

45th Division News

January, 1994

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

COMBAT CHRONICLES WORLD WAR II

Italy 1943. During the months of October, November, and December of 1943, the Italian Campaign was fast becoming the "Forgotten Front." There were several reasons for this, the least of which was that the slogging, painstaking battles of the Allies to gain a yard of real estate were not as newsworthy as events in the Pacific where American troops were battling the Japanese from island to island. One of the main reasons for a lack of interest in Italy was because the American Chiefs of Staff only agreed to a campaign in Italy to appease Winston Churchill. The American interest lay in an invasion across the English Channel...and the sooner the better. Supplying troops and equipment to a campaign in Italy only delayed building an army large enough to invade France. Also, the Americans were more interested in Operation Anvil, the invasion of Southern France, that was being held up by the commitment in Italy. (*Forrest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall, Organizer of Victory, 1943-1945.*)

The forces in Italy were not abandoned by the American high command, far from it. General Marshall, U.S. Chief of Staff, felt that further commitment in Italy was unsound...that Italy had no strategic value except to draw German forces away from the Russian Front. When the Anzio beachhead (Operation Shingle) was proposed, General Marshall refused to approve of it. In the end, it was strictly a British project.

Regardless of their feelings about the Italian Campaign, the American high command continued to support the commitment by supplying additional troops reinforcements. In November, when the allies hit the Winter Line, the Fifth Army forces consisted of the U.S. II and VI Corps, the 3rd, 34th, 36th, and 45th Infantry Divisions and the 82nd Airborne Division, plus the 1st Special Forces and U.S. Ranger Battalions. Later, the U.S. 1st Armored Division and the 2nd Moroccan Infantry Division and the 3rd Algerian Infantry Division were added to Fifth Army forces before the end of 1943.

Francis T. Miller in his *History of World War II*, stated "The land of the Caesars was now to become one of the bloodiest battlegrounds in all history."

The 45th Infantry Division continued to catch the brunt of the hard fighting as they moved up the spine of the Italian mountains. After the breakout from the Salerno beachhead, the 45th was assigned to the right flank of the Fifth Army with the British Eighth Army on their right. The entire Fifth Army pivoted to the left so that they could move up the length of the Italian peninsula. This placed the Thunderbirds in the most difficult terrain, the Italian mountains, engaging the well entrenched German forces, who held all of the good defensive positions.

Then the rains came. The countryside turned into mud, mire and more mud. Anyone venturing off the paved roads bogged down in thick, gooey mud, which was the consistency of clay and tenaciously clung to everything it touched. 45th Division troops faced not only a vicious and determined German Army, but also the mud and the mountains. The Germans had prepared their positions well in advance, and they were well-concealed, dug-in, and almost impossible to penetrate. Together the mud and the mountains combined to slow the division's advance as much as did the opposition of the retreating Germans.

On October 20, the Thunderbirds ended 40 days of continuous fighting, a record that marked the longest period that an entire American division in the European Theater had been in the line without relief. The division moved to a rest area, with the exception of 1st and 2nd battalions, 157th Infantry, the Division Artillery, and the 45th Reconnaissance Troop who remained in the line. The rest was well earned. The division had captured 274 villages or towns, moved almost 200 miles from the Salerno beachhead, and taken 365 German prisoners. The division suffered about 30 percent casualties during the period. The successful efforts of the 45th Division to capture the commanding area around the **VOLTURNO RIVER** enabled the 34th Division to cross the river without serious incident. The 45th captured the hub city of **BENEVENTO** and many smaller towns.

Upon return to the line on 30 October, the division was again assigned the position on the right flank of the Fifth Army and continued up the same route they were on before the rest period. **VENAFRO** was captured and they met the **WINTER LINE** head on, facing German troops that were well entrenched. The fierce winter,

the rugged mountains, the mud, long supply lines, and the dogged German resistance made advance almost impossible. The Allied advance ended on 15 November and it became a stand-off in the mountains, each yard of real estate was grudgingly fought over, neither side yielding much and each exacting a high price for any effort to gain a foot.

The mountains were so treacherous and the tortuous mountain trails were too steep, winding, and narrow for vehicles, so the 45th Division organized a Mule Train under the able leadership of LTC John Wirtz, the Division Veterinarian. His efforts were so successful that his "Mules and Skinners" were able to sustain the Division supply lines to the forward troops, carrying supplies and ammunition up, and the wounded down. Without mules, the winter campaign in Italy would have been impossible (Official War Dept. Pub, *The Winter Line*). At the beginning of November the 45th Division had thirty-two animals; at the end of December the number exceeded four hundred.

Throughout December, 1943, the 45th Division was constantly engaged with German forces; the costs had been high: 121 KIA, 476 WIA, 26 MIA, and 2234 sick or injured. (Malaria was beginning to take a terrible toll.) When the Division was relieved on January 9, 1944, it had been in combat for all but 7 days of the 122 days of fighting on the Italian mainland, but part of the division remained in the line during those seven days (1st and 2nd Battalions, 157th Infantry, Division Artillery, and 45th Reconnaissance Company).

