in the Korean war;

Whereas the Congress has enacted and the President has signed into law an Act to establish a Korean War Veterans' Memorial in the Nation's Capitol to recognize and honor the service and sacrifice of this Nation's servicemen and servicewomen who participated in the Korean war; and

Whereas on the 40th anniversary of the commencement of the Korean war, it is appropriate to recognize, honor, and remember the service and sacrifices of the servicemen and servicewomen of the Nation who preserved the independence of South Korea by enduring the rigors of combat, a hostile climate, and other trying conditions during that war; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That June 25, 1990, is designated as "Korean War Remembrance Day," and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to urge the departments and agencies of the United States and interested organizations, groups, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half staff on June 25, 1990, in honor of the Americans who died as a result of service in the Korean War.

APPROVED JUNE 28, 1990.

June 19, considered and passed House.

June 22, considered and passed Senate.

PRICE LIST/MAIL ORDER FORM

45th INFANTRY DIVISION MUSEUM GIFT SHOP

(Mail completed form to: 45th Inf Div Museum Gift Shop, 2145 N.E. 36th, OK City, OK 73111)

"45th DIVISION" JEWELRY:

CHARM, 'Gold' Round T/B	\$4.00
CHARM, 'Silver' Oval	4.50
CHARM, 'Gold' Backing	4.50
CHARM, 'Silver' Backing	4.50
NECKLACE, Charm, 'Silver'	7.50
TIE TAC, 'Gold' T/B	2.00
BELT BUCKLE, 45 Inf Div	7.00
MONEY CLIP, 'Gold'	5.00
LAPEL PIN (Approx 3/4")	2.50
LAPEL PIN, TB/USA/OK Flags	2.00
BOLO TIE, Red	6.00
BOLO TIE, Gold	6.00
TIE CLASP, 'Gold' (BAR) T/B	4.00
PAPERWEIGHT (Marble)	3.50
EAGLE PIN w/SPRD WINGS 'Gold'	2.00
KEY RING w/Div Charm 'Silv' T/B	4.00
KEY RING w/Lthr Fob T/B	3.50
LAPEL PIN, Indian Head (Sm)	2.00
LAPEL PIN, Indian Head (Lg)	2.50

CERAMIC ITEMS

ASH TRAY (Approx. 5 1/2" T/B)	4.00
COFFEE MUG w/T/B Insig	3.00

T-SHIRTS

Infantry Blue, w/T-Bird on Pocket:	
Childrens: S M L	7.00
Adults: S M L	8.00

CAPS

One size fits all w/T-Bird & "45th Div" Ltrng:	
Blue/White	5.50
Red/White	5.50

MISCELLANEOUS PRINTS (8 1/2x11 simulated parchment)

"Soldier"	.50
"I Am The Infantry"	.50
"War is an Ugle Thing"	.50
"Saga of the Thunderbird"	.50

(*) Not always available. Prices subject to change without notice.

(Effective Date: 1 May 90)

COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLIONS (SET)	\$6.00
COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLION	2.00

EARRINGS

Round, 'Gold'	8.00
Oval, 'Silver'	8.00
T-Bird, 'Gold'	7.50
T-Bird, 'Silver'	7.50

CLOTH INSIGNIA

45th Infantry Division Insignia:	
Regulation Size	2.00
Miniature Size	1.25
Swastika (Replica)	2.50

POST CARDS

Museum, Front View, (In Color)	.25
"Willie & Joe" by Mauldin	.25

MISCELLANEOUS

Button, 45th Inf. Div.	.25
Booklet, Address/Tel (T/B)	2.00
Auto Tag, Plastic, "45th Museum"	3.00
Bumper Sticker, "T-C-D-R"	.50
Decal, 45th Inf Div	.50
Solar Car Shade	12.00
Notes, (Museum Litho)	3.00

BOOKS*

"The Thunderbird Tradition" (The Museum Guide)	5.00
"Thunderbird" History of the 45th Infantry Division	5.50
"Citizen Soldiers" by Franks	24.95
"Bill Mauldin's Army"	14.95
45th Infantry Division (Repr)	22.50
Oklahoma Heritage (Booklet)	1.00

ORGANIZATION HISTORIES(*)

179th Inf Regt-Story of Regt	25.00
180th Infantry Regt	18.00
279th Infantry Regt	6.00
157 Infantry Regt	25.00
158th Infantry Regt	20.00
Reforger '57	15.00

Sub-Total	\$
Postage/Handling	\$ 2.50
Total	\$

Note: Enclose Check/Money Order for total

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. Give complete designation: _____

World War II _____ Korean War _____ Post Korean War _____

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

Thunderbird Deaths

JOET. ALSIP, Chandler, OK, deceased 21 September 1990. Joe was a native of Oklahoma and served throughout World War II with Battery C, 171st Field Artillery.