ANZIO BEACHHEAD (OPERATION SHINGLE)

The "end run" operation at Anzio was designed to secure a beachhead and to threaten the routes of communication in rear of the German 10th Army by seizure of the high ground of **COLLE LAZIALI**. The original plans were for a single division, the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division, to make the landing in December, 1943. The tenacious German opposition, the weather, and difficult terrain kept the Fifth and Eighth Armies from reaching objectives in the Winter Line campaign; this, coupled with a shortage of landing craft, caused the amphibious operation to be postponed.

On Christmas Day, Allied leaders drafted new plans that included increased forces and the necessary shipping. Two division's plus airborne and some armor--over twice the force originally planned--were to make the landing between January 20 and 31st.

Preparations for the invasion were impossible to conceal. The loading of troops and equipment aboard landing craft in the Naples harbor could not be hidden. The convoy sailed from Naples on January 21 and swung out to sea to hide its destination before turning back toward the shore at Anzio. Unbelievably, the Germans failed to detect either the loading of vessels at Naples or the slow approach of the invasion force. The amphibious landing took the Germans completely by surprise. For the first time in combat, 45th Division troops walked ashore unopposed during an amphibious assault.

The invasion force, under U.S. VI Corps, commanded by MG John Lucas, consisted of the 3rd U.S. Division, the 179th Infantry Regimental Combat Team of the 45th Division, two parachute regiments of the 82nd Airborne Division, and the 1st British Infantry Division. The balance of the 45th Infantry Division would follow later in January.

Forrest C. Pogue, in *...Organizer of Victory...*, stated that Lucas, "suffering from a 'Salerno complex' was determined to guard against a German counter-attack." As a result, "despite definite surprise and a landing in force without successful opposition, he did not strike boldly inland." Therefore, the Germans were able to react by reinforcing their troops with units from the southern front in Italy, from the Balkans, and from France. Their forces expanded from 20,000 on January 22 to 41,000 on January 25, increased to 70,000 by D+7 compared to our 56,000; and the Germans held all the high ground. Within eleven days after the landing, the German forces numbered over 98,000 compared to our 92,000. The beachhead radius was only 10 miles and there was not a spot anywhere that was not hospital area with tents blazoned with huge red crosses. The fighting at Anzio was some of the most costly and bloodiest of World War II.

Francis Miller in *History of World War II*, stated "it was the artillery that finally

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(COMBAT CHRONICLES cont'd from page 1)

saved the beachhead for the Allies." One analysis of the campaign, "The Gamble that Failed," stated "the role of artillery at Anzio, both in keeping the precarious beachhead and in breaking out from it finally, is in itself an epic. There was at one point the heaviest massing of artillery fire power in the war and one of the conflict's largest in total." Field Marshal Albert Kesserling, commander of German tactical forces in Italy, later said that the 45th Infantry Division was one of the two finest United States divisions his forces had faced. He also expressed a desire to see "the Falcon's automatic artillery."

Anzio was to be a four-month stalemate, bloody and costly for both sides. In the next issue of *The Newsletter*, the entire Anzio campaign will be covered in detail.

KOREA

February 1952: The 45th Infantry Division continued its mission of occupying, defending, and improving its positions along Line JAMESTOWN (MLR).

The division was deployed with the 179th Infantry RCT on the left, 279th Infantry RCT on the right, and the 180th Infantry Regiment in reserve. On 6 February, the 179th Infantry was relieved by the 180th Infantry. On 27 February, the 179th Infantry was relieved by the 179th Infantry. The 245th Tank Battalion remained in reserve positions in the 9th ROK Division sector covering enemy armor approaches. Division Artillery remained in support throughout the period.

From 10 to 16 February, during Operation SNATCH, all personnel remained out of sight and all weapon were silenced to simulate a friendly withdrawal and deceive the enemy into exposing himself. Initially successful, the plan's effect was materially lessened by alertness of enemy intelligence agencies in securing information as to friendly intentions. Constant contact with the enemy was maintained by an aggressive and continuous patrol program. Several raids were conducted by friendly forces.

During the month friendly patrols destroyed 9 enemy bunkers, 43 buildings and 1 outpost.

There were 43 Division battle casualties during the month of February, 1952.

THUNDERBIRDS HONORED



On 16 September 1993 the Adjutant General of Oklahoma and several members of his staff and retired Army and Air National Guard members participated in ceremonies at the National Guard Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in honor of the 45th Infantry Division and the Thunderbirds who were recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor during World War II.

Ceremonies at the National Guard Memorial included presentation of a wooden replica of the Medal of Honor constructed by Henry Chavez from 23 different

kinds of wood in natural color. Chavez is a 45th Infantry Division Museum volunteer.