He moved to California after World War II and retired from the U.S. Postal Service. Burial was in Chandler, Oklahoma.

JOHN F. FESLER, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma deceased 22 September 1990. John was a veteran of World War II and Korea. He was a member of 700 Ordnance in Korea.

He retired as Vice-President and Assistant General Manager for Mistletoe Express after forty years service.

John is survived by his wife Theyva, one son and a grandson.

ESTLE H. HALLMARK, Ardmore, Oklahoma. Deceased October 1990. He was a member of Company H, 180 Infantry during the Korean War.

Estle was a lifetime resident of the Ardmore area. He was a member of Memorial Christian Church, TROA, DAV and American Legion.

Estle was a past commander of the 245th Transportation Battalion and retired in the grade of Colonel from the Oklahoma Army National Guard. He was also retired from his civilian employment with the Department of Human Services.

Pallbearers were all current or retired members of the Oklahoma National Guard. Burial was with full military honors.

Survivors include his wife Carolyn, two sons, one daughter and four grandchildren.

MINNIE LEMASTER, Oklahoma City, OK, deceased 27 November 1990. Minnie was the widow of Ira V. LeMaster, a lifetime "Thunderbird." Ira served in the 45th Division Artillery prior to and during World War II. He commanded the 160th Field Artillery Battalion during the Korean War.

Minnie was a lifetime educator in the field of music. This included elementary schools, high schools, colleges, universities, church groups and civic organizations.

She was a "tried and true" Thunderbird and served for many years as a 45th Infantry Division Museum Volunteer.

Minnie will be missed by her many "Thunderbird" friends and many friends associated with the musical and teaching profession throughout Oklahoma.

REECE L. MCGEE, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, deceased 25 October 1990. He was a member of the 179th Infantry during the Korean War.

Reece was born in St. Louis, OK, received his education in Public Schools in Norman, OK and graduated from the

University of Oklahoma with a degree in Business Administration.

He was a member of the University of Oklahoma football team in 1948 and 1949, but his heart belonged to softball. He began pitching on adult teams at the age of 12 and continued to play until 1965. Reece was elected to the Metro Softball Hall of Fame in 1988. He was employed by the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation for 16 years, serving as Executive Vice-President for 7 years.

Survivors include his wife, Lou, two sons, two daughters and 7 grandchildren.

BILLY G. TAYLOR, Norman, Oklahoma, deceased 14 September 1990. He was a member of 700 Ordnance during the Korean War and served as a member of the 45th Division and/or the Oklahoma Army National Guard for over 41 years.

Bill was a civilian employee of the Oklahoma Military Department for 37 years. He was a deacon for the First Baptist Church in Norman and a Sunday School teacher for 5 year olds for over 30 years. He was known to them as "Uncle Bill."

He was the recipient of many military awards and decorations from both war and peace time service.

Pallbearers were all military friends. Burial was at the IOOF Cemetery, Norman, OK with full military honors.

FOSTER G. STEINBECK, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Deceased 3 December 1990 at age 69.

He was a native Oklahoman and a graduate of Central High School and Oklahoma City University.

Foster served in the 45th Division throughout World War II. His business careers included stocks and bonds salesman, area representative for a chemical company and the U.S. Postal Service.

Foster and his wife attended the 45th annual reunion in August 1990.

Survivors include his wife Helen, one daughter and two grandchildren.

THOMAS L. WITTMANN, Hurst, Texas, deceased 7 July 1990. Tom was a native of Oklahoma and served with Battery C, 171 FA during World War II. He was awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and many other awards and decorations.

He moved to Hurst, TX after World War II and retired from Bell Helicopter company.

Tom attended many reunions and was a real "Buddy" to all members of Battery C. This proud "Thunderbird" will be missed. He is survived by his wife Louise and two sons.

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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