The three living Medal of Honor recipients Van T. Barfoot, Ernest Childers and Jack Montgomery were recognized during the ceremony. The replica will be permanently displayed in the Medal of Honor room at the National Guard Memorial.

Ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier included presentation of the "Thunderbird Memorial Wreath" which was placed at the tomb by the Honor Guard and remained during one guard tour (approximately 30 minutes).

THUNDERBIRDS PARTICIPATE IN COMMEMORATIVE EVENT



On 10 September 1993 the U.S. Army Field Artillery Center, Fort Sill, OK observed the fiftieth anniversary of the Salerno, Italy landing with a ceremony in honor of World War II veterans. The Lawton Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted a luncheon at the Officers Club to honor veterans from the 45th Infantry Division.

MG John A. Dubia, invited MG Frederick A. Daugherty, former CG, 45th Infantry Division to join the reviewing party for the ceremony consisting of a four battalion parade and then to serve as the luncheon speaker.

Daugherty was accompanied by thunderbird veterans of World War II and Korea, Rex Wilson, Fred Snyder, Odell Shaw and joined at Fort Sill by Harry Hughes and Louis Scott. Numerous 45th Division veterans attended the ceremony and luncheon.

THIRTY-THREE DAYS IN A HOLE

(An Anzio Experience)

By Anse H. "Eddie" Speairs

About two years ago Jeff Slade sent me a picture of Company C, 157th Infantry members, 1st Sgt Joe Allee, EX-O Don Waugh and myself. It reminded me of the thirty-three days we spent in a hole on Anzio--a record for Company C.

On Anzio, in April 1944, my company left the "Pines" and relieved a company of the 3rd Division. We took over a position to the left of Co. B, 157th, whose CP was in Garibaldi's tomb. Our company CP was a hole dug under the ruins of a two-story farmhouse. A platoon CP was in a house to our left; the entire company was on line, so there was no reserve platoon.

Our CP "hole" held four men--Don Waugh, Joe Allee, my runner, and me. We settled in shortly before dawn. After a short nap we decided to get some fresh air and eat a K ration. The sun was shining and we hugged the back wall of the house and checked out our surroundings. One of the first thing I saw was a huge white sow flat on her back and deader than a hammer--a souvenir left for us to bury by the company we relieved.

We were just starting to eat when two shells landed very near us and close behind came several more. We scrambled into our hole. I said it was just an accident for there was no way the Krauts could have seen us up against the house, so we went out again. This time we got about two minutes of sunshine before the first round arrived and we set a record for hitting the "hole." Two rounds hit the house and that made believers out of us for the rest of the day.

That night at Battalion I looked at the situation map and saw that Co. C was on a salient that stuck out far enough to allow the German FO a clear view of our "backyard." There would be no more sunshine for us or anyone else in Charlie Company.

We settled into a routine that we followed for the next 32 days. All movement was from dark to daylight; all resupply and evacuation, also we had to haul out or bury trash, for too much litter would draw fire come daylight.

Our days became very monotonous. We had extra sound-power phones and they were put to good use; a couple of cranks would get someone on every phone and jokes or information disseminated. Max Johnson, the weapons Platoon leader, was a favorite of all. Almost every day he came up with a new way to fix K rations. He also wrote poetry and was the life of the party.

Any little incident was welcomed to relieve the monotony. A new lieutenant tidied up his hole one day and carelessly put most of his belongings on the berm. A machine gun made a clean sweep and educated the lieutenant. Depths of the foxholes varied and under the house was dry but noisy. The Germans obviously knew it was a CP and when they had nothing else to do would drop in a few rounds. We counted 18 hits one day, but the more they knocked down, the better we liked it!

The Germans would try to herd a group of loose farm horses in the area into our position and fire on them to annoy us. Of course, our FOs never had any nasty ideas like that.

We ran into some odd things when moving around at night. One night I found four turkeys roosting in a hen house. They went to the rear and came back roasted two nights later. One night I headed to a forward position when I saw a man crawling down a shallow ditch. I hit the ground; there was no reason for a GI to be crawling in that area. I challenged him very quietly with no response. I finally crawled toward him and discovered it to be a very dead German who had died on his hands and knees and was leaning against the side of the ditch.

Someone in the rear got a brilliant idea and decided to run a tank down a path in our area at night, fire a few rounds then hightail it for the rear. Naturally, this drew artillery fire on only one group--us! I protested to no avail and the next night the tank was back and we had a repeat performance. I called battalion again and said to tell the tanker we had found some scattered mines, so they had better sweep. No one likes to sweep for mines in the dark, so that ended the idea.

The advance party for our relief came up to scout the area and I took the CO on a tour and turned the others over to their counterparts. It was a dark night and we took it slowly. Suddenly, one of my machine guns opened up and the Germans answered. The other CO and I crawled out of the line of fire. At the CP I got on the phone and asked who in hell started the "duel." Lt. Waugh said, "But Captain, I was just showing the other LT where the German MG was located."

The relief went off without incident and we headed for the rear. Everyone was tired and dirty (all water had come up in five-gallon cans and it wasn't wasted on washing), but all were smiling.

These are but a few of many stories about our thirty-three days in a hole at Anzio. We had been without baths or clean clothes and we lived on K rations. Personal elimination functions were in a K ration box or C ration can and thrown over the berm. Anything else was done at night--no one stuck their nose out during the daylight hours. Joe Allee was killed a few weeks after the picture was taken and Don Waugh was killed about three months later.

(Editor's Notes: (1) If you have an interesting and amusing anecdote to tell about your combat days, send it to us and we will consider publishing it in the NWSLTR. All stories become the property of the Association, will be edited and cannot be returned. (2) Eddie rejoined the Division after World War II and commanded an Infantry Battalion during the Korean War. He remained on active duty after Korea and retired as a Colonel).

RETURN OF THE SHOTGUN

On April 30, 1945, the 45th Infantry Division entered Munich and occupied it for several weeks. My platoon slept in a warehouse the first night, but then we commandeered private residences and some of us lived in the home of a widow named Baroness von Schachner. German civilians were required to turn in their weapons and rather than turn in her husband's prized double barreled shotgun, the baroness gave it to me and I mailed the gun home.

I didn't turn out to be much of a hunter and the shotgun stood in my closet unused for almost five decades. In 1992 I determined to find a descendant of the von Schachners and return the gun to the family. Munich City Hall helped me find a grandson who, it turns out, lives with his family in the same home we occupied at the corner of Lachner and Renata Str.! I wrote and offered to return the gun and the grandson promptly responded. He had

already applied for a gun permit from Munich police and he mentioned his family would be vacationing in California in the summer and perhaps we could meet.

So, in August of 1993 we hosted Dr. Wolf-Armin Freiherr von Reitzenstein, his wife, and three children at our home in Marin County. Wolf teaches Latin, Greek and History in a gymnasium and his wife is a physician in private practice. All but the young daughter spoke very good English and communicating was no problem.

We had a quiet dinner with the family the first night and I shared memorabilia from my Munich days including pictures of our men at leisure in their home and doing close order drill on Renata Str. The next night my wife and I hosted a "Return of the Shotgun Party" where I presented Wolf with his grandfather's shotgun. Wolf's father had been killed on the Russian front in 1942 and Wolf was five years old when the war ended. GI's had also occupied his mother's home and his memories of the experience were quite moving. He told us he remembered the soldiers more as guests than as occupiers.

After another day of sightseeing, the family left with the shotgun for Munich. It had been a happy three days. Wolf writes that the gun now hangs in his workroom and the children are inviting all their friends to see it.

Now, my next project is to find the descendants of F. Weinhold. I have his gold pocketwatch!

Dan P. Dougherty, Company C, 157th Infantry, 3 Mann Drive, Kentfield, CA 94904, (415)457-1411

DACHAU

(STILL A SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION)

The September 1993 edition of "RAINBOW REVELLE", published by the 42nd Infantry Division "Rainbow Division Veterans Association", contained an article entitled "DACHAU", plus several references to memorials, including one at Dachau and several related actions pertaining to the goals of the "42nd Division Veterans Memorial Foundation".

Excerpts of the publication are as follows:

"We have heard many others claim that their units were the liberators of the Dachau prison camp. These others include the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion, 20th Armored Division, a Third Army Division, and a Tank Destroyer Unit. We have also read the accounts by and about an officer of the 45th Division that troops of the 45th Division had liberated the prison camp before the 42nd Division arrived."

"The meticulous research of our own "Sol Feingold and Art Lee" has clearly established the chronology of liberation with our people "first" in the compound and General Linden accepting the camp surrender from the SS Officer in charge".

The significance of the Dachau liberation is apparent, as the number of liberator claimants attests. "PRESERVATION OF OUR HISTORY IS OUR FOUNDATION'S TASK, AND WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO FULFILL IT." That it was a timely statement is even clearer in November than it was in May.

(Editor's Note: The 42nd Infantry Division is credited with entering combat as a Division on 14 February 1945. Since the War officially ended 8 May 1945, this would give the Division credit for a total of 84 days of combat. Without the claim for liberation of Dachau the 42nd Division would possibly have no "claim to fame" during World War II).

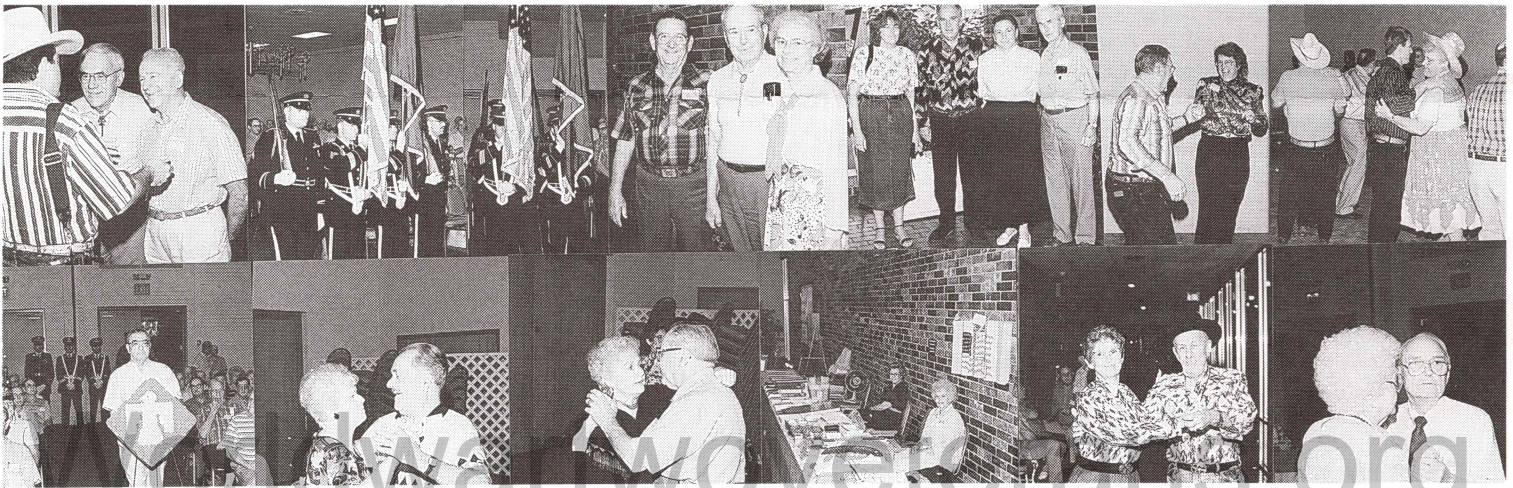
45TH DIVISION APPRECIATION DAY

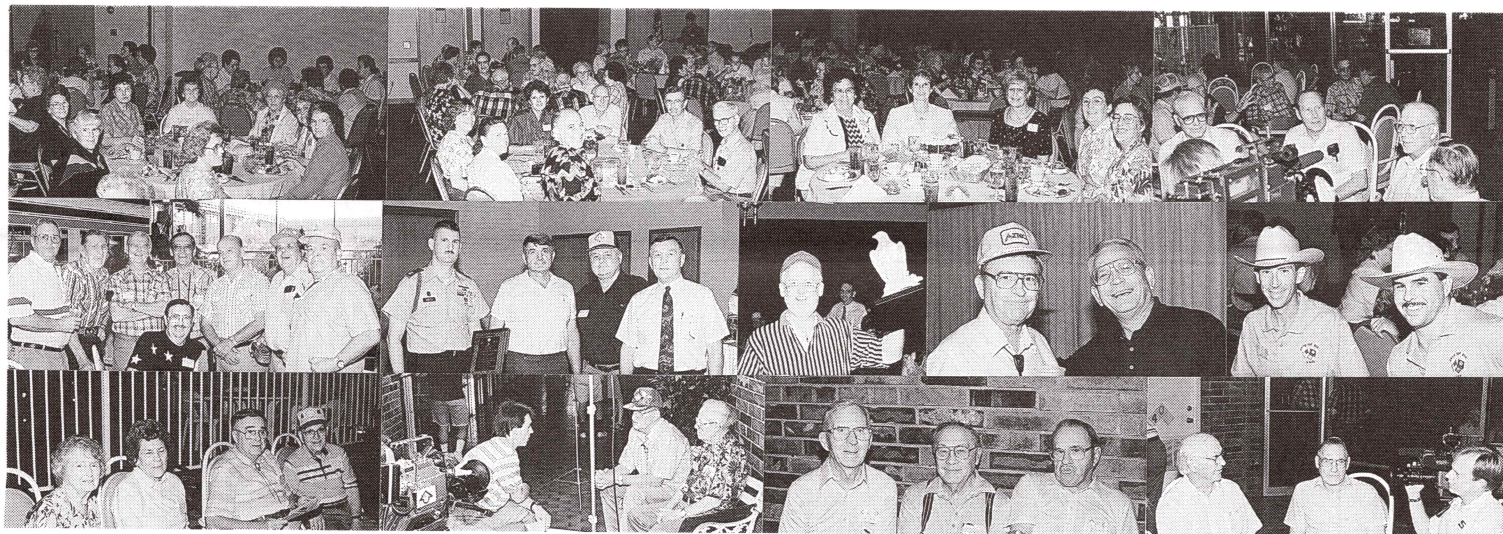
Oklahoma Legislature Concurrent Resolution Number 99, approved 17 April 1988 proclaimed the second Tuesday in April of each year beginning in 1989 as "45th Infantry Division Appreciation Day."

The Oklahoma Military Department and The George Nigh Institute are planning a luncheon to be held on Tuesday 12 April 1994, which will be designated as "A SALUTE TO THE 45TH INFANTRY DIVISION".

The luncheon will be held at the Myriad in Oklahoma City, OK and will be limited to 1000 participants. Detailed information will be furnished as it becomes available.

The principal speaker will be General Dennis J. Reimer, Commanding General, Headquarters Forces Command, Fort McPherson, GA.





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following letter was received from Stephan B. Ross, 378 Ward Street, Newton Centre, MA 02159 as a result of a telephone call my daughter made after watching an Unsolved Mysteries program concerning an inmate at Dachau who was looking for a soldier who befriended him.

Unsolved Mysteries sent me a list of calls they received from different people in response to the airing of my story. Please excuse the delay of my response. I have also received numerous letters from people throughout the country and I am gradually responding, as time allows.

I have made every attempt possible with assistance from the military to locate the tanker who befriended me and rekindled my spirit to go on living. I believe he was one of the soldiers from the 191st Tank Battalion, since they were in Dachau supporting the 45th Infantry Division on that eventful day of Liberation from Dachau Concentration Camp. There have been a number of soldiers who have come forward, but none of them have matched all the details, especially them giving me a flag.

Thank you for calling and being interested in my dream to find the caring tanker. It is people like you who have made this country a great country to live in.

God Bless you and God Bless America, the greatest land of all!!!

ANTHONY PROIETTA, 7674 Great Muskrat, Liverpool, NY 13090

I served with Company A, 279th Infantry Regiment from November 1952 until August 1953 after the cease fire. Could someone tell me where Company A was located when the cease fire was declared?

I served with Pat Clad (MT), Lawrence "Zeke" Tennant (WV), Richard Truby (PA), Paul Peterson (NE) and my platoon leader was Lieutenant Liles.

MAURICE S. PETERSON, Route 1, Box 281-C, Motley, MN 56466

Congratulations on carrying the story of the liberation of "Dachau" in your July 1993 edition. Enclosed find a clipping from my local paper supporting your story. It is about time people gave credit where it is due. The 45th made it all possible.

KENNETH MCLEAN, 24 Prospect Street, Clinton, NJ 07011

Enclosed find the obituary for Tom G. Earnest. Please put in your next 45th Division News and also in the memorial service for our 1994 convention.

I would also like to vouch for the article by James H. Rickey in the October Division News about the Dachau Concentration Camp. I am the driver he mentioned in his article.

There is no doubt in my mind the 3rd Battalion, 157th Infantry, 45th Division liberated Dachau, and "NO BODY ELSE", because I was there.

LOWELL B. HUGHES, 501 West Poe, Roswell, NM

I wish to notify you of the death of my uncle, William Ralph Williams on 25 November 1993. He lived at 503 North Santa Fe, Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.

Ralph was first Sergeant of Company H, 179th Infantry Regiment, and served with the 45th Division from Camp Berkeley to Europe. He was 83 years old when he died and had celebrated his birthday in the hospital a day before his death.

Ralph was a long time member of the division association and his service with the 45th during World War II was the high point of his life and in our talks he spoke highly of everyone with whom he served.

LEWIS L. EUBANKS, 2113 North Rose Drive, Midwest City, OK 73110

I joined the 279th Infantry, 45th Infantry Division for basic training at Camp Polk, LA in January 1951 and accompanied them to Hokkaido, Japan and thence to Korea. In that time I had some wonderful experiences and some not so wonderful, but in that time I met some really great people.

Unfortunately, in July 1979 I had a stroke (cerebral Hemorrhage). The neurosurgeon gave me only a 10% chance of living even with surgery. Without the surgery I was gone and even with surgery he could make no guarantees of my condition should I live through the operation.

With the talent of a great doctor and the help of God, I have mostly recovered my health except for one serious problem. The brain surgery that saved my life erased a good bit of my memory of the previous years. With a lot of help and patience from family and friends, I have been able

to reconstruct most of my old life, however. I have only partial recall of my time in the service. This is the purpose of my letter. I would love to hear from anyone from the division who may remember me. Just getting names would be great, but if anyone could also give me some details of our service together the information would be appreciated and I feel sure it would help me fill the gaps in this most important time of my life.

Remember, the only people who can help me are the men I served with. Thanks in advance to all of you who answer my call for help, and may God bless you all as He has blessed me.

LEONARD J. MECKEL, 1052 Becklow Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21220

In your recent edition, I read with interest the article entitled Korean Chronicles. You noted that the 179th Infantry and 180th Infantry went on line in the Chorwon-T' son corridor on 1 January 1952.

I joined Company F, 180th Infantry in March of 1952 and was assigned as a platoon leader. I later served in Battalion Headquarters. My reason for writing, however, is to make a request. What I am looking for is a map of the area assigned to 2nd Battalion, or Fox Company, or both. For many years I had such a map, however, sometime during my army travels (23 years) it was lost.

I would appreciate any help you can offer. A copy of the map would suffice or maybe a reader of your fine 45th Division News could offer some help.

EDWARD J. MCKITRICK, 4800 Arney Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111

I joined the 45th Division at Fort Devens, MA and was assigned to Company L, 179th Infantry. I served with the 3rd Platoon as a Staff Sergeant in the amphibious landings in Sicily, Salerno and Anzio. I was fortunate to have served with Charles Coco who now lives in California and Sgt Joe Harberson who was promoted to Lieutenant and was killed in action in Italy. If it were not for them I may not be writing this letter 50 years later. I talk to Coco about once a month. I would like to hear from anyone who may know them or me and served with us.

MAT MARINO, 142 1/2 Bay Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801

During the week of October 4, 1993 my wife and I were in Washington, DC for the express purpose of visiting the US Holocaust Memorial Museum of which I am a Supporting Member.

Neither of us had seen the museum or the permanent exhibit before. Having been with the 179th Infantry Regiment at the time the 157th Infantry Regiment liberated Dachau, imagine my surprise when the first thing I saw was the movie film shot during the first few hours of the liberation of the camp on April 29, 1945. Credit was given, primarily, to the 45th Division, but acknowledging that the 42nd Division was in the vicinity.

I had a copy of the July issue of the 45th Division News with me and a photocopy was made by their Library and Photo Section for their records.

ROBERT E. CRAMER, Company G, 179th Infantry, P.O. Box 456, 3076 East Lake Road, Skaneateles, NY 13152

I served in the Korean War with Company K, 180th Infantry. I did not know about the annual reunions, the 45th Division Association or the 45th Division News until this summer.

I would like to get in contact with anyone from Company K.

VERLE L. RITTER, 2808 Oklahoma Avenue, Davenport, IA 52804, 319/386-4728

I was a member of Company F, 180th Infantry during World War II. Sometime in October 1944 I was a squad leader in the 1st Platoon and took a 6 man combat patrol to find the Krauts. We found them and caught them by surprise, however when I opened fire on two of them all hell broke loose. They were dug in and rifle and machine gun fire had us pinned down. One of the men on my left was hit bad and Herman "Chief" Gowdy from Renton, Washington picked him up, threw him over his shoulder and carried him through a hail of bullets to safety about 200 yards away.

We must have been successful as we advanced through the area later in the day and there were several dead Germans throughout the area. The Chief should have some kind of recognition for his actions, however, there was so much excitement and so many things happening it just didn't

happen, but I will never forget the incident. If someone knows the whereabouts of Herman Gowdy, I would like to get in touch with him. I still visit with Jim Elder of North Charleston, SC, O C Ruder of Dorset, VT and Charles Rich of Leroy, NY.

JOSEPH R. HOYO, 101 Clark Road, St. Clairsville, OH 43950, 614/695-0846

Preparations for the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Liberation of France are on the way. I thought you would want to know what is in project, to inform the membership of the Association.

The area, here, was liberated at the end of September 1944. The ceremonies of commemoration will be held in the City of Epinal and at the Cemetery on 24 September 1994. The next day 25 September, ceremonies will take place in Remiremont.

I am sure that, in Epinal especially, the locals would love to have veterans of the 45th Infantry Division, "THEIR LIBERATORS", to commemorate, with them, this 50th Anniversary.

Very important ceremonies are also planned in other parts of the Vosges Mountains. In Fraize, it will be on 18 September 1944. In Bruyeres, it will be on 15-16 October 1994.

Hoping these informations will be helpful for the planning of returns, I wish you all the very best.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.

ROLAND B. PRIEUR, Superintendent Epinal American Military Cemetery and Memorial, Paris Embassy (ABMC), Unit 21551, APO AE 09777.

TIDBITS

George Brownlee, 1216 Ridgecrest Drive, Kingfisher, OK 73750 reports that several members of Company M, 179th Infantry had participated in the "Korea Revisit" program in September 1993. This is the program sponsored by the Korean Veterans Association, which annually hosts 1,000 former United States servicemen who served in Korea between 1950 and 1953. The only cost is transportation, food and lodging is provided by the KVA.

Irvin R. Garrison, 34 Country Oaks, Woodward, OK 73801 reports that after being commissioned in the Army National Guard in 1950, he served with the 279th Infantry during the Korean War and transferred to the Army Reserve in 1959. He retired from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Army Reserve in 1980 and from the Public Schools system as Superintendent in 1990. He is currently retired from everything and enjoying life in Woodward, OK.

New member **Walter F. Okorowski**, 22600 Middlebelt H-13, Farmington Hills, MI 48336 who served in Company F, 180th Infantry during the Korean War is currently employed by the Roger Penske Corporation. He states that he has eight children by two marriages.

Walter was member of the cadre that opened Fort Polk, LA in 1950 prior

to the arrival of the 45th Division. He would like to contact Ollie G. Raper, Enid, Oklahoma.

I was with Company B, 179th Infantry from early February 1944 at the Anzio Beachhead until about ten days before the war ended. While waiting to cross the Danube River, we witnessed one or two German jet aircraft shooting down at least eight of our bombers. Not a very good thing to see.

Earl W. Suhrbler, 11511 Huggins Street, Leesburg, FL 34788-4419

REUNION NOTICES

45TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION: 29 September-2 October 1994, (21-24 September 1995) the Radisson Inn, I-40 at Meridain, Oklahoma City, OK

189th FIELD ARTILLERY AND 645 TANK DESTROYER BN: will hold their annual combined reunion at the Saddleback Inn, 4300 SW 3rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 14-16 April 1994. Contact T.J. Hunker, P.O. Box 127, Wheatland, OK 73097, Telephone 405/745-2433

TANK COMPANY, 179TH INFANTRY (KOREA): 10-12 June 1994 in Northeast, MD. Point of contact: John L. Harrison, 670 Hances Point Road, Northeast, MD 21901, 410/287-5192.

45TH SIGNAL COMPANY (KOREA): Any member wishing to hold a mini reunion of the Signal Company in conjunction with the 1994 45th Infantry Division Association please contact George T. Nolan, 888 North Benton, Helena, MT 59601 or John W. Macagney, 29 Watervliet Avenue, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442

REUNION INFORMATION POINTS OF CONTACT

During the 1993 reunion a request was made for members who were interested in disseminating "reunion information" in their State to sign their name on a designated form. Members signed up for the States listed below:

Alabama	Missouri
Illinois	New Hampshire
Indiana	New Jersey
Iowa	New Mexico
Kansas	New York
Louisiana	Oklahoma
Maine	Tennessee
Massachusetts	Texas
Michigan	Virginia
Minnesota	

If you are interested in serving in this capacity for your State, please furnish your name and address to the association office.



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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DUES PAYING TIME IS HERE

45th Division Association dues expire on 31 December of the year indicated on the "LABEL" of your NWSLTR. As of the printing of this edition there were 348 members whose dues expired as of 31 December 1992, and 1011 members whose dues expired as of 31 December 1993.

A membership application is included in this NWSLTR for your convenience in bringing your membership up to date. If your dues expiration date is "1993", your dues are now due. If your dues expired as of 31 December 1992, you need to pay your dues prior to 31 March 1994, otherwise you will be dropped from our membership rolls on that date.

Payment of multiple year dues reduces the workload for our volunteers in the out years and also reduces your cost to \$3.75 a year for a four year membership, and to \$3.50 for a ten year membership. **LET'S HELP KEEP THE THUNDERBIRD ALIVE**



50TH ANNIVERSARY 45TH INFANTRY DIVISION BATTLEFIELD TOURS CELEBRATING THE "FIGHTING 45TH VICTORY CAMPAIGNS"

- **SICILIAN BATTLEFIELDS**
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- **SICILIAN & ITALIAN BATTLEFIELDS**
May 24, 1994 to June 6, 1994
- **ITALIAN, FRENCH & GERMAN BATTLEFIELDS**
May 30, 1994 to June 16, 1994
- **ITALIAN BATTLEFIELDS**
May 30, 1994 to June 6, 1994
- **BAVARIAN & AUSTRIAN ALPS**
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FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

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SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

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Francis Witkowski, Sr.

NEW MEMBERS

10-YEARS

Bob G. Chadwick	John W. Macagney	Glendle L. Powell
John W. (Billy) Clayton	Larry William McCully	Verle L. Ritter
Charles W. Evans	Jody C. McLain	Clyde H. Sharp
Julian H. Hall	Jack L. Neville	Richard E. Womack
John L. Harrison	Walter F. Okorowski	
Hugh L. Linderer	Frank W. Podpechan	

4-YEARS

Thomas W. Bacchus	Walter C. Crane	Bobby G. Maxey
Eugene C. Berryhill	Arthur L. Donovan	Raymond S. McLain, Jr.
Richard L. Boren	Catherine A. Fiore	Frank P. Muth
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John R. Bridwell	John J. Gillespie	Charles E. Perry
Murray P. Carver, Jr.	Robert B. Hall	John N. Nick Phillips
Joseph J. Cavin, Jr.	Mollie F. Howard	Clifford W. Rains
Gordon K. Colbert	James C. Labue	Gerald Strain
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TAPS

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John C. French	James C. Ramey	William R. Williams
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James M. Jackson	Edison A. Reber	
Walton C. Jones	Norman A. Rhodes	

45th Division News

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Michael T. Jackson President

